

VOICE OF DEMOCRACY

2026-2027

CONTEST THEME - "What A Veteran Taught Me About America"

Voice of Democracy is a script-writing program designed to give high school students the opportunity to voice their opinion on a patriotic theme, which is chosen by the VFW Commander-in-Chief. All ninth, tenth, eleventh and twelfth grade students enrolled in Kansas public, private, parochial schools, or home school programs are eligible to participate. Exchange students and past first place department winners are not eligible to participate. **CONTEST RULES:** Students record their original 3 to 5 minute essay on a flash drive/email submission on the above stated theme. They submit their flash drive/email submission, a copy of their written essay and the completed entry form to the local Post/Auxiliary chairman. The flash drive/email submission must be in their own voice without music, special effects or background sounds. Songs and poetry are not acceptable. Students may not identify themselves in anyway. **THE STUDENT DEADLINE TO THE POST IS OCTOBER 31, 2026** The winning Post flash drive/email submission, the written essay, along with the complete entry form, the student biographical questionnaire, recent photograph and parent release form must be in the hands of the **District Chairman by November 15, 2026**. Then the District winner needs to be in the hands of the **Department chairman by December 10, 2026**. See link for VOD brochure

DEPARTMENT AWARDS

First Place: \$1,000.00 Second Place: \$500.00 Third Place: \$300.00

Department first place winner receives an expense paid trip to Valley Forge to compete at the VFW National level and a chance at the \$35,000.00 first place National Scholarship. Starting in 2017 each Department winner is guaranteed at least a \$1,000.00 scholarship at National.

ALL CHAIRMAN, POSTS, DISTRICTS, PLEASE MAKE SURE ALL FORMS ARE COMPLETE WITH A RECENT PHOTOGRAPH

DISTRICT PARTICIPATION REPORTING

District Chairman: Please forward the completed District report form and summary to your Department Chairman no later than December 10, 2026.

POST NO. – List Posts that have declared students winner(s). Please list the participating Posts in numerical order.

AUXILIARY – If Post has an auxiliary, credit their participation by indicating YES or NO.

NUMBER OF PARTICIPATING STUDENTS – Number of students that actually entered the competition by writing an essay.

NUMBER OF POST WINNERS ADVANCED – Number of Post winners that were advanced up to the second level of competition (i.e. District).

SCHOLARSHIP/BONDS AND AWARDS – Total amount of dollars actually awarded to student participants.

ADDITIONAL MONEY EXPENDED – All additional monies (other than scholarships/bonds and awards) allocated and expended in conducting their program (banquets, gifts, pins, jackets, etc)

FORWARDING DISTRICT WINNER TO DEPARTMENT

District Chairman: The District winner's materials that should be forwarded to the Department Chairman (immediately after the District judging is complete) are:

- 1) District winner's completed official entry form
- 2) District winner's recording (flash drive email submission) (VOD only)
- 3) District winner's typed essay
- 4) District winner's photograph (close-up of head & shoulders)
- 5) District Summary Participation Report
- 6) District Voice of Democracy Report Form

BUDGET

AWARDS:

1st place award	\$1000.00
2nd place award	500.00
3rd place award	300.00
(\$300.00 paid by Auxiliary)	

MID-WINTER

2 banquet tickets @ \$40.00 (for 2 State VOD Chairs)	80.00
Plaque for 1 st place winner	40.00
7 VOD medals @ \$8.95	80.55
7 VOD pins @ \$4.50	40.50

TRIPS

Freedom Foundation Trip Expense
PAID BY NATIONAL

	2041.05
(Auxiliary)	-300.00

TOTAL	\$1741.05

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