

YWCA Darien/Norwalk 2019 Stand Against Racism Essay Contest

- **Submission:** It is preferred that essays be submitted via email. Each participant can submit *one* entry for consideration (per year). Submissions should be made to exec@ywcadn.org and include 2019 Stand Against Racism Essay Contest in the subject line. Mailed/in person submissions should be submitted to:

The YWCA Darien/Norwalk
49 Old Kings Highway North
Darien, CT 06820

- **Submissions Terms of Agreement:**

By submitting an essay the applicant and their parent/guardian is agreeing to the terms and conditions outlined below, as well as to the validity of the information submitted.

1. All submissions become the property of YWCA Darien/Norwalk
2. The applicant and parent/guardian certify that the essay being submitted is exclusively the work of the applicant.
3. If the applicant's essay is chosen for one of the prizes the applicant and parent/guardian agree that they will make themselves available for photographs and/or videos and such photos and/or videos as well as the essay may be used for publicity including media distribution by the YWCA Darien/Norwalk.
4. The awards ceremony for this contest

- **Personal Information Required**

Each submission should include the following, which is not included in the total word count:

First Name: _____ Last Name: _____
Address: _____
Address: _____
Town: _____
School: _____ Grade: _____
Home Phone: _____ Cell Phone: _____
Email Address: _____
Essay Title: _____
Essay Submission Date: _____

- **Deadline:** The 2019 Essay Contest Deadline is Monday, April 22nd. Entries received via email after Midnight EST on that day will not be considered. Submissions made via U.S. Mail must be postmarked by Monday, April 22nd. Submissions made in person must be received at the YWCA Darien/Norwalk by 2:00 p.m., Monday, April 22nd.
- **Length:**
 - **High School** - Essays should be no longer than 750 words..
 - **Middle School** - Essays should be no longer than 500 words.

These are *maximum* word counts; if your response to the prompt can be *clearly* and *powerfully* communicated in fewer words, that is great.
- **Eligibility:** The contest is open to middle school and high school students that live in Darien or Norwalk. Students entering the contest that attend a private school may enter the contest for the town of their primary residence, regardless of the location of their school.
- **Language:** Essays should be written in English and represent the youth's original work.

- **Original Work:** A teacher/sponsor can provide pre-writing activities and appropriate review, editing, and translation support, but the ideas, content, structure and style of the actual essay MUST come from the youth alone.
- **Titling Documents for Submission:** To help us organize and manage the files that are submitted, please use the following guidelines when titling your document prior to submission. **Essays that are not saved with this naming format will lose 3 of a total possible 60 points in the review process.**
 - Name the file "LastnameFirstinitial_Essay2019GradeLevel". For example, our 8th grade student Mary Jones would title her essay "JonesM_Essay2019Grade8".
- **Winners/Prizes:** A panel of reviewers selected by the YWCA Darien/Norwalk will judge entries and will award one Winner for each of the following categories:
 - High School – Darien - \$250 prize
 - High School – Norwalk - \$250 Prize
 - Middle School – Darien (grades 6-8) - \$100 Prize
 - Middle School – Norwalk (grades 6-8) - \$100 Prize

Winners will be announced and awards presented the week of April 29, 2019.

- **Evaluation Criteria:** Each submission is read by at least two reviewers. Essays will be evaluated using the following criteria:
 - **Addresses Prompt**—The essay effectively takes into account the entirety of the prompt. Please do not submit an essay that is being used as your "college essay." If an essay does not make an earnest attempt to address the Contest's prompt, it will not be considered for review.
 - **Focus**—The thesis/main message is clear and supported throughout. The essay does not stray from the main message.
 - **Organization & Structure**—The essay is organized and well-structured. Author demonstrates command of grammar, spelling and mechanics.
 - **Voice/Originality**—The essay uses a highly engaging and personal style. The author finds fresh or interesting ways to convey ideas. The author approaches the topic from a unique perspective.

Evidence of Personal Reflection—The essay demonstrates that the author has genuinely explored the topic/question and how it relates to his or her own life. The essay reflects a depth in reflection.

Prompt: In American culture we say that someone has a blind spot about something, meaning they are unable to understand it or see how important it is. When it comes to racism in our everyday lives people often have a blind spot regarding their own biases. What would you define as your (or our communities) blind spot and how can it be removed?