

## About the NMA Leadership Speech Contest



NMA... THE Leadership Development Organization proudly presents its Leadership Speech Contest as one of the nation's leading competitions among high school age students. Its primary purpose is to promote better understanding of Leadership and the unique role it plays in today's world. The top prize is \$4,000 cash!

The contest involves young men and women in grades nine through twelve. They research, write, and then deliver a speech based upon their interpretation of a variety of Leadership topics. Topics such as Leadership in the world, its application to the free enterprise

system and what Leadership means to them personally are some examples of speech themes. In short, the students are limited only by their imagination and creativity.

Students report to us that participation in this contest increases their awareness and understanding of Leadership. The contest provides an incentive for the development of communication skills - vital to those preparing to enter the workforce. In communities across the country, the NMA Contest has become recognized as an innovative program supporting our young people.

The financial rewards, at all levels of the competition, contribute to students' furthering their education. NMA members take enormous pride in their program and herald the contest as one of the NMA's greatest contributions to understanding the various aspects of Leadership. We sincerely invite you to look at our program closely and join us in participating in this important program.

### Levels of Competition

In high school meeting rooms, community theatres, libraries, and even plant auditoriums, students across the country start giving their speeches in early fall. Their goal remains the same, write a first class speech and then begin to present it to various audiences, eventually working one's way to the top, with a chance at that \$4,000 top prize. Along the way, they receive the advice, counsel, and encouragement from parents, teachers, friends, and business leaders.

*The four levels of competition are:*

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| 1. Chapter Level                       | 2. Council Level  |
| 3. Chapter Leader Training (CLT) Level | 4. National Level |

At the Chapter Level, contests run by local NMA chapters, students in grades 9-12 from area high schools along with home schooled students in the area compete against each other for prizes to be determined by chapters, if monetary, not to exceed \$300.

At the Council Level, students compete against one another from a wider geographical area... where several NMA chapters band together to sponsor the second level of competition. The top monetary prize at this level should not exceed \$500.

At the CLT Level (two regional meetings held in in the spring of each year) the competition begins to get stiff. Here, council and chapter winners from several east and west regions, meet to compete for two top prizes at the East and West CLT Contest of \$1,000 and \$500 cash.

Finally, at the National Level, the four CLT finalists compete at the NMA Annual Conference held in the fall. These contestants compete for cash prizes of \$4,000, \$1,000, and two \$500 third place prizes.

## **STUDENT ELIGIBILITY**

Participants must be enrolled in a school or be home schooled (grades 9 - 12) within the area that the sponsoring Chapter serves. An exception would be a student without a local chapter could still participate. Contact NMA Headquarters for possible sponsoring chapters.

## **SPEECH PREPARATION RULES**

1. The speech is to relate to Leadership. Speeches at all levels shall have Leadership as its main theme to be considered eligible for competition.
2. Non-leadership issues such as social, medical, environmental, political etc. shall not be primary subjects unless integrated into how leadership plays a role.
3. Each contestant shall research, write and deliver his/her own speech. Advice and coaching is allowed and changes may be made to the speech at any time prior to the contest regardless of level.
4. Contestants shall submit a draft of their speech to the Contest Director prior to participating in the contest to assure the content meets the criteria of Leadership as the main theme. The Contest Director shall establish the deadline for submitting the speech.
5. Contestants shall not identify themselves, their city, state or school in the context of their speech.
6. Notes are allowed, but the speech shall not be read verbatim.
7. Audio/visual aids shall not be used with the presentation.
8. Contestants' speeches shall be limited to no more than six minutes or less than four minutes.
9. Contestants shall give proper credit to any source from which they derive information. Contestants may use quotations and/or copyrighted materials, but must identify the original author. Acknowledging the source of the material shall be the responsibility of the contestant.
10. Speeches prepared for this contest shall not be presented to any other group without acknowledging that the speech was prepared for and was or will be delivered in this contest.
11. The listed Speech Preparation Rules are also part of the Contest Rules.

## **TOPICS FOR CONSIDERATION**

1. Leadership in the world today
2. Community Leadership or how I can be a leader in my community
3. What makes a good leader?
4. Leadership and the Free Enterprise System
5. Leadership for the next millennium
6. Attributes of a leader or the importance of inclusiveness in leadership
7. Great Leadership Examples

8. Leadership: Past, Present and for the next millennium
9. What Leadership means to me

## CONTEST RULES

### A. COMPETING

1. Contestants shall compete in a Chapter Level Contest in order to be eligible to participate in a Council or higher Level Contest. At the Chapter Level, contestants shall compete against students in grades 9-12 within a school, between schools, between home schooled students or between chapters. Contestants shall only compete at one Chapter Level Contest per year.
2. If a contestant has not competed in a Chapter Level Contest, he/she shall not be eligible to compete in any higher level of contest competition. If any doubt exists concerning a contestant's eligibility, contact NMA Headquarters to resolve the issue promptly.
3. The Leadership Development Conference (CLT) Level contest is conducted at two regional meetings held in April or May. Contestants from chapters/councils located in the Northeast, Central and Southeast areas shall compete at the East CLT. Contestants from chapters/councils located in the Pacific North, Pacific South and Southwest areas shall compete at the West CLT.
4. Chapters geographically isolated from other chapters or those chapters not in a Council may have their contestant compete in a CLT Level Contest, but shall have conducted a Chapter Level Contest. In order to compete at the higher level contest, a **written waiver** shall be submitted and approved by NMA Headquarters in advance. The waiver letter (see Sample Letters Section) is usually initiated by the Contest Director or Chapter President.
5. At all contest levels, competing contestants shall not be able to hear nor be in attendance of another contestant's speech being delivered.
6. At all contest levels, there shall be no photography, video or audio recording allowed during the contest except if arranged by NMA.
7. If determined by the contest director and the NMA Meeting Coordinator, all contestants shall be required to use a microphone when delivering their speech.
8. Contestants shall be respectful of other contestants at all times and shall conduct themselves in a professional manner.
9. Contestants winning the National Level Contest are ineligible to compete in future NMA Leadership Speech Contests.

### B. Documentation

1. As soon as it is determined the chapter/council plans to conduct a speech contest, the Chapter/Council Speech Contest Confirmation Form shall be completed and sent to NMA Headquarters. This informs NMA Headquarters of the intent to conduct a contest but does not obligate the chapter/council to conduct a contest. The form needs to be on file prior to the date of the chapter/council contest or no later and January 31<sup>st</sup> for the chapter/council to

be eligible to conduct the contest.

2. For an individual to compete in the Chapter Level Contest, each contestant shall complete both the Student Entry Form and the Consent and Acknowledgement of Risk Form. Both forms require the student's and parent or guardian signatures. The originals are kept by the chapter and a copy of both forms shall be sent promptly to NMA Headquarters along with a printed or typed copy of the speech (it may be a draft).
3. The Chapter/Council Confirmation, Student Entry Form and Risk Forms shall be on file at NMA Headquarters prior to the contest.
4. At all levels, written copies (may be a draft) of contestant's speeches arriving after the due date established by the appropriate Contest Director, may be ruled ineligible for competition.
5. For those contestants winning at the Chapter Contest but not competing at the Council Level, a waiver letter needs to be prepared and submitted to NMA Headquarters for approval. Once approved, plans to compete at the CLT Level can be initiated. (see Sample Letters Section).
6. For those chapters and councils sending their winning contestant to the CLT Level Competition, a package of documentation needs to be submitted to NMA Headquarters no later than two weeks prior to the date of the CLT. It consists of the CLT Contest Registration Form, Risk Form, a copy of the winning contestant's speech and a copy of the Student Entry Form.

**C. Contact Person for CLT and National Level**

1. A member of the sponsoring chapter/council shall be designated as the contact person for their contestant and shall attend the CLT Level Contest or their contestant shall not be permitted to participate in the contest. The contact person's name shall be submitted to NMA Headquarters on the CLT Contestant Registration Form.
2. A contact person who shall attend the National Level Contest needs to be designated for each winning contestant competing at the National Level Contest. The contact person's name needs to be submitted to NMA Headquarters or their contestant shall not be permitted to compete.

**D. Judging**

1. At all contest levels, a minimum of two judges shall be used with an additional tie breaking judge whose ballot will be counted only if a tie occurs.
2. Each judge shall be provided with a clipboard along with a copy of the Judging Criteria, a Judge's Ballot and a Judge's Ranking Form (see Judging Criteria and Evaluation Forms Section).
3. All judges shall evaluate all contestants competing in the contest.
4. At all contest levels, **one winner** shall be designated and the decision of the judges in placing the contestants is final. Scores and ranking shall not be revealed.
5. Individual ballot tabulations by judges shall not be revealed to anyone after the competition has been completed.

**E. Time Keeper**

1. There shall be one Time Keeper (a backup may also be used) who shall record each contestant's presentation time on a Time Record Sheet (see Judging Criteria and Evaluation Forms Section). The Contest Director shall pick up the forms after the last contestant has competed.
2. The length of the contest speech shall be between four and six minutes. The Time Keeper shall indicate intermediate times to the contestant using color cards/lights which shall be clearly visible to each speaker but not obvious to the audience. The green card/light shall be displayed at four (4:00) minutes, the yellow card/light shall be displayed at five and a half (5 ½) minutes and the red card/light shall be displayed at six (6:00) minutes and remain visible until the speech ends.
3. The Time Keeper shall start the watch with the contestant's first word uttered to the audience and the watch shall be stopped with the contestant's last word to the audience.
4. There are no disqualifications for the length of the speech but penalty points may be applied for violating the four to six minute length of speech rule.

**F. Speech Time Limits and Grace Period**

1. The minimum time for the speech shall be four (4) minutes with a ten second grace period. The speech could be as short as three minutes, fifty seconds (3:50). If the measured time is shorter, a penalty of two points would be applied to the contestant's score.
2. The maximum time for the speech shall be six (6) minutes with a 20 second grace period (6:20). If the speech is longer, penalty points would be applied to the contestant's score. A penalty of two points would be applied if the measured time is between six minutes, twenty-one seconds (6:21) and six minutes, thirty seconds (6:30). For measured time longer than six minutes, thirty seconds (6:30), a penalty of five points would be applied.

**G. General**

1. At all contest levels, NMA shall have the right to edit, publish and/or record any speech used.
2. The listed Speech Preparation Rules are also part of these Contest Rules.
3. If any of the Contest Rules are broken, the contestant shall be disqualified from competing by the appropriate Contest Director.
4. Protest at the Chapter/Council Level shall be in writing and given to the Contest Director who will evaluate and concur with the highest Chapter/Council officer or contest judges to assure a fair evaluation.
5. Protest at the CLT/National Level shall be in writing and given to the Contest Director who will evaluate and concur with the NMA President/Chairman of the Board or contest judges to assure a fair evaluation.
6. On the date established for the National Level Speech Contest, all four contestants shall compete at the time and place scheduled for the contest.

