



CELEBRATING 77 YEARS OF SERVING THE YOUTH OF JEFFERSON CITY (1946 – 2023)  
P.O. Box 105095, JEFFERSON CITY, MO 65110-5095

September 13, 2023

#### CONTACTS

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#### OPTIMIST SCHOLARSHIP OPPORTUNITIES 2023-2024

“Optimist International, founded in 1919, is now into its’ 2nd Century” of helping the youth of local communities, and our **Optimist Club of Jefferson City** is encouraging area students, under the age of 19 as of October 1, 2023, to participate in **one of three different Optimist sponsored scholarship opportunities**. This year’s **ESSAY CONTEST, ORATORICAL CONTEST** and **COMMUNICATION CONTEST for the DEAF and HARD of HEARING (CCDHH)** each offer **\$2,500** college scholarships to the District winners. There are **different deadline submission dates for each of the Scholarship opportunity contests below**.

1. This year's **Essay subject: “Optimism: How It Connects Us”** represents the Optimist International organizational theme for 2023-2024. Contestants must be **under the age of 19 as of October 1, 2023, and have not yet completed secondary school or its equivalent**. Each participant will be required to complete an application and submit it along with the essay. The essay must contain at least 700 words but no more than 800 words (every word in the essay is counted - but does not include the Title, bibliography or foot notes; and hyphenated words count as one word). Further guidance on official contest rules may be found on the application itself which must be submitted with the essay along with a copy of the student's birth-certificate or passport to validate age eligibility. The **deadline for submission of ESSAY contest** will be **January 19, 2024**, and contest application, original essay, and copy of birth certificate or passport should be mailed to Optimist Club of Jefferson City, P.O. Box 105095, Jefferson City, MO 65110 to arrive no later than January 19, 2024. Local winners will receive a medal award and advance to District competition to compete for a \$2500 college scholarship.

2. The Optimist Club will hold a **combined gender ORATORICAL Contests** with boys and girls. Interested students should prepare their own speech on **this year's topic: “How to Change the World with Optimism”**. Contestants must be **under the age of 19 as of October 1, 2023, and have not yet completed secondary school or its equivalent**. The contestants may receive advice in the preparation of the speech and may make minor changes or improvements in the speech at any time. The official contest rules are found on the application itself. The speech should be at least four minutes but not longer than five minutes, and any quotations or copyrighted material used in the speech must be identified verbally during the

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The first part of the document is a letter from the President of the United States to the Vice President. The letter is dated October 10, 2018, and is addressed to the Vice President. The letter discusses the President's plans for the future of the United States and the role of the Vice President. The President expresses his confidence in the Vice President and his commitment to the United States.

The second part of the document is a letter from the Vice President to the President. The letter is dated October 10, 2018, and is addressed to the President. The letter discusses the Vice President's plans for the future of the United States and the role of the President. The Vice President expresses his confidence in the President and his commitment to the United States.

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presentation and in the written copy of the speech with the original author's name. The **Optimist Oratorical Contest** gives young people the chance to speak before others and gain confidence in public speaking. All contestants at each level of competition must furnish a **copy of their birth-certificate or passport** to validate age, **with their entry application** before competing. Local winners at the Club level will receive medallions and advance to Zone, Regional, and District competition to compete for a \$2,500 first place; \$1,500 second place; and \$1,000 third place scholarships at District level. The **deadline for submitting ORATORICAL applications to the Club will be February 16, 2024**, and the Club level contests will be held **March 4, 2024**, with backup date March 18, 2024. If contestants would like mentoring prior to the contest, please indicate that on your application. Return your **application, a written copy of the speech and copy of birth certificate or passport** to the Optimist Club of Jefferson City, P.O. Box 105095, Jefferson City, MO 65110, as early as possible to allow time for a mentor to assist. Remember, the club contest is only 16-days beyond the **application deadline, February 16, 2024**, so don't wait until the deadline to request a mentor. The District winner will advance to the International Regional level to compete for an additional \$5,000 1<sup>st</sup> place scholarship and the chance to advance to the International World championship level to compete for \$15,000, \$10,000, and \$7,500 scholarships (1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup>, and 3<sup>rd</sup> places). **Overall, the Oratorical winner has the potential to win a total of \$22,500 in college scholarships.** The Optimist International World championship contest will be held during June 2024, at St. Louis University (SLU), St. Louis, Missouri.

3. Our Optimist Club also sponsors a **Communication Contest for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing (CCDHH)** designed to offer young people who are deaf or hard of hearing the opportunity to present their thoughts in a public forum. This experience helps contestants develop the skills and confidence to present in sign or orally to a large audience. The program also provides a valuable opportunity to compete for a \$2,500 college scholarship. Contestants make a 4-5 minute presentation on **this year's assigned topic: "How to Change the World with Optimism"** and will compete at the District level for the \$2,500 scholarship. Contestants must be **under the age of 19 as of October 1, 2023, and have not yet completed secondary school or its equivalent.** Contestants must submit the result of an audiogram (or Cochlear Implant Programming Report) completed no longer than 24 months prior to the date of the contest by a qualified audiologist. Contestants must be certified to have an **uncorrected** hearing loss of 40 decibels or more, which must be supported by the audiogram (or CI Programming Report) in order to be eligible to compete. Contestants attending either public or schools providing special services are eligible to enter if criteria are met. Students may use sign language or oral presentation or a combination of both to compete. The **deadline for submitting your application to the club is March 31, 2024.** The District level contest will be held at the West Missouri Optimist (WEMO) conference on **May 11, 2024**, at Inn of Grand Glaze, Lake Ozark, MO. If you plan to compete in the CCDHH contest please contact Richard Teubner, chairperson, at (816)-390-0013 or email: [richard.teubner@yahoo.com](mailto:richard.teubner@yahoo.com).

Club President Richard Teubner stated, "As Optimists, it is our goal to encourage our young people and do what we can to bring out the best in each of them. This gives them a wonderful opportunity to tap into their creativity and pursue possible scholarships at the same time." The Optimist Club of Jefferson City has been serving the youth in the community since June 1946.

Optimist International is one of the world's largest service club organizations with over 88,000 adult and youth members in more than 2,500 clubs in the United States, Canada, the Caribbean and Mexico and throughout the world. Proudly supporting the motto "**Bringing Out the Best in Kids**," Optimists conduct over 65,000 positive service projects that reach more than 6,000,000 young people each year. To learn more about Optimist International, please call 800-500-8130 or visit the organization's website at [www.optimist.org](http://www.optimist.org). The Jefferson City Optimist Club can be contacted by email at [JCOptimists@gmail.com](mailto:JCOptimists@gmail.com); on Facebook at [Optimist Club of Jefferson City](#); or by writing the Optimist Club of Jefferson City, P.O. Box 105095, Jefferson City, MO 65110.

Respectfully yours,

*Walter B Shull*

Walter B. Shull,  
Optimist Club Youth Activities Chairman

**Enclosures:** Optimist International Youth Contests 2023-2024 Flyer; Three copies for each of the Official Entry Form Applications with the contest rules (feel free to duplicate additional copies of the applications/rules) or you can download them from the Optimist website: [<https://www.optimist.org/member/scholarships1.cfm>](https://www.optimist.org/member/scholarships1.cfm); and then click on either, Essay Contest, Oratorical Contest or CCDHH contest box respectively, then click on application.