

2024-2025 Official Entry Form Voice of Democracy Competition

Must Be Completed by All Contestants

Name: First, M.I., Last
Jake Kenneth Willey
Address
2324 Twin Oak Place
Monroe, Georgia, 30656
City, State, Zip
Phone (404) 956-5881 Email jakewilley52@gmail.com
Date of Birth (mm/dd/yy) 04/03/08 Grade in School 11 Age 16 Jacket Size AL
School Name, City, State Monroe County Day School, Monroe, Georgia
Teacher's name and Email (if applicable) Pam Arnold, parnoid@monroe.school

To Be Completed by Student's Parent/Guardian

(Required even if student is 18 or over)

Parent/Guardian Name (Printed) Paula Willey
Parent/Guardian Signature Paula Willey Date 11-07-24
Parent/Guardian Daytime Phone (770) 605-5185
Parent/Guardian Email pkwilleybug@gmail.com

Participant Agreement for Students Advancing to National Level

If selected as a first-place state winner, I have the consent of my parent/guardian and school to attend the Voice of Democracy National Finals in Washington, D.C. as a guest of the VFW National Organization. In consideration for permission to participate in the National Voice of Democracy Competition ("Competition") I do hereby, for myself, for my heirs, executors, administrators and assignees, waive, release and discharge all rights and claims which I have or which may hereafter accrue against the Veterans of Foreign Wars of the United States (VFW) and/or the Departments (state organizations) of the Veterans of Foreign Wars and their respective officers, agents, successors and assigns from any damages which may be sustained by me in connection with my participation in or association with the Competition and/or arising out of any travel related to the Competition. In the event of sickness, accident or injury in connection with the Competition, I consent to and accept the services of a duly licensed medical, surgical or dental specialist selected on my behalf and for such treatments, as they may deem necessary. I understand that VFW will not be liable for such treatment. I further understand that the Veterans of Foreign Wars of the United States retains non-exclusive rights to use my audio file, essay, name and likeness in the promotion and execution of the organization's programs and activities.

I Have Read and Understand the Rules and Participant Agreement

I certify that I am the sole author of the enclosed audio/essay entry and that I have not inappropriately used any AI tools or Chat GPT. I have only entered the competition once yearly if otherwise eligible. I understand that if it is found that I have entered any other Post's competition or used this essay for another VFW competition, I face elimination from the competition and will return any and all prizes or incentives awarded.

Signature of Student Participant Paula K Willey Date 11-12-24

To Be Completed by the VFW Post

I certify that this student has an authorized entry in our VFW Post Level Voice of Democracy Competition.

Post Commander/Chairperson Signature Gregg Morrison, JVC Post # 4180

VFW Auxiliary President/Chairperson Signature (if applicable)

Post Address PO Box 392465

City, State, Zip Shelville, GA 30339

VFW Post Email VFW4180@gmail.com

No. of students participating 8

No. of winners advanced to District 3

Amt. of Post/Aux. scholarship awards \$ 325

Amt. of Post/Aux. additional expenses (banquet, pins, etc.) \$ 93

To Be Completed by the VFW District

I certify that the student named in the previous section is the duly selected winner of the Voice of Democracy Contest District Competition and is our sole entry into the Departments.

District Chairperson Signature _____ Dist. # _____

Address _____

City, State, Zip _____

Phone _____ Email _____

To Be Completed by the VFW Department Chairperson

I certify that the student named in the previous section is the duly selected first-place winner of the Voice of Democracy Department Competition and is our sole entry into the National Judging.

Department Chairperson Signature _____

Daytime Phone _____ Email _____

The winner ☒ has been ☐ will be (check one) notified that they are the first-place Department winner on _____

For assistance contact:
816.968.1155
Email: youthscholarships@vfw.org

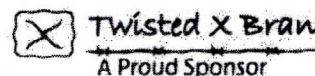
Local VFW Post Information:

Contact: Gregg Morrison, JVC

Phone: 770-656-3780 Best Time To Call: 12-1800

Alternate Contact: Donald Franklin, CDR

Phone: 770-972-8612 Best Time To Call: 12-1800



Many years ago, our Forefathers would have never seen or even thought of what America would be like today. They wanted America to form a more perfect union, establish justice, and provide for the common defense. Some of the ways they anticipated this vision were by making the Bill of Rights and the Constitution. When the Bill of Rights was created James Madison stated, "All power is originally vested in, and consequently derived from the people." This quote recognizes the power of the people and shows that the people could make decisions as well. There are many ways the United States is still adhering to the forefathers vision despite there being a few things that stray from the vision.

Some ways the United States is adhering to the vision of our forefathers are the amendments. One of the amendments that proves the United States is still adhering to the vision of our forefathers is the 2nd amendment, the right to bear arms. The right to bear arms gives American citizens the right to own a firearm. James Madison described, "The right of the people to keep and bear arms shall not be infringed. A well regulated militia, composed of the body of the people, trained to arms, is the best and most natural defense of a free country." This quote means that the citizens were allowed to protect their liberty. Another amendment is the 1st amendment, also known as freedom of speech. Freedom of Speech gives people the right to speak freely without fear of being punished. Benjamin Franklin believed that, "Without Freedom of Thought, there can be no such thing as Wisdom; and no such thing as public liberty, without Freedom of Speech." This quote means there isn't any wisdom without freedom of thought, and there isn't any liberty without freedom of speech. The 1st amendment also includes Religious Freedom. Religious Freedom allows everyone to practice any religion they desire. The Bill of Rights states that, "Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof; or abridging the freedom of speech, or of the press; or the

right of the people peaceably to assemble, and to petition the Government for a redress of grievances.”. This quote means Congress cannot make a law that forces someone to believe in a certain religion. These rights demonstrate how the United States is still adhering to the vision of our forefathers.

There are more amendments that make the United States still adhere to the vision of our Forefathers. These amendments would be the 4th amendment, and the 5th amendment. The 4th amendment does not allow the government to search your property unless they have any suspicion of illegal activity. The Bill of Rights states that, “The right of the people to be secure in their persons, houses, papers, and effects, against unreasonable searches and seizures, shall not be violated, and no Warrants shall issue, but upon probable cause, supported by Oath or affirmation, and particularly describing the place to be searched, and the persons or things to be seized.”. This quote means a citizen's property cannot be searched or taken without a search warrant or probable cause. The 5th amendment gives you the right to remain silent and gives you the choice on whether you would like to speak in the courtroom or not. Benjamin Franklin described, “That it is better one hundred guilty persons should escape than that one innocent person should suffer is a maxim that has been long and generally approved.”. This quote means It's better to let a group of guilty people escape than to let that one innocent person in the group suffer. The 5th amendment also states that the Government cannot take your property unless it's paid for. James Madison claims, “A Government is instituted to protect property of every sort...This being the end of government, that alone is a just government, which impartially secures to every man, whatever is his own.”. This quote means the Government has a role to protect people's rights to their property, and that people shouldn't be in fear of injustice. These rights also demonstrate how the United States is still adhering to the Founding Fathers vision.

A few ways the United States has strayed away from the forefathers vision is the vast amount of violence, terrorism, and lack of opportunity. The large amount of violence in the United States ties with gun violence, physical violence, and even cultural violence. Gun violence is usually tied with gangs, but it also has relations with road rage incidents, and much more. Violence also has a connection to terrorism. Terrorism is the use of violence, and intimidation to get what they want. The final way America has strayed away from our Founding Fathers vision is lack of opportunity. America has a lack of opportunity because there are many people without jobs due to their educational background. Some people don't get the opportunity to get a good education because they can't afford it. These 3 details display how the United States has strayed away from the Founding Fathers vision, just not completely.

In conclusion, the United States has pretty much completely stayed in the same lane as the vision of our Founding Fathers despite the few ways it has "strayed" away.