**2012 John F. Kennedy – Profile in Courage Essay Contest**

**FOR COMPLETE GUIDELINES VISIT THE PROFILE INCOURAGE ESSAY CONTEST AT WWW.JFKLIBRARY.ORG.**

**Eligibility**

The contest is open to United States high school students in grades nine through twelve attending public, private, parochial, or home schools; U.S. students under the age of twenty enrolled in a high school correspondence/GED program in any of the fifty states, the District of Columbia, or the U.S. territories; and U.S. citizens attending schools overseas. Past winners and finalists are not eligible to participate. Employees of John Hancock Financial Services and members of their families are not eligible to participate.

**Requirements**

* Essay submissions for the 2012 contest will be accepted starting September 1, 2011. The contest deadline is Saturday, January 7, 2012.
* Essays can be no more than 1,000 words. Citations and bibliography are not included in the word count.
* Essays must be the original work of the student.
* John F. Kennedy, Robert F. Kennedy, and Edward M. Kennedy are not eligible subjects for essays.
* Essays must describe an act of political courage by a U.S. elected official that occurred during or after 1956, the publication date of [Profiles in Courage](http://www.jfklibrary.org/Events-and-Awards/Profile-in-Courage-Award/About-the-Book.aspx).  The official may have addressed an issue at the local, state, or national level. See [Contest Information and Topic Guidelines](http://www.jfklibrary.org/Education/Profile-in-Courage-Essay-Contest/Contest-Information-and-Topic-Guidelines.aspx) and [Helpful Tips for Writing Your Essay](http://www.jfklibrary.org/Education/Profile-in-Courage-Essay-Contest/Prepare-Your-Essay/Helpful-Tips-for-Writing-Your-Essay.aspx)for more information.
* Essays about [previous Profile in Courage recipients](http://www.jfklibrary.org/Events-and-Awards/Profile-in-Courage-Award/Award-Recipients.aspx) will be disqualified unless they describe an act of political courage other than the act for which the award was given.
* Essays must have a minimum of five sources, including one non-internet source.

**Source Material**

* Essays with fewer than five listed sources will be disqualified.
* All participants must cite sources they used to research their topic throughout their essay. Please use parenthetical citations within the text. We cannot accept citations in footnote form.
* Essays must include a bibliography. Accepted formats include APA, MLA, or Turabian. You must use a minimum of five selected sources. Please refer to [Guidelines for Citations and Bibliographies](http://www.jfklibrary.org/Education/Profile-in-Courage-Essay-Contest/Contest-Information-and-Topic-Guidelines/Guidelines-for-Citations-and-Bibliographies.aspx).
* Essays must include one non-internet source.

**Essay Submission**

* Students have the choice of either submitting their essay online (preferred) or of mailing their essay. **All** students must complete and submit a registration form online for student and school information. For instructions on how to submit your essay, see [Registration and Submission](http://www.jfklibrary.org/Education/Profile-in-Courage-Essay-Contest/Registration-and-Submission.aspx).
* Mailed in essays must be postmarked by January 7, 2012.

**Nominating Teachers**

* All students must list the name of their nominating teacher on the registration form. The role of a nominating teacher is to provide students with support and advice during the writing of their essay. Nominating teachers are also asked to read students' essays to make suggestions for improvement before they are submitted to the essay contest. As part of this review process, the nominating teacher reviews the essay for syntax, grammatical, typographical and spelling errors and ensures the essay meets the contest requirements listed above. The first place winner and his/her nominating teacher, as representatives of their school, will be invited to receive awards at the annual Profile in Courage Award ceremony held each May at the Kennedy Presidential Library in Boston.
* Nominating teachers can be former or current teachers, but must still be teaching at the same high school as the essay participant. Usually students ask their English or History/Social Studies teachers. In very few cases, we will make an exception if a student is unable to ask a teacher from their high school to be their nominating teacher. The parent or legal guardian responsible for the instruction of home schooled students can also serve as a nominating teacher.

**Content (55%)**

* Demonstrated an understanding of political courage as described by John F. Kennedy in [Profiles in Courage](http://www.jfklibrary.org/Events-and-Awards/Profile-in-Courage-Award/About-the-Book.aspx)
* Identified an act of political courage by a U.S. elected official that occurred during or after 1956
* Proved that the elected official risked his or her career to address an issue at the local, state, national, or international level
* Explained why the official's course of action best serves or has served the larger public interest
* Outlined the obstacles, dangers, and pressures the elected official is encountering or has encountered
* Thoughtful, original choice of a U.S. elected official
* Well-researched
* Convincing arguments supported with specific examples
* Critical analysis of acts of political courage

**Presentation (45%)**

* Communicated ideas clearly
* Well-organized
* Correct syntax, grammar, spelling, and punctuation
* Written in compelling and original manner
* Bibliography of five or more varied sources including one non-internet source
* Thoughtfully selected, reliable sources

**An essay will be disqualified if:**

* It is not on the topic.
* The subject is not an elected official.
* The subject is John F. Kennedy, Robert F. Kennedy, or Edward M. Kennedy.
* The subject is a previous [Profile in Courage Award recipient](http://www.jfklibrary.org/Events-and-Awards/Profile-in-Courage-Award/Award-Recipients.aspx) unless the essay describes an act of political courage other than the act for which the award was given.
* The essay focuses on an act of political courage that occurred prior to 1956.
* It does not include a minimum of five sources.
* It is postmarked or submitted by e-mail after the deadline.
* It is not the student’s original work.
* The top ten essays are judged by members of the [Profile in Courage Award Committee](http://www.jfklibrary.org/Events-and-Awards/Profile-in-Courage-Award/Committee.aspx).

The winner receives **$10,000** -- a **$5,000** cash award and **$5,000** to grow in a John Hancock Freedom 529 College Savings Plan. The winner is invited to the Profile in Courage Award ceremony to accept his/her award. The ceremony is held in May at the John F. Kennedy Presidential Library in Boston.

A second place winner receives a **$1,000** cash award.

Up to five finalists each receive a **$500** cash award.

All winners receive a hardcover copy of *Profiles in Courage* by John F. Kennedy.

The nominating teacher of the first place winner is also invited to the Kennedy Presidential Library to receive the John F. Kennedy Public Service Grant in the amount of **$500** for school projects encouraging student leadership and civic engagement.

All participants receive a Certificate of Participation.

* Winners and finalists will be notified by March 31. All participants will receive a letter announcing the winners and finalists by May 15.

Please do not call the Kennedy Presidential Library for information about the status of your essay.
* Students may register and submit essays for the 2012 Profile in Courage Essay Contest  beginning September 1, 2011. The 2012 contest deadline is January 7, 2012.

Please read [contest information and topic guidelines](http://www.jfklibrary.org/Education/Profile-in-Courage-Essay-Contest/Contest-Information-and-Topic-Guidelines.aspx) carefully before submitting your essay. Essays must meet [contest requirements](http://www.jfklibrary.org/Education/Profile-in-Courage-Essay-Contest/Eligibility-and-Requirements.aspx) to qualify for evaluation.

**Please read the following instructions carefully**

### Submit your essay online (preferred method)

* Please complete the [full registration/essay submission form](http://www.jfklibrary.org/Education/Profile-in-Courage-Essay-Contest/Registration-and-Submission/Registration-and-Submission-Form.aspx) online. We request that you register when you are ready to submit your essay. Copy the text of your essay and bibliography from your original document and paste it into the designated boxes on the online submission form. To correctly format your essay and bibliography, make sure you insert an extra carriage return between paragraphs and after each entry on your bibliography (hit twice on your keyboard.) Citations must be in parenthetical form within the essay. Footnotes can not be submitted.

**OR**

### Submit your essay via mail

* All students are required to complete the[online registration form](http://www.jfklibrary.org/Education/Profile-in-Courage-Essay-Contest/Registration-and-Submission/Registration-and-Submission-Form.aspx)regardless of whether they submit their essay online or via regular mail. We recommend that you register when you are ready to mail your essay.

Submit your essay via regular mail by printing out the completed online registration form along with two hard copies of your essay. Your essay must be typed, double-spaced, and printed only on one side of the paper. Attach your registration form to only one copy of your essay. Your second copy should contain no personal identification information.

Please mail to:

John F. Kennedy Library Foundation
Profile in Courage Essay Contest
Columbia Point
Boston, MA 02125

Mailed essays must be postmarked by January 7, 2012.

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