



# ERCA COMMUNITY CONTRIBUTION SCHOLARSHIP COMPETITION

## OFFICIAL RULES AND REGULATIONS

- 1. CAN I APPLY?** The ERCA Community Contribution Scholarship Competition (the "Competition") is open to all high school students who are legal residents of the United States. Applicants must have recognized a need or problem in their community, have determined a way to address this need or solve this problem, have developed an action plan, and have worked to put the action plan in place so as to address the need or solve the problem. The action plan must be a unique project developed by the student, not a project developed by an established group of which the student is a member. All applicants under the age of eighteen (18) or minors at the time of application must have the permission of at least one (1) of their parents and/or legal guardians to apply. By applying, applicants and/or their parents or legal guardians (if such applicants are minors) agree to accept and be bound by all terms of these Official Rules and Regulations ("Official Rules"). Employees (and their immediate families and household members, whether or not related) of Educational Research Center of America, (ERCA), their parent, subsidiary or affiliated entities, advertising or promotion agencies, are not eligible to apply or win. Void where prohibited. Competition is subject to all applicable federal, state and local laws.
- 2. HOW TO APPLY:** Applications will be accepted from July 29, 2013 through July 11, 2014 (the "Application Period"). To apply, applicants must complete the official ERCA Community Contribution Scholarship Competition Application ("Official Application Form") in its entirety. The application can be found on the ERCA website, located at [www.studentresearch.org](http://www.studentresearch.org) (the "Website"). It can either be completed and submitted online; or a pdf of the application can be downloaded from the ERCA website, completed in its entirety, and submitted by postal mail to: ERCA Community Contribution Scholarship Committee, Educational Research Center of America, PO Box 9005, Farmingdale, NY 11735. To be eligible, all applicants must provide (a) all required personal information including student's full name and permanent address, city, state, zip; phone number; e-mail address; name of high school; high school graduation year; address of high school (including city, state, and zip); high school phone number; name of your high school guidance counselor; the approximate average of your QPA/GPA; school and community activities including work experience; any academic, community, or school-related honors you have received; and the name, address, city, state, zip, and phone number of an adult in your community who is familiar with your accomplishments, and what your relationship is to them. This adult cannot be your parent or relative. ERCA may contact this person if you are a semi-finalist; (b) a brief Description of the community need your project addressed, or the community problem your project solved, and how you solved it. If you need more room than is provided on the official entry, please attach an additional page. Applications must be postmarked during the Application Period and received by July 22, 2014; applications received after July 22, 2014, will be held and submitted for judging in any subsequent competition for 2014/2015. Descriptions must be the applicant's original work, and all applications (and Descriptions) become the property of Sponsors, will not be acknowledged or returned and may be used by Sponsors in any manner or media in perpetuity without compensation. The Official Application Form and Description must be written in English. Limit one (1) application per person. Multiple applications from any person and/or duplicate applications will be deemed void. Sponsors are not responsible for misdirected, inaccurate, incomplete, lost, late, delayed, undelivered, postage-due, damaged or illegible applications, and all such applications will be void. Sponsors are also not responsible for errors or problems which may occur in connection with or relating to the Competition or downloading the Official Application Form, whether computer, technical, mechanical, typographical, printing, human or otherwise, including, without limitation, errors or problems which may occur in connection with the administration of the Competition, the processing or judging of applications or the announcement of scholarship semi-finalists, finalists / winners. Sponsors reserve the right, in their sole discretion, to cancel, modify or prematurely conclude the Competition should any unauthorized intervention or other cause beyond their control corrupt the administration, security or proper operation of the Competition. If the Competition is cancelled, Sponsors may, in their sole discretion, judge all eligible applications received up to time of such action using the judging procedures outlined below to determine the winners. False or deceptive entries or acts will render the applicant ineligible, and Sponsors reserve the right to disqualify any applicant (and void his/her entry) who acts in a disruptive manner or violates these Official Rules.
- 3. JUDGING:** Judging will be conducted in two rounds yielding fifty (50) Semi-Finalists (the "Semi-Finalists") and twenty-five (25) Finalists (the "Finalists" or "Winners"), respectively. (a) Fifty (50) Semi-Finalists will first be selected by a panel of ERCA staffers on or about August 11, 2014, from all eligible applications received by the date specified above, according to the following process: (i) Applications are sorted by graduation year; this levels the playing field for all students by enabling the judges to compare applications from the same class year; (ii) Each Description is read and evaluated based equally upon the following criteria: subject matter, quality of community project and correct usage of grammar (including punctuation and spelling). (b) Twenty-Five (25) Finalists/Winners will be selected from the Semi-Finalists by a panel of teachers based equally upon the following criteria: project quality, grades, honors and activities. (c) In the event of a tie in either round of judging, the winner will be determined from among all such tied applicants based first, upon grade point average, and if necessary, second, upon references.
- 4. NOTIFICATION OF SEMI-FINALISTS:** Semi-Finalists will be notified of their selection on or about August 25, 2014, by certified mail, return receipt requested and are subject to verification by Sponsors. Semi-Finalists (and/or their parents or legal guardians if such potential winners are minors) must provide 1) A copy of the applicant's most recent report card; 2) A copy of the applicant's birth certificate or other proof of legal residency in the United States; 3) The applicant's Social Security number; 4) A signed and sealed letter from the reference cited on the applicant's application verifying that the project the applicant wrote about was actually developed and completed by the applicant, and describing the quality of work done by the applicant in general; 5) A signed publicity release form; and 6) A recent photograph of the applicant (taken within the last 12 months) by September 19, 2014, in order to be eligible to be awarded a prize. If any Semi-Finalist (i) fails to do so, if (ii) any notification is returned as undeliverable, (iii) or if any student declines to accept a prize or is determined to be ineligible for any reason, such student will be disqualified and, at Sponsors' sole discretion, a runner-up will be notified. Finalists will be notified of their selection on or about October 17, 2014, by certified mail, return receipt requested.
- 5. PRIZES; ODDS OF WINNING:** Twenty-Five (25) Finalists / Winners will each receive a \$1,000 scholarship paid by check to the accredited post-secondary educational institution designated by the Winner at the start of the Winner's first applicable post-secondary school term following Winner's selection. Odds of winning will depend, in part, upon the number of applicants from each graduation year. Prizes will be awarded by graduation year, based on the percentage of applicants out of the total from each graduation year. (For example, if 50% of the applicants are high school seniors, 50% of the scholarships will be awarded to high school seniors.) All prizes will be awarded. Receipt of this scholarship may negate or otherwise affect the financial aid the student receives from other sources. Winners and/or their parents or legal guardians are responsible for the reporting and payment of all federal, state and local taxes incurred by acceptance and use of the prize (or any portion thereof).
- 6. GENERAL RULES AND REGULATIONS:** By participating in this Competition, applicants (and/or their parent or legal guardian): (i) agree to be bound by the decisions of Sponsors and judges which are final and binding in all matters; (ii) grant Sponsors and their designees the right, unless prohibited by law, to use their names, cities and states of residence, voices, pictures and likenesses, without compensation, notification or permission, for the purpose of advertising and publicity in any and all media, now or after known, throughout the world in perpetuity; and (iii) acknowledge and agree that Sponsors will own and administer 100% of the copyright in all Descriptions submitted and may exploit, edit, modify, and distribute the Descriptions in any and all media, now or hereafter known throughout the world in perpetuity without limitation at no additional notification or permission of applicants, their parents or legal guardians or any third party. Sponsors expressly disclaim any responsibility and applicants (or their parents or legal guardians if such applicant is a minor) agree to release, indemnify and hold Sponsors harmless for liability, damages or claims for injury or loss to any person or property (including death) relating to, in whole or in part, directly or indirectly, participation in this Competition, the acceptance and/or subsequent use or misuse of any prize awarded. Sponsors are not responsible for any injury or damage to persons or property which may be caused directly or indirectly, in whole or in part, from the downloading of any material from the Website, regardless of whether the material was prepared by Sponsors or a third party, and regardless of whether the material is connected to the Website by a hypertext link. Sponsors further assume no liability either for the cancellation, modification or premature conclusion of the Competition for any reason. All such losses or expenses must be borne by the affected applicants or Winners.
- 7. OFFICIAL RULES, WINNERS' NAMES REQUESTS & REMOVAL FROM MAILING LIST:** For a copy of these Official Rules or to learn the identity of the Finalists / Winners, log onto the Website. The identity of the Finalists/Winners will be posted on or about January 6, 2015. If you do not wish to receive future Competition or other ERCA contest or sweepstakes mailings, please submit a written removal request to Sponsors at: ERCA, PO Box 9005, Farmingdale, NY 11735.
- 8. PRIVACY:** Information applicants provide to Sponsors will be used to communicate with applicants regarding this Competition and otherwise as set forth in the Sponsors' Privacy Policy available at [www.studentresearch.org](http://www.studentresearch.org) by clicking on the "Privacy of Student Information Policy" link.
- 9. DISPUTES:** Each applicant (or their parents or legal guardians if such applicant is a minor) agrees that: (1) any and all disputes, claims, and causes of action arising out of or in connection with this Competition, or any prizes awarded, shall be resolved individually, without resorting to any form of class action, and any judicial proceeding shall take place in a federal or state court within the State of New York; (2) any and all claims, judgments, and awards shall be limited to actual out-of-pocket costs incurred, including costs associated with entering this Competition, but in no event attorneys' fees; and (3) under no circumstances will applicant be permitted to obtain awards for, and applicant hereby waives all rights to claim punitive, incidental, and consequential damages, and any other damages, other than for actual out-of-pocket expenses, and any and all rights to have damages multiplied or otherwise increased. All issues and questions concerning the construction, validity, interpretation and enforceability of these Official Rules, or the rights and obligations of applicant and Sponsors in connection with the Competition, shall be governed by, and construed in accordance with the laws of the State of New York, without giving effect to any choice of law or conflict of law, rules or provisions (whether of the State of New York or any other jurisdiction), that would cause the application of the laws of any jurisdiction other than the State of New York.
- 10. SPONSORS:** This Competition is sponsored by Educational Research Center of America, (ERCA), 2 Dubon Ct, Farmingdale, NY 11735. Sponsors reserve the right to cancel the Competition at any time and substitute another promotion in its place.