

First Amendment Essay Contest to Award Prizes

Oklahoma high school students and college undergraduates can win cash prizes by entering the 2009 First Amendment Congress Essay Contest, sponsored by FOI Oklahoma Inc. Entrants have until Oct. 2 to submit their essays.

For this year's essay, young writers are asked to consider the question: "What is the impact of Internet news, blogs, and social networking sites on the traditional role of the media as a watchdog of government activity?"

Entries should be about 500 words, typed, double-spaced, including the student's name, grade, school, mailing address, phone number and e-mail address. Entries must be e-mailed to *The Oklahoman's* News Research Editor, Linda Lynn, at LLynn@oklahoman.com.

Prizes will be awarded to the first-, second-, and third-place winners in both high school and college categories.

High School winners will be recognized on Oct. 28 during the First Amendment Congress Education Day at Tom Steed Center in Midwest City. College winners will be honored Oct. 29 during the event's Professional Day at *The Oklahoman* in Oklahoma City.

FOI Oklahoma Inc is a statewide organization formed to educate the public and elected officials about rights guaranteed by the First Amendment and to promote openness in government. This marks the eleventh year the group has hosted a First Amendment Congress to discuss these fundamental freedoms.

For questions concerning the essay contest, contact Linda Lynn at 405-475-3676. For information about the 2009 First Amendment Congress, contact Kay Bickham at 405-341-3169.