



March 2025

Dear Teachers of History and Government:

As you plan your Fall 2025 curriculum, we invite you to consider the NSCDA's annual **Congressional Essay Contest topic**. The topic for the 750-word essay this year is **"Describe the principles in the Declaration of Independence you believe are most important in lifting the human condition and explain how they have helped this country meet evolving challenges over our 249 years."**

Winners receive full tuition and varying levels of travel support to our 49th annual **"Congressional Seminar," for one week in late June 2026 (exact dates TBD) in Washington, D.C.** The seminar is an interactive, civic-focused workshop, conducted by NSCDA's long-time non-profit partner, the Workshops Foundation. (workshops.org) The seminar includes a Mock Congress, enabling students to collaborate with peers from varied backgrounds and views to forge public policy on pressing national and international issues.

Participants have the opportunity to exercise their leadership and public-speaking skills. All participants enjoy access to world-class museums, government and congressional offices, and memorable tours. Scholarships cover the cost of university campus housing and meals, along with an additional per diem for lunches on tours off campus.

Your students may enter the contest in one of two ways:

- You assign the essay topic and select as many as 10 top essays to be submitted with students' completed applications (see <https://nscda.org/grants-and-scholarships/congressional-essay-contest/>) to your local Corporate Society of The Colonial Dames.

OR

- Students may submit their own applications and essays directly online at the NSCDA drop box (accessible at <https://nscda.org/grants-and-scholarships/congressional-essay-contest/>)

Please print and post **the contest poster**, providing submission instructions and highlighting the benefits of the contest.

(see <https://nscda.org/grants-and-scholarships/congressional-essay-contest/>)

The deadline for submissions is December 1, 2025. For any questions or concerns, please feel free to contact me at any time. We hope to receive your students' thoughtful essays.

Best regards,

Susan Sheeren

Congressional Essay Contest Vice Chair

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