new york state
~ archives ~

Student Research Awards

2016 Guidelines

Introduction

The New York State Archives announces its twenty-sixth annual Student Research Awards program to promote and recognize excellence in student research. The main purpose of the awards program is to encourage students to explore the wealth of historical records held in historical records repositories* in New York State. A secondary purpose is to increase cooperation between schools and organizations that administer historical records useful for education.

Students, working individually or in groups, develop projects such as research papers, papers reconstructing the past, exhibits, documentaries, performances, PowerPoint entries, websites, or proposals for the designation of a historical marker, property or district. Projects must include an annotated bibliography and use historical records.

Projects are not required to focus on New York State history; however it can be more convenient and engaging to conduct research using historical records that are found locally in libraries, historical societies, local governments, businesses, community organizations, and with individuals and families. Often, the most successful research projects examine an event from a local point of view.

This is a research award contest and, therefore, the final product should answer a research question. Research questions do not have a yes or no answer and can be answered in different ways based on the evidence found in historical records. Research questions often begin with: How, What or Why. For example: Why was New York influential in the outcome of the Civil War?; How did the Erie Canal impact the economy of individual communities?; Why do people break the law?; and How does popular media influence culture?

Students are encouraged to work closely with their teachers, school library media specialists, public librarians and local historians while working on their projects.

*A repository is a facility organized to collect, hold, care for, and provide access to historical records.

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Awards

The Student Research Awards program is a statewide competition open to all New York State students in grades 4-12. A total of three (3) awards will be given; one each for students in the following divisions:

- Grades 4-5
- Grades 6-8
- Grades 9-12

Each award consists of a framed certificate and a cash prize. **To qualify for an award**, all entries must:

- Show a heavy reliance on information from historical records
- Provide an annotated bibliography
- Provide a URL in the annotated bibliography for each online historical record found on the Internet
- Provide a signed entry form

Projects that do not contain historical records, an annotated bibliography, or a signed entry form will be disqualified.

Timetable

Entries must be postmarked no later than July 1, 2016. Award winners will be notified by mid-September. Results of the competition will be formally announced during Archives Month in October 2016. Entries submitted for competition must be researched and developed during the July 1, 2015 – June 30, 2016 school year. Projects can be sent by FedEx, UPS, or USPS to the address on page 1 of these guidelines. Entries submitted by email will not be accepted.

Entry Formats

Students may submit a project on any topic in any of the following formats:

Research Paper

Two categories of research papers are eligible for an award:

(1) Traditional research paper, based on a subject of choice;

(2) A research paper that reconstructs the past by analyzing and interpreting the issues and events mentioned in a historical story, ballad, folksong, folktale, diary, letter, poem, or an oral history interview. (For example: a student uses an 1863 letter written by Colonel Barber in Virginia to his wife in upstate New York as part of a study to reconstruct the colonel's life, in order to show the impact of the Civil War on the life of a New York soldier and his family.) Students must use historical records to analyze and interpret the issues and events mentioned in the folksong, diary, letter, poem, etc. they are using.

Papers must be typed or computer-printed on 8 ½" x 11" paper, 12-point font and double-spaced with pages numbered and no less than 1,000 words (excludes notes, annotated bibliography, illustration captions, and supplemental or appendix materials). Citations such as footnotes or endnotes are required for all sources. Five (5) copies of the paper are required. Papers will not be returned.

PowerPoint Presentations

There is a 500 word count limit for student-composed words including labels and captions. Citations and quotations do not count in the word limit. Copies of the entry must be submitted on five (5) individual DVDs/CDs and must be PC compatible. Submissions will not be returned.

Exhibits

This category does not limit the size of the exhibit, but no larger than 24"x36" is preferred. Tri-folded exhibits are welcome. The exhibit should be shipped in a re-usable carton; exhibits will be returned to the entrants if shipped this way. The State Archives is not responsible for any damage or loss suffered by the exhibit in shipment. Student-composed written materials on the exhibit should contain no more than 500 words including labels and captions. This limit does not apply to quotations or documents that may be used as an integral part of the exhibit. If the exhibit is too large or heavy to be shipped, a videotape, slideshow, or photographs of the exhibit may be submitted instead. Copies of the exhibit labels, text, and any additional information that accompanies the original exhibit must be submitted with the entry.

Documentary

Copies of the documentary must be submitted on five (5) individual DVDs, playable on a computer (using Quicktime) or a DVD player. Five (5) copies of the script must also be included. Entries should be no longer than fifteen (15) minutes. Submissions will not be returned.

Performance

Copies of the performance must be submitted on five (5) individual DVDs, playable on a computer (using Quicktime) or a DVD player. Five (5) copies of the script must also be included. Entries should be no longer than fifteen (15) minutes. Submissions will not be returned.

Websites

There is no word limit on websites. Website entries must have a valid URL address listed on the entry form that will work through the summer. In addition, name of the entrant(s) must appear on the website.

Proposal for a designation for a historical marker, property or district

All proposals must be the result of research using historical records. Proposals must be typed or computer-printed on 8 ½" x 11" paper, use 12-point font and double-spaced with pages numbered. The text length of the proposal must be no less than 1,000 words (excludes notes, annotated bibliography, illustration captions, and supplemental or appendix material). Citations such as footnotes or endnotes are required for all sources. Five (5) copies of the proposal must be submitted. Submissions will not be returned.

All proposals submitted to the State Archives for designating historic properties, districts, or markers are for Student Research Awards purposes only. To officially nominate a site for the State and National Register of Historic Places, visit the website of the New York State Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation, Field Services Bureau. To nominate a site for a historic roadside marker, visit the William G. Pomeroy Foundation website (currently only nominations for events dated between 1740 and 1915 are accepted).

Competition Rules

- All entries must be nominated by teachers, library media specialists, or administrators in the school attended by the student or groups of students. Adult community members such as municipal historians and public librarians may also nominate students. Both individual students and groups of students (including the entire class) may be nominated. All projects must be completely student-created. Entries from home-schooled students are welcome.

- ***An annotated bibliography is required for ALL entries.*** The bibliography should list all primary sources (including historical records) and secondary sources used in preparing the entry. The annotations for each source must explain how the source was used and how it contributed to the project.

    - Students may use the MLA-style or Chicago Manual of Style formats. Students must choose one style format and be consistent throughout the entry.

    - Five (5) printed copies of the annotated bibliography must be submitted

    - Students must list the primary sources used first and then list the secondary sources used in their research. The bibliography may be as long as necessary. When using Internet sources, students must provide the URL to the specific historical record used, not just the general website of the repository.

- Students are encouraged to work with their teacher or school library media specialist while preparing the annotated bibliography. For guidance, visit Purdue University's Online Writing Lab. Examples of annotated bibliographies developed by elementary, middle and high school students can be found on pages 7-8 of these guidelines.

- A substantial portion of the student research must be based on historical records from archives, museums, historical societies, libraries, local governments, community organizations, businesses, families, or individuals. Historical records are ***not*** published copies of documents. They are ***original*** documents created during the time period on which the research is focused. The use of Internet websites, such as those of the New York State Archives, the Library of Congress, and the National Archives, is encouraged. When using Internet sources, students must link to the specific historical record used, not just the general website of the repository, in the annotated bibliography. However, ***the Internet should not be the only source of historical records***. The following are some examples of eligible historical records and where they might be found:

  - **Personal papers**: original letters, diaries, journals, photographs, drawings, and financial records from family collections or archives.

  - **Business records**: ledgers, correspondence, journals, meeting minutes, advertisements, and research and development files. Business records are usually located at the business itself, in the possession of the family that owned the business, or at local archives, libraries, universities, and historical societies.

  - **State and national records**: censuses; vital, property, and probate records; and wills. Copies of these records are often located in local government archives, as well as at local historical societies and libraries, which may have microfilm copies.

  - **Local government records**: minutes of board meetings, tax assessment records, engineering and highway department records, police and court records, budgets and annual reports, and other types of records created by the local governments themselves. These records are usually located at individual local government units, such as school districts, towns, villages, counties, cities, fire districts, public benefit corporations, and BOCES.

  - **Community organization records**: correspondence, speeches, membership lists, financial records, and meeting minutes. Community organizations may include local churches, labor unions, political parties, service clubs, and philanthropic and fraternal groups. The records of these groups may be in the possession of each specific organization, or located at local historical societies, archives, universities, and libraries.

- Students **MUST** use historical records (described in the bullets above), but they may also use published primary source materials to supplement their research. Published primary sources can include board minutes (for example, county board proceedings), broadsides, maps, annual reports, periodicals, or newspapers. Primary source materials can also include items contemporary to the period that is the subject of the research (for example, *Godey's Ladies' Book* to document 19th century fashion, crafts, recipes, etiquette, etc.; *Harper's Weekly* to

document the Civil War years; *Life Magazine* to document the World War II years). All these primary source materials are generally located in special collections of libraries, historical societies, museums, universities, or local governments.

- **Oral history interviews are not eligible** for this awards program. However, such interviews may be used as a historical item as part of a research paper that reconstructs the past (see Research Papers).

- Entries prepared for other competitions (such as History Day) are eligible if they meet other relevant criteria, especially the use of historical records in research.

- Any plagiarism will result in disqualification.

- **All entries must be accompanied by five copies of the signed entry form.**

Judges and Criteria

The Student Research Awards judges include teachers, historians, and archivists. The judges will select the award recipient(s) for each division based on the following criteria:

- To what extent has the student used historical records?

- Does the bibliography display a variety of historical records?

- To what extent has the student used information from these documents?

- Is the entry historically accurate?

- Does the entry demonstrate an understanding of historical context?

- Does the entry show evidence of creativity and imagination in interpreting information from historical records with other information?

- Does the final product answer a research question in depth, using analysis and interpretation of the historical records?

Entry Checklist

As you prepare an entry for competition, use this summary as a checklist. An explanation of competition rules begins on page 4 of these guidelines.

- Did you use historical records in conducting your research?

- Have you included five (5) signed copies of the entry form, annotated bibliography and entry (except for exhibits)?
- Did you include an annotated bibliography?
- Did you include citations, if required?
- Does the final product answer a research question in depth, using analysis and interpretation of the historical records?
- Does your entry meet word length, time and size requirements?
- Are exhibit entries packed in re-usable cartons?
- Are documentaries and/or performances submitted in DVD format and include a script?
- Are computer-based entries PC compatible?
- Did you provide a URL on the entry form for your website entry?
- Did you provide URLs for all online sources listed in your annotated bibliography? Each online source must link to the specific record, not just the institution's homepage.
- Did you meet the July 1, 2016 deadline?

Annotated Bibliography Examples

These examples were taken from previous entries of the Student Research Award contest. Students may use these examples to help create their own annotated bibliographies. For further instructions on creating an annotated bibliography, visit Purdue University's Online Writing Lab.

Elementary School

List of Confederate Soldiers Buried in Woodlawn Cemetery. The Chemung County Historical Society, Elmira, NY.

This source was used to understand how carefully the records for the dead Confederate soldiers were kept.

Middle School

Photograph. Two Young Brothers, Seated for a Family Photograph in the Kovno Ghetto. 1944. United States Holocaust Memorial Museum, Kovno, Lithuania. United States Holocaust Memorial Museum. Web. 29 June 2012. http://www.ushmm.org/wlc/en/media_ph.php?MediaId=559

This photo shows two young Jewish children in a Ghetto during World War II. These children were later deported and killed at a nearby Concentration Camp. You can see how dirty their surroundings are. This is another example of how what happened in WWII led to the creation of the UDHR.

High School

Letter to Edwin Oviatt, November 12, 1909. Rack 7, Shelf 4, Herbert Parsons Yale Alumnus, Knapp House Archives. Rye, NY

While not signed, the letter is from a Yale alum and penned early in the twentieth century, so one could assume they are from a nineteenth century graduating class. This provided the entry with a unique perspective on how the college athletics were viewed prior to their expansion in the early/mid twentieth century.

For More Information

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