

The Battle of Flowers® Association 2018 ORATORICAL CONTEST RULES

APPLICANTS:

1. The Battle of Flowers® Association (“Association”) Oratorical Contest will be held on **Friday, February 23, 2018** at the Witte Museum located at 3801 Broadway, San Antonio, Texas 78209. The topic for our contest is:

A Lone Star Love Affair: Texas Ranchers & Treasured Lands

2. The Association expects a speech that is seamless, historical, impassioned and stimulating. Therefore, judging will be based on the content and presentation of the speech, which includes, but is not limited to, the following:

Content

- adheres to the contest theme and remains on topic throughout
- is appropriate for the intended audience (see paragraph 3)
- is well-developed and clearly organized
- provides historically accurate information supported by research and references
- follows rules of grammar (e.g., word usage, pronunciation, sentence structure)

Presentation

- delivered completely from memory
- educates the audience by showcasing knowledge of the topic
- entertains the audience without being overly dramatic
- is 10-12 minutes in length

3. **Know your audience!** The winning speech should be suitable for delivery to an audience of over 500 people at the Association’s annual Fiesta Luncheon. Please keep in mind that the mission of the Association is educational and patriotic in nature. The majority of the audience at the contest and the luncheon will be composed of educated women between the ages of 40 and 70 who are devoted to and well versed in the history, culture and patriotic traditions of Texas.

4. Speeches must be original and historically accurate with the intent to inform and educate the audience on the topic (as opposed to comedic or dramatic). Speeches will be delivered from a podium with a stationary microphone in front of a large audience. Speeches should be completely memorized, as no notes or manuscripts are permitted at the podium during the contest. Visual aids may not be used and costumes will not be permitted. Contestants are required to use and cite multiple sources from scholarly articles and books in the body of the speech. All sources must be footnoted in the bibliography of the written speech (see paragraph 10).

5. The length of each speech should not be less than 10 or more than 12 minutes. Contestants who do not adhere to these time limits may have points deducted from their score or may be subject to disqualification. Timing by contest officials will start when the contestant begins to speak and the length of the speech will be reported to the Judges Chairman. A contestant may arrange for his or her own time prompter to be seated in the audience and give only non-verbal prompts.

6. Application to the contest is open to undergraduate or graduate students enrolled in a Texas university or college. An undergraduate applicant must be enrolled in at least 12 class hours and a graduate applicant in at least 6 class hours during the semester in which the contest takes place. The total number of contestants selected to participate shall be limited to not more than twelve, and no more than three students from any one university or college may compete. Previous first place winners are not eligible to compete in subsequent contests. Other previous contestants may submit an application; however, since the contest can accommodate only a limited number of contestants, consideration will be given to how closely the contestant complied with contest rules and deadlines and whether he/she fully participated in all aspects of the previous contest.

7. Prospective contestants should choose and research only **one** of the names shown on the List of Suggested "Texas Ranchers and Treasured Lands". (As has been the rule in previous contests, the historical events/people commemorated must have taken place or lived at least 50 years ago.)

8. **To enter the contest, a completed entry form, along with a resume and a topical abstract must be received by the Contest Chairman by Thursday, November 2, 2017.** The topical abstract should be approximately 500 words in length and designed to give the selection committee a "snapshot" of the speech – the particular "Texas Rancher or Ranch" chosen -- and how the applicant intends to explore the topic by describing that person or ranch as related to the development of ranching in Texas. Criteria utilized by the selection committee may include, but is not limited to, the following: adherence to the topic, clear development of the theme, suitability and interest to our audience, proper use of grammar, and historical accuracy supported by research. Applicants will be notified whether or not they have been selected as a contestant on or before **November 20, 2017**.

APPLICANTS SELECTED TO BE CONTESTANTS:

9. For those applicants selected to be contestants, a written copy of their entire completed speech and bibliography must be submitted to the Contest Chairman on or before Thursday, **January 25, 2018**. Failure to turn in the written speech by this deadline will result in disqualification of the contestant and another applicant may be offered his/her place in the contest. Minor changes in the speech may still be made prior to the contest date.

10. On the day of the contest, contestants and their faculty advisors (if applicable) should arrive at the Witte Museum by 8:30 AM to sign in. It is imperative that contestants arrive on time. At registration, each contestant shall provide 2 copies of his or her final speech, which must include a bibliography. Contestants who fail to do so will not be eligible to compete. Please proofread speeches for correct grammar and spelling as the first and second place speeches will be archived in the permanent records of The Battle of Flowers Association. The contest begins promptly at 9:00 AM. The order in which the speeches will be delivered will be determined by a random drawing prior to the contest and listed in the event program.

11. The Preliminary Session will be judged by a panel of three to five judges who are either: (a) professional judges of intercollegiate forensics competitions, (b) individuals who possess specific knowledge of and/or expertise in the current topic, or (c) members of the Association chosen by the Judges Chairman. At the conclusion of the Preliminary Session, contestants and their faculty advisors are invited to be guests of the Association for lunch at the museum. Following lunch, all participants in the Preliminary Session will be presented a Certificate of Participation and the names of the five contestants continuing on to the Final Session will be announced. Contestants who have delivered their entire speech by memory in the Preliminary Session but are not selected to participate in the Final Session will receive an award of \$125.

12. The Final Session will begin promptly at 1:15 PM before a new panel of three to five judges with similar credentials. These speeches will be delivered in reverse order from the Preliminary Session. After the judges have deliberated, a Certificate of Merit will be presented to the five finalists along with cash awards to the second through fifth place winners. The prize amounts our contest will award to 2018 winners are \$3,000 for first place, \$1,500 for second place, \$1,000 for third place, \$750 for fourth place and \$500 for fifth place. The top three winning students will earn their University Advisors a monetary award for the Advisor's department: First Place, \$1,000; Second Place \$500 and Third Place \$250.

13. The first place winner will deliver his or her speech for members and guests at the Association's annual Fiesta Luncheon to be held on Thursday, **April 26, 2018**, at 11:00 AM at the Tobin Center for the Performing Arts in San Antonio. The winner will be presented a check for \$3,000 at the conclusion of the speech and will ride in the annual Battle of Flowers Parade on Friday, **April 27, 2018**.

14. Each contestant will receive a copy of his or her judges' comments from the contest to be mailed at a later date.

A copy of these rules, as well as the entry form and other important contest information, is available on our website: www.battleofflowers.org