2023 Essay Contest

**First prize: $250 Second Prize: $100 Third Prize: $50**

Topic: **Yes, We Can**

*IMPORTANT!* Please note: the deadline for essay submissions is **MARCH 15, 2023.**

President Barak Obama used the phrase “Yes, we can” to encourage his supporters during the 2008 presidential election campaign. How would you apply his slogan to today’s world. What gives you hope for positive developments in the world and makes you optimistic about the future?

You may address the topic in terms of what people can do to bring about positive change in any area of contemporary life, including your school or community, the country as a whole, and/or the larger world we live in. You may discuss how people can work together, as well as how a single person or a few people can have a positive impact on society. You do not need to address all those suggestions and you may write from a different approach to the question. Remember that your treatment of the topic should be in the form of an essay, not a letter or a poem.

The Harvard-Radcliffe Club of Rochester invites all area students in grades 9 -12 to demonstrate their writing skill and creative ideas in this essay contest. You can take any position, argue any point, and espouse any cause in relation to this theme…so long as the work is your own and no one else’s. We are looking for students with fresh perspectives, well-reasoned arguments, and excellent verbal skills.

Official Rules

1.Any student currently attending school in the Greater Rochester Area in Grades 9,10, 11 or 12 may enter by completing the entry form and submitting a qualifying essay. Children of members of the Harvard-Radcliffe Club of Rochester (“HRCR”) are not eligible to enter. No purchase, entry fee or other payment is required. Information provided on the entry form will be used solely for purposes of this Contest.

2. Entries must be sent by electronic mail unless permission is given to submit paper entries. Submit electronic essays to [HRCREssayContest@gmail.com](mailto:HRCREssayContest@gmail.com) **An entry form is also required and is available from the Harvard-Radcliffe Club of Rochester website:** <http://hrcrochester.clubs.harvard.edu>

You should keep a copy of your essay for reference. We cannot assume responsibility for delayed, misdirected or lost email.

3. Entries shall be no more than 1,000 words long. ESSAYS MUST CONSIST SOLELY OF THE ENTRANT’S ORIGINAL WORK AND MUST NOT BE ENTERED IN ANY OTHER CONTEST. Though an essay may contain ideas or facts derived from research, the expression of these must be exclusively in the entrant’s own words. No editing, correction or other assistance by anyone else, nor borrowing of another’s language without attribution, is permitted. Any entrant who is discovered to have received such assistance in preparing an entry will be disqualified. (If discovery occurs after a prize has been awarded, the prize will be forfeited and repaid to HRCR.)

1. The theme of the essay shall be: Yes, we can! Potential winners shall be selected according to the following criteria: (a) originality of ideas, (b) persuasiveness of arguments, (c) relevance to the theme, (d) effectiveness of expression, (e) and appropriate length. The panel of judges shall consist of members of HRCR and other qualified persons selected by HRCR, whose decisions in all matters shall be final and binding on all parties.
2. The Prizes are: one First Prize of $250

one Second Prize of $100

one Third Prize of $50

HRCR reserves the right to withhold awarding any or all of the prizes if the judges decide the entries are of insufficient merit.

1. All entries become the property of HRCR and may be retained or disposed of in its sole discretion, but copyright in each entry will remain with the entrant. Any taxes on prizes are the sole responsibility of the winners or their guardians.
2. Sponsor: Harvard-Radcliffe Club of Rochester, Inc.
3. Jane Shuffelton, Contest Administrator  [HRCREssayContest@gmail.com](mailto:%20%20%20%20%20%20%20HRCREssayContest@gmail.com)