

GAO AFRICAN AMERICAN HISTORY MONTH 2010 ESSAY ORATORICAL CONTEST

SPONSOR:

The United States Government Accountability Office (GAO)

THEME:

"The History of Black Economic Empowerment"

The need for economic development has long been a central element of black life. After a long history of toil as slaves, African Americans gained their freedom but found themselves in a struggle to make a living. The chains were gone but unfortunately racism was everywhere. Pushing against the odds, African Americans became landowners, skilled workers, small businessmen and women, ministers, and professionals. The 2010 theme reflects on this history of economic self-empowerment. It also draws our attention to the need to sustain and expand upon previous growth in this area. Lastly, the theme is in honor of the centennial of the National Urban League, the frontier organization created in 1910 to address the needs of African Americans as they migrated to the various cities in the United States.

CHALLENGE:

The challenge here is to reflect upon the history of Black economic empowerment and the ability to continue to make progress despite the current economic climate the country finds itself in. In so doing, students may select a person, group, or issue relevant to this discussion. Students may consider one or more of the following issues in their research or may independently select a relevant issue to address:

1. Describe what "Black Economic Empowerment" means to you and your generation personally.
2. Provide your own tribute to the National Urban League by tracing their history and discussing their contributions to black economic empowerment.
3. With Jim Crow laws firmly in the past, discuss the modern day challenges to black economic empowerment.
4. In 1997, then National Urban League President Hugh B. Price said that black economic power is the final frontier separating African Americans from the American dream. Discuss whether or not you think that frontier has been reached. If not, discuss what your generation will do about it.
5. If you were President of the United States, describe what your economic stimulus package would be.

ELIGIBILITY:

Sophomore, junior, and senior (10th through 12th grades) high school students currently enrolled in Washington, DC, public high schools are eligible to participate. First place winners of this contest are ineligible for future contests.

GUIDELINES:

Students will conduct theme-based research and submit a double-spaced typewritten essay of 700 to 1,000 words. The essays will be orally presented in 10 minutes or less to a panel of judges. Students should be professionally dressed in business or business/casual attire (slacks, blouses or shirts, dresses, skirts, etc. but no jeans, mini-skirts or other weekend type attire). Essays and oral presentations may be reproduced in GAO videotapes, in printed newsletters, GAO productions, and other announcements of the contest and results.

Each participating school should designate a teacher or administrator to serve as the student’s sponsor. Sponsors should: prepare and submit the reply form (intent to participate) and student essays no later than Wednesday, February 3, 2010; advise, assist, and accompany contestants for this competition; and enter at least one but no more than three students from each participating high school.

RESPONSE DATE (Intent to Participate):

Sponsor’s reply form and student essays must be received by the deadline date of Wednesday, February 3, 2010.

ADDITIONAL CONTEST DATES:

Students will present their essays in a semifinal round and a final round of competition. A private, semifinal competition will be held in person on Friday, February 5, 2010, from 9am until noon before a small panel of judges. The final competition will be held during African American History Month on Friday, February 19, 2010, before a GAO-wide audience from noon – 3:30 pm. Each competition will be held at the GAO Building located at 441 G Street, NW, Washington, DC.

PRIZES AWARDED:

- First place ----- \$1000 & Certificate
- Second place----- \$750 & Certificate
- Third place----- \$500 & Certificate
- Honorable Mentions (2) ----- \$300 & Certificate
- All contestants receive certificates and GAO mementos.

JUDGING:

Written entries are judged and awardee selections are based on: timeliness of the essay submission; relevance of the research and analysis to the theme; and quality, quantity, style, accuracy, completeness, currency, organization, and originality of presentations. Oral presentation evaluation factors include: stage presence, poise, and confidence; credible and convincing presentation; connection with the audience; voice projection; pronunciation; and articulation. Students should be professionally dressed in business or business/casual attire. Decisions of the judges are final.

SUBMISSION SUMMARY:

Intent to participate forms and student essays must be received by February 3, 2010. In person presentations are conducted on February 5 (semi-finals) and February 19 (finals), 2010. All three dates are mandatory. For additional information or details, contact GAO by mail, fax, email, or telephone as shown below. For prompt receipt, faxing or emailing is the preferred method of delivery. Please call to confirm receipt.

Mail	GAO's African American History Month Essay/Oratorical Contest Attn: Shirley A. Jones, Esq., Assistant General Counsel U.S. Government Accountability Office 441 G Street, NW, Room 7T43 Washington, DC 20548
Email	jonessa@gao.gov
Telefax	202-512-3445
Telephone	202-512-8156

GAO AFRICAN AMERICAN HISTORY MONTH ESSAY-ORATORICAL CONTEST

NOTICE OF INTENT TO PARTICIPATE

Name of Student Participant _____

Student's Grade _____

Address _____

Telephone _____
Number

Topic of Speech _____

School _____

Sponsor _____

Telephone Number _____

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