Looking Back • Thinking Forward

The year 2020 will mark twenty-five years since the bombing of the Alfred P. Murrah Federal Building in Oklahoma City. Since then, much has changed in the United States and the world, yet much is still the same. You were not alive in 1995, but perhaps you understand what life was like for young people and/or have some perceptions of what society was like in general at that time. Family members and other adults who remember April 19, 1995, may have also influenced your perception of what society was like during that period.

The essay committee at the Oklahoma City National Memorial & Museum is deeply interested in what you, the young people of the United States, think about the state of your community, especially in comparison to your perception of how things have changed in the past twenty-five years. The essay committee is also curious about your thoughts on our society going forward—what are your beliefs about the future of your community, nation, and world? Do you feel hopeful? Why or why not?

Allegiance Credit Union is proud to sponsor the Oklahoma City National Memorial & Museum Essay Contest for the 12th consecutive year. On April 19, 1995, the then Federal Employees Credit Union, was located on the third floor of the Murrah Building and lost 18 of 33 employees and over 100 members in the bombing. The credit union survived with the support of other credit unions and continues to thrive 25 years later thanks to the Oklahoma City community. “This essay contest is just one of the many ways Oklahoma City National Memorial & Museum is sharing lessons of hope with our young people,” said Amy Downs, Survivor and Allegiance Credit Union President/CEO.
The contest is open to all public, private, parochial or homeschool students in grades 5-12. All student essays must be accompanied by a Student Release and Teacher Registration form. The Teacher Registration form should be completed by a teacher or counselor. Parents may complete the form for students they homeschool. If the student is participating independently, he/she must select a teacher or counselor to review his/her essay and complete the Teacher Registration form. Essays not accompanied by both a Student Release and Teacher Registration form will not be considered for judging.

Grades 5-6 ..........................350 words PRIZES 1st Place.......$100 2nd Place ......$75 3rd Place ......$50
Grades 7-8 ..........................350 words 1st Place.......$150 2nd Place ......$100 3rd Place ......$75
Grades 9-10 ..........................500 words 1st Place.......$200 2nd Place ......$150 3rd Place ......$100
Grades 11-12 ..........................500 words 1st Place.......$500 2nd Place ......$400 3rd Place ......$300

Teachers who submit multiple entries need only submit one Teacher Registration form with the essays. Only one essay per student may be submitted. No names or identifiable information should be on the body of your paper. All entries must be received online, no later than Sunday, February 23, 2020.

Please submit your essay and complete the Student Release form online at MemorialMuseum.com/essaycontest. The Teacher Registration form can also be completed online. In Order To Be Considered, Essays Must Be Submitted Online.

Please make sure the following are completed before submission:
- Have you reviewed your essay for proper grammar and punctuation?
- Has your teacher reviewed your essay and completed the Teacher Registration form?
- Is your Student Release form complete with proper signatures and contact information?
- No names or identifiable information are on the body of your paper.

Essays will be judged by educators and community leaders. The decision of the judges is final. Essays will be judged on originality, adherence to topic, and proper grammar, spelling and punctuation.

The Oklahoma City National Memorial & Museum's 19th Annual Student Essay Contest meets several state and national standards for Language Arts.

Oklahoma English Language Arts Standards - http://sde.ok.gov/sde/language-arts
Common Core National Standards for English Language Arts - http://www.corestandards.org/ELA-Literacy/
National English Language Arts Standards - http://www.ncte.org/standards

Winners will be contacted by phone or email by March 13, 2020. A list of the winners will be posted on the Memorial website, MemorialMuseum.com by March 20, 2020.

All winners will be recognized at a ceremony in April 2020. Winning essays will be available online at MemorialMuseum.com.

Essays not accompanied by both a Student Release and Teacher Registration form will not be considered for judging.
Spend some time talking with an adult you know who remembers life in 1995. Ask them about their view of how our community is different now than it was in 1995. In the adult’s opinion, is the community better and/or worse? In your essay, describe the adult’s view, and share your belief about what you and others can do to improve our community.

**Essay Topics - Grades 5 through 6**  
(Suggested word count, 350 words)  
**Prizes:** 1st Place $100  2nd Place $75  3rd Place $50

**Essay Topics - Grades 7 through 8**  
(Suggested word count, 350 words)  
**Prizes:** 1st Place $150  2nd Place $100  3rd Place $75

Spend some time talking with an adult you know who remembers 1995. Ask them about their view of how our community is different now than it was in 1995, whether for better and/or for worse. In your essay, describe the adult’s view, respond to their view with your own thoughts, and share your belief about what you and others can do to improve our community.

**Essay Topics - Grades 9 through 10**  
(Suggested word count, 500 words)  
**Prizes:** 1st Place $200  2nd Place $150  3rd Place $100

As a society, are we better today than we were in 1995? In what ways are we better—or worse? In what way(s) can we improve, both as individuals and as communities? What ideas do you have for changes that should be made? In your response, you may offer examples from your personal experience, perception, and learning.

**Essay Topics - Grades 11 through 12**  
(Suggested word count, 500 words)  
**Prizes:** 1st Place $500  2nd Place $400  3rd Place $300

As a society, are we better today than we were in 1995? In what ways are we better—or worse? In what way(s) can we improve, both as individuals and as communities? What ideas do you have for changes that should be made? In your response, you may offer examples from your personal experience, perception, and learning.