

2010

Excellence in Writing Scholarship Competition

Rules, judging information, tips for success, entry instructions



Scholarship Topic:

Should young people be allowed on social networking websites?

In the social media age, teenagers and young adults comprise an important demographic. According to the Pew Institute, 65 percent of online teenagers use social media. To many in this age group, sites like Facebook and Twitter are vehicles for modern self expression. However, in September 2009, President Obama advised a group of Virginia students to carefully use Facebook because “in the YouTube age, whatever you do, it will be pulled up again later somewhere in your life.” Is the President correct? Should minors heed his warning? Or do they understand the weight of having a permanent and detailed online record of their lives?

Is the solution to ban minors from social networking sites – until they are of age and responsible for their own choices?

Take a Stand! After researching the topic, write an editorial or create an editorial cartoon voicing your opinion about restricting young people from using social media websites, such as Twitter, MySpace and Facebook.

Deadline for entry is March 2, 2010

Official Rules

Who is eligible to enter: All high school juniors and seniors who live in the Austin American-Statesman home subscription area, with the exception of students whose parents or guardians are full-time or part-time employees of the competition sponsors: the Austin American-Statesman, AMD and 3M.

Awards: The three categories for this competition are editorial cartoons (open to all school sizes), large school editorials (5A) and mid-size/small school (4A & under) editorials.

The following scholarships will be awarded:

	Large (5A)	Mid-Size & Small School (4A & under)	Editorial Cartoons
1st	\$1,500	\$1,500	\$1,500
2nd	\$1,000	\$1,000	\$1,000
3rd	\$750	\$750	\$750

Plus 10 "Honorable Mentions" – 5 in the Large & 5 in Mid-Size/Small Editorial categories, \$325 each.

Scholarship money will be awarded upon receipt of proof of registration from a school of higher education including university, community college or other accredited college program.

Judging

All entries will be reviewed by three preliminary judges. The top ten entries in each category will be judged by three of the final judges.

Editorials:

The editorials will be scored by judges on a 50-point scale with 10 possible points allowed in each of the following 5 areas:

the introduction presents a problem, the use of facts and research, the conclusion offers a solution, spelling, grammar and writing skill, and creativity.

Editorial Cartoons:

The editorial cartoons will be scored by judges on a 50-point scale with 10 possible points allowed in each of the following 5 areas:

artistic merit, originality, appropriateness to topic, presentation, style and clarity.

Editorial Entries

An editorial is an article that presents the newspaper's opinion on an issue. Basically, it is a persuasive essay that offers a solution to a problem.

Rules for submitting an editorial entry:

Word count must be between 500 and 1,000

Double-spaced

12-point, non-italic fonts

Include title page (*Do not put your name on any page of entry, including the title page*)

Email your editorial entry to nie@statesman.com (see submission rules)

Tips for a successful editorial entry:

- * In the opening paragraph, identify the topic of your editorial and give background information. Establish your position and grab attention with dramatic phrases. State your position as strongly as possible.
- * In the body of your editorial, use the opinions of experts, refer to historical facts, and use statistics such as surveys and polls. Make sure your arguments are clear and supported in a way that your reader will appreciate and understand.
- * Explain the issue objectively as a reporter would and tell why this topic is important. Offer opposing viewpoints and your arguments against them.
- * In your conclusion, restate your strongest arguments and offer novel solutions.

Editorial Entries Continued

Submitting your editorial entry:

Email your editorial entry to nie@statesman.com

Type "Scholarship Competition" in the subject line

Attach your entry as a Word document

The body of the email must contain:

student's name, home address, phone number, grade level and school name, the name of the teacher or parent sponsoring the student's entry, the title of the editorial and word count.

Remember: DO NOT INCLUDE YOUR NAME ON ANY PAGE OF THE EDITORIAL OR ON THE TITLE PAGE. Your name should only be in the body of the email.

Finally, type the following statement in the body of your email:

I agree to abide by the rules of the contest and to accept the decision of judges as final. I am not a child or guardian of someone who is a full-time or part-time employee of the competition sponsors, the Austin American-Statesman, AMD or 3M. I agree, if selected as a winner, to permit the use of my name, photo and entry in contest promotional materials. All work submitted by me for this contest is my own.

Editorial Cartoon Entries

Cartoons were originally designed to carry messages to people who couldn't read. Today, editorial cartoons have become a sophisticated means for observing society, expressing opinions on issues and getting a reaction from people. Today's editorial cartoon plays a key role in interpreting the world in which we live.

Rules for submitting an editorial cartoon:

Editorial cartoons can be hand-drawn or computer-rendered.

Entries must NOT depict pornographic, libelous or other inappropriate images.

Entries should be JPGs or PDFs under 2MB.

Entries include a one-page explanation with the title of the cartoon and a brief explanation about the message.

Do not put your name on any page of entry (including the explanation page).

Email your editorial entry to nie@statesman.com (see submission rules below).

Tips for a successful editorial entry:

Use cartoon techniques:

Caricature – Distorting a person's features in a way that makes the person still recognizable.

Stereotyping – Showing all persons of one group (religious, racial, etc.) as looking and acting the same.

Symbols – Using a sign or object to stand for something else, for example the Uncle Sam figure represents the U.S.

Satire – Pointing out something that seems wrong and ridiculing it.

Labels – Using written words to identify figures or causes.

Editorial Cartoon Entries Continued

Submitting your editorial cartoon entry:

Email your editorial entry to nie@statesman.com.

Type "**Scholarship Competition**" in the subject line.

Attach your entry documents – the cartoon and explanation page.

The body of the email must contain:

student's name, home address, phone number, grade level and school name, the name of the teacher or parent sponsoring the student's entry, and the title of the editorial cartoon.

Remember: **DO NOT INCLUDE YOUR NAME ON ANY PAGE OF THE EDITORIAL OR ON THE EXPLANATION PAGE.** Your name should only be in the body of the email.

Finally, type the following statement in the body of your email:

I agree to abide by the rules of the contest and to accept the decision of judges as final. I am not a child or guardian of someone who is a full-time or part-time employee of the competition sponsors, the Austin American-Statesman, AMD or 3M. I agree, if selected as a winner, to permit the use of my name, photo and entry in contest promotional materials. All work submitted by me for this contest is my own.

ENTERING THE COMPETITION

Submit your entry using the official entry form found on the Newspapers in Education website or email your entries to nie@statesman.com.

Remember, **do not** put your name on the entry documents. There should be nothing to identify you on the title page, editorial or on the editorial cartoon.

Here is what we need to know about you in the body of the email you send with your entry:

Student's Name, Address and Phone Number

Grade Level and School Name

Word Count for Editorial Entry (if applicable)

Editorial Title (if applicable)

Editorial Cartoon Title (if applicable)

The name of the teacher or parent sponsoring the student's entry

Include this statement in your email:

I agree to abide by the rules of the contest and to accept the decision of judges as final. I am not a child or guardian of someone who is a full-time or part-time employee of the competition sponsors, the Austin American-Statesman, AMD or 3M. I agree, if selected as a winner, to permit the use of my name, photo and entry in contest promotional materials. All work submitted by me for this contest is my own.

**Entries should be emailed by
5 p.m. Wednesday, March 2, 2010**

Helpful Hints and Reminders

Make sure your entry is attached to the email you send. Whether you use our fill-able PDF form, or you are emailing the entry directly, make sure you remember to attach the entry.

Do not include your name on any page of your entry. We need your personal information in the body of the email. Your attachment should not have your name on any page.

The deadline to enter is March 2, 2010. Send your entry early and ask questions before the deadline has passed.

Email questions to nie@statesman.com.

Research the topic. The more facts you have to put in your editorial, the better.

The Statesman
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