



**Arkansas Martin Luther King, Jr. Commission announces
2022 MLK Central Arkansas Essay Contest**

For immediate release

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The mission of the Arkansas Martin Luther King, Jr. Commission, a division of the Arkansas Department of Education, is to promote and preserve the life and legacy of Dr. King in our state; and to promote the principles of nonviolence and equality among all citizens. Our community outreach projects are designed to promote education, an appreciation for history, and to encourage youth to engage in positive leadership development and roles within their communities.

In promoting this message of service, we encourage and challenge the youth of Arkansas to demonstrate what they can do to keep Dr. King’s dream alive and relevant in this 2022 King Holiday: Day of Impact Essay Contest. This experience will increase students’ knowledge about Dr. King, and enhance their language and writing skills, creativity, self-esteem, and character.

The Arkansas Martin Luther King, Jr. Commission announces the 2022 MLK Central Arkansas Essay Contest. The 2022 MLK Essay Contest, sponsored by WalMart and Sam’s Club is designed to connect younger generations to Dr. King’s dream of nonviolence and community service. The contest is open to grades 6-12. Students are encouraged to contact local districts to enter or the Arkansas Martin Luther King, Jr. Commission at (501) 683-1304.

“This is an opportunity to promote education and to hear young people’s voices, writing provides a voice, a platform” says DuShun Scarbrough, Executive Director. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. spoke about the “fierce urgency of now,” and now is the time to connect younger generations with Dr. King’s dream and principles of nonviolence, peace, and acceptance so that they will be able to carry it on to the next generation.”

Who can enter?

All students in Central Arkansas, grades 6-12, are invited and encouraged to enter this contest. School districts should submit one (1) essay from each of the following categories:

- Middle School students, grades 6-8. 1-2 page essay
- High School students, grades 9-12. 2–3-page essay

School districts (public, private, in-person, or virtual) in Central Arkansas, are asked to host an essay contest by complete the items listed below:

- Distribute the information to each qualifying school within your district. The contest will begin on Friday, October 15, 2021.
- Form a team to receive, review, and score each qualifying essay. Use the enclosed rubric to score all entries received by Wednesday, November 17, 2021, 3:00 PM.
- Submit one (1) middle school (grades 6-8) and one (1) high school (grades 9-12) entry to the Arkansas MLK Commission at Diana.Tippen@ade.arkansas.gov no later than Tuesday, December 7, 2021, at 12:00 Noon to represent your district in the contest.
- Notify the winners and their parents.

Schools that wish to participate are asked to host a contest and complete the items listed below.

- Distribute the information to each student within your category. The contest will begin on Friday, October 15, 2021
- Form a team to receive, review, and score each qualifying essay. Use the enclosed rubric to score all entries received by Wednesday, November 8, 2021
- Submit one (1) middle school (grades 6-8) and one (1) high school (grades 9-12) entry to your school district no later than Wednesday, November 17, 2021, at 3:00 pm to represent your school in the district wide contest
- The district will use the enclosed rubric to score and select a winner to be included in the Holiday Central Arkansas Essay Contest

Essay Guidelines

1. Entries must be written work that follows a basic grammatical structure and consists of three main parts: introduction, body, and conclusion. Poetry will not be accepted
2. Essays must be typed in Times New Roman, 12-point font, and double spaced
3. Essays must follow MLA style if referencing other sources. *Students should consult their instructors for guidance.*
4. Only one essay per student will be accepted
5. Only one essay per district will be accepted for each category
6. Essays must be original
7. Entries received by the AMLK Commission after the Tuesday, December 7, 2021, 3:00 PM deadline will not be considered in the contest

Submission Topic

Essay Prompt: Why is volunteerism important?

1. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. is a renowned civil rights leader who fought for equality and recognized the power of service. He said, "Everyone can be great because everybody can serve." Observing the Martin Luther King, Jr. federal holiday through volunteerism is a way to begin each year with a commitment to making your community a better place.
2. Think about what volunteerism means to you, your community, and how it can impact the life of someone that may be of a different background from yourself. Write an essay

explaining what volunteerism means to you, and how you can impact our society through volunteerism.

3. The content of the essay should demonstrate an understanding of Dr. King's dream and who he was. It should include suggestions and ideas for practical ways of carrying out his dream through volunteerism.
4. Include a quote of Dr. King's in the essay and use MLA style citation if drawing from other sources.

Contest Guidelines

All participants will receive a certificate of participation from the Arkansas Martin Luther King, Jr. Commission, and the Arkansas Department of Education for their participation. The overall top ten scored essays will be invited to attend a special ceremony and receive special recognition. The winning essays will be announced on during the 2022 King Holiday: Day of Impact activities, which will be nationally viewed, hosted by the Arkansas Martin Luther King, Jr. Commission.

All submitted essays become the property of the Arkansas Martin Luther King Commission and Arkansas Department of Education and may be used for promotional and/or educational purposes.

Registration:

Each applicant must complete an entry form and neatly attach it to the cover of their essay. All fields on the form must be completed and legible.