



BIXBY OPTIMIST CLUB

CONTACT  
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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
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### **Local Optimist Club to Sponsor Oratorical Contest for Students**

Bixby, Oklahoma – The Optimist Club of Bixby is encouraging area students to speak their minds about the topic of “For Me, Optimism is ... ” as part of the Optimist International Oratorical Contest for 2009.

The Optimist Club will judge the local students’ speeches based on content and presentation to determine the top winners. Winners will receive a medal and a cash prize and the winning speeches will be sent to the zone level, and possibly the district level for the opportunity to win college scholarships.

Students under the age of 16 as of December 31, 2008, are eligible to participate.

“As they prepare for their future, many of our local students need experience expressing their thoughts and opinions to an audience,” Club President Judy Evans said. “The Oratorical Contest challenges them to do just that and also offers an opportunity for scholarships. In this way, our club hopes to bring out the best in each of them and help them achieve their goals for the future.”



The deadline to hand in speeches is April 13<sup>th</sup>, 2009. Students wishing to participate in the oratorical contest can find out more about the contest by contacting the club at (918) 366-0215 or sbevard@olp.net.

The Optimist Club of Bixby has been participating in the Optimist Oratorical Contest for several years and has been active in the community since 1974. Other programs and service projects that the Club is involved in include Essay contest, Leadership Luncheon, Miss Bixby Scholarship Pageant and the Green Corn Festival.

Optimist International is one of the world's largest service club organizations with 120,000 adult and youth members in 3,800 clubs in the United States, Canada, the Caribbean and Mexico and throughout the world. The Optimist Oratorical Contest is one of the organization's most popular programs, with more than 2,000 clubs participating annually. Carrying the motto "Bringing Out the Best in Kids," Optimists conduct positive service projects that reach more than six million young people each year. To learn more about Optimist International, please call (314) 371-6000 or visit the organization's website at [www.optimist.org](http://www.optimist.org).

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# Application for the 2008-2009 Optimist International Oratorical Contest

Name \_\_\_\_\_  
 Address \_\_\_\_\_  
 City \_\_\_\_\_  
 State/Province \_\_\_\_\_ Zip/Postal Code \_\_\_\_\_  
 Telephone ( \_\_\_\_\_ ) \_\_\_\_\_ E-mail \_\_\_\_\_  
 Date of Birth \_\_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_\_ Sex Male Female  
 Have you participated in any other Optimist Club's Oratorical Contest this school year?  
 Yes  No

Please send application to address below

Contestant Agreement  
*I have studied the rules of the contest, and I will be bound by all of the requirements.*  
 Contestant's Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_  
 Parent or Guardian Permission:  
*I give my permission for my child to participate in this contest.*  
 Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_  
 Relationship \_\_\_\_\_  
 Sponsoring Optimist Club Name \_\_\_\_\_  
 Sponsoring Optimist Club Number \_\_\_\_\_  
 Please send application to address below

**Topic: "For Me, Optimism is..."**  
**Official Rules**

**Section I — General Rules**

1. The Optimist International Oratorical contest will begin at the Club level, proceed to the Zone level and end with a contest at the District level.
2. Contestants must enter through a local Optimist Club.
3. The official application must be completed by each contestant and submitted to the sponsoring Club's Contest Chair.
4. The District has the right to decide whether to have a combined gender contest or a separate gender contest.
5. No Zone, Regional or District level contest shall have fewer than 3 or more than 20 contestants competing.
6. Optimist International has the right to edit, publish and record any speech used in any contest without payment to the author.

**Section II — Qualifications For Contestants**

1. The contest is open to students under the age of 16 as of December 31st of the 2008-2009 school year. Contestants must be educated in the United States, Canada and the Caribbean. There is no minimum age.
2. A contestant is eligible to enter/compete in only one Optimist Oratorical contest during a contest year.
3. Each contestant shall prepare his or her own speech. The contestant may receive advice in the preparation of the speech and may make minor changes or improvements in the speech at any time.
4. A student who has won a District Oratorical scholarship is not eligible to compete at any level of the competition again.
5. All contestants at each level of the contest must furnish a birth certificate with their entry before competing.

**Section III — Contest Rules**

1. All contestants must speak on the official topic.
2. A speech may be delivered in a language other than English if the language used is an official language of the country in which the sponsoring Club is located.
3. All contestants must state the official topic before beginning their speech in order for the timekeeper to record the exact time of the speech. A 3-point penalty is automatically assessed by the timekeeper for failure to state the official topic.
4. Any quotation or copyrighted material used in the speech must be identified verbally during the presentation and in the written copy of the speech with the original author's name. The contestant shall be fully responsible for the use of any quoted material and Optimist International shall assume no responsibility. Failure to identify non-original material will result in disqualification.
5. The use of props, special costumes or clothing, or the use of prompters will not be permitted. The penalty will be disqualification. Notes and lecterns can be used if the contestant desires.
6. The time allowed will be not under 4 minutes or over 5 minutes. Contestants going over or under will not be cautioned, and will be penalized one point for each 15 seconds or fraction of over or under the allotted time. This penalty will be determined by the official timekeeper.
7. Timing will begin immediately after the official topic is expressed. Any salutation to judges, audience, etc. should precede the announcement of the topic. Timing will stop when the contestant finishes.
8. No reference can be made that identifies the student, parents, school, community, sponsoring Optimist Club or District. This will result in a deduction of 5 points or a fraction of based on the degree of identification.

**Section IV — Scoring**

- Scoring in all Club, Zone and District contests will conform to the following criteria.
1. Poise – appearance and personality: 20 points
  2. Content of Speech – subject adherence, theme, content, logic and color: 35 points
  3. Delivery & Presentation – voice, volume, pronunciation, gestures, eye contact, sincerity and emphasis: 35 points
  4. Overall Effectiveness – appeal, impression, attitude and effect: 10 points

**Section V — Penalties**

1. Failure to announce the official topic - 3 points
2. Failure to identify non-original material - disqualification
3. Use of props, etc. – disqualification
4. Time penalties – 1 point for each 15 seconds or fraction of over or under the allotted time
5. Self-identification – 5 points or fraction of based on degree of identification

**Section VI — Awards**

1. Club level – medalion
  2. Zone level – plaque
  3. Regional level – plaque
  4. District – plaque and scholarship
- A. Each winner of the District level contest will receive a scholarship for use at a college, university or trade school only. In a combined gender contest, there will be two winners awarded \$1,500 each, or three winners awarded scholarships of \$1,500, \$1,000 and \$500 respectively for first, second and third place. In Districts conducting separate gender contests, the first-place boy and girl will receive a scholarship of \$1,500.
- B. All scholarships will be payable to the educational institution of the recipient's choice, subject to the approval of Optimist International.
- C. All scholarships will be administered by Optimist International.
- D. Scholarships will be held by Optimist International for a period of up to 12 years from the effective date.

**For more information contact:**

SPONSORING CLUB SHOULD POST  
 CONTACT INFORMATION HERE