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[Home](#) > [Resources](#) > [Printer-friendly PDF](#)

Contests, Competitions, and Scholarships

Tags: [competitions](#) [contests](#) [high school](#) [HSLDA](#) [recognition](#) [rewards](#) [scholarships](#)



Dear Friends,

This month marks the second anniversary of HSLDA's Homeschooling Thru High School program. You, our readers, have energized and encouraged us by reading and responding to our newsletters, using our resources, and visiting our website. We thank you!

June brings thoughts of those lazy days of summer soaking up the sun while enjoying the great outdoors. If your solitude is punctuated with cries of "I'm bored!" we may have just the solution for you! Why not use the summer to explore contests/competitions which may be available to your children and use this free time to begin preparing for them. Or, begin researching sources for scholarships for your children who are approaching high school graduation. Let us get you started on your search.

CONTESTS/COMPETITIONS

Having opportunities for your children to showcase their talents and abilities gives them a desire to develop those areas and motivates them to pursue excellence.

Our [Homeschooling Thru High School](#) website includes a section on competitions where you can begin your search. Some of these contests call for individual entrants while others require team participation. Some contests or competitions listed on our website may have deadlines that have already passed for the 2007 awards, but most of them are yearly so plan now to enter next year's competition.

HSLDA also sponsors contests each year for all ages. We run contests for essays, photography, art, and poetry. Cash prizes are awarded, and part of the small entry fee goes to the Home School Foundation as it assists needy homeschooling families. If you are involved in a support group, co-op, or group class, why not encourage all of the teens involved to send in an entry to one of HSLDA's contests? They'll have fun participating, and will also have the extra satisfaction of knowing that a homeschool widow, single mom, or needy family will be helped in the process. [Click here](#) to view past contest winners. Themes and further information on upcoming contests will be announced and posted in mid-September.

Another good source of information, especially at the local level, will be your state homeschooling organization. It may be able to direct you to competitions available in your area. This information may also be found on its website.

If your child is a writer, put those talents to good use and suggest that your teen consider sending an article to a magazine that publishes student works. We've listed [some you may like to try](#).

And if your teen has both writing and art skills, then [Landmark Edition's David Melton Memorial](#) Written & Illustrated by... Contest for Students may be just what you are looking for as well as [Scholastic's Art and Writing Awards](#).

From time to time, members send us information on contests which are open to homeschool participation and we will blog the information encouraging our readers to take advantage of these opportunities. To check some of these possibilities out, you can read our blog at <http://www.hsllda.org/mlink.asp?id=4175> and quickly scroll through the current entries as well as those in the blog archive.

Also, if you come across a contest which excludes homeschoolers, you may want to contact the sponsor of the contest and petition them to open the contest to homeschoolers. In most cases, the sponsor is not deliberately choosing to exclude

homeschoolers, but it may just need a polite and reasoned explanation of why homeschoolers should be allowed to enter.

AWARDS/RECOGNITIONS

Other contests may award an honor such as the Congressional Award to show that your child completed a rigorous program. Homeschoolers have done very well in this program, and your teen may be motivated to read about other [students who have won this award in the past](#). Still other organizations may offer prizes such as a trip to tour an area or to participate in a forum on the national level. Generation Joshua sponsors the Benjamin Rush Awards Program where entrants can win prizes, a trip to Washington, D.C., or even a Patrick Henry College scholarship. [Click here](#) for more details.

Did you know it is possible for homeschool students to be recognized for outstanding academic/leadership abilities? Although the National Honor Society does not consider homeschool students eligible for its organization, there are other entities that recognize the academic achievements of homeschoolers. We've listed [several of these options](#).

Records of these awards and recognitions should be kept to add to your children's resumes or extracurricular activity sheets which may be requested by colleges, employers, or military recruiters. They are indications that your children are hard working, persevering, and capable of achieving a level of expertise.

SCHOLARSHIP RESOURCES

Many of the competitions available to students have monetary rewards. Money is not only a great motivator, but can also offer an opportunity for your child to earn scholarships for his or her future plans. By way of definition, scholarships are free money awarded to persons who successfully meet the goals set forth by a panel of judges, a committee, or an individual. Scholarships can be awarded as a result of a competition, for academic excellence, or based on financial need. Some sources of scholarship money include your employer (or your student's employer), local fraternal organizations, and large national corporations. As an example, [one fast food chain](#) offers its student employees scholarship help for college, so don't overlook the obvious. Also search your public library for books that list a variety of scholarships and provide you with the eligibility requirements for applying.

Some competitions will offer scholarships which will be earmarked for post-high school education. Others will simply be awarded to the participant to be used at his or her discretion. As a tip, don't wait until your child is a senior in high school to begin researching scholarship possibilities. Throughout the high school years, encourage your child to explore the possibilities and take charge of the hunt! Again, if you need [a place to start](#), we've done the legwork for you.

Next month, we'll take a look at some tips for helping your child balance his high school activities from schoolwork to part-time jobs to activities to volunteer work to...are you tired yet? If you or your child is feeling overwhelmed while juggling all of these activities, then perhaps a good look at time management would be beneficial. Stay tuned....

Until then, it remains our joy to support you and applaud your investment in your teen's life,

Becky Cooke and Diane Kummer
HSLDA High School Coordinators



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