



Virginia War Memorial's 2023 Veterans Day Essay Contest

Prompt: Write about a Virginian who served in the United States military during the Korean War era whose story inspires you.

July of 2023 marked the seventy-year anniversary of the conclusion of the Korean War (1950-1953). To honor those men and women who served in the military during the war in Asia, the Virginia War Memorial is calling on all students to write about a service member who inspires them.

The subject of your essay may be someone your family knows or knew personally, or it may be the story of a Virginia Korean War era veteran that you have researched. When selecting the subject of your essay, consider your family, members of your community, or others whose stories resonate with you personally. He or she may be from any branch of the military and have served at any time during the Korean War. Consider what lessons they have taught you, and what we could all learn from their example. Your essay should focus on their time in service, though you may also address their time as a civilian or veteran if relevant.

You may develop your response through speaking with an individual, speaking with people who knew them, and using primary sources. Personal interviews are encouraged, but feel free to utilize newspaper records, personal stories, military records, letters, books, internet research, or more to tell us about your subject and why they inspire you.

A great place for information about Virginians who served in the Korean War is the archives at the Virginia War Memorial. Archivist Sylvia Marshall has access to archival material and oral histories that can help you to create an essay. Feel free to reach out to her at Sylvia.Marshall@dvs.virginia.gov and let her know that you are researching for the Veteran's Day Essay Contest. The Virginia Military Dead Database created by the Library of Virginia is another great resource.

Successful essays will have a clear focus, address the theme directly, and use a combination of cited sources and personal experiences. Students must properly cite their sources in a bibliography (APA or MLA style) and include the bibliography with their submission. Entries will be judged on clarity of thought, grammar, spelling, and punctuation, and adherence to the contest theme and guidelines.

The Virginia War Memorial Veterans Day Essay Contest is open to all Virginia Middle and High School public, private, or homeschooled students. A winning entry will be chosen from the 6th-8th grade group, and from the 9th-12th grade group. Submissions must be between 500-750 words, incorporate at least one primary source, and include an APA or MLA style bibliography.

Winners of the 2023 Essay Contest will receive a prize package through McDonalds of Richmond and Hampton Roads. Awardees will be invited to read their winning essays at the Commonwealth's Veterans Day Ceremony, to be held Friday, November 10, 2023, at 11:00am. Entries should be submitted electronically through the Virginia War Memorial's website by 11:59pm on Sunday, October 15th.

Entries received after this time will not be considered. To submit your essay and review rules and guidelines, please visit <https://vawarmemorial.org/learn/contests-scholarships/essay/>. Contact Crystal Coon, VWM Assistant Director of Education at crystal.coon@dvs.virginia.gov with additional questions.

The Virginia War Memorial Foundation proudly supports the educational and patriotic programs offered by the Virginia War Memorial.