

2015 FFRF Michael Hakeem Memorial College Essay Contest

FOR COLLEGE STUDENTS UNDER AGE 25



First Place: Michael Hakeem Memorial Award: - \$3,000

Second Place — \$2,000

Third Place — \$1,000

Fourth Place — \$750

Fifth Place — \$500

Sixth Place - \$400

Optional Honorable Mention(s) - \$200

Proud to be an atheist: Challenging stigmas against nonbelievers

Eligibility: Currently enrolled undergraduate college student through age 24, including but not limited to college seniors graduating in the spring or summer 2015, attending a North American college or university.

Prompt: Atheists are one of the most despised minorities, yet statistically are among the most moral segments in the U.S. population. Write a persuasive essay about why nonbelievers should be respected, not stigmatized. Include personal perspective or experiences with religious family, schoolmates or community. Provide supporting arguments (e.g., recent studies, philosophical or historic perspectives) about how freethinkers contribute to society despite widespread vilification. Include at least one paragraph about why you are a nonbeliever.

Length: 700–900 words

Other requirements: Essay must be submitted both by mail and email by postmark deadline. No faxes. Typed, stapled, with standard margins, double-spaced. Include word count. Place name and essay title on each page. Choose own title and include a one-paragraph biography on separate page at end of essay. Include name, age and birth date, hometown, university or college, year in school, intended major and interests, and anticipated graduation date. Don't attach a résumé.

Provide both summer and fall 2015 addresses (campus and home), phone numbers and email addresses for notification. Winners may be asked to send verification of student enrollment. FFRF monitors for plagiarism.

Do not write under or over word minimums and maximums. For chance to win \$50 bonus, indicate the name of the secular school or college club you belong to or join the Secular Student Alliance (free at www.secularstudents.org/studentmember) and mention it. The bonus is provided by a kind couple.

Deadline: Postmarked no later than June 15, 2015. Winners announced in September.

Submission rules: Essays must be both mailed (postmarked) and emailed no later than June 15, 2015 to collegessay@ffrf.org with subject heading "Essay [and Your Full Name]," e.g., Essay (Your Full Name), and to:

College Essay Contest
FFRF
PO Box 750
Madison WI 53701

About Michael Hakeem: The late Michael Hakeem, a sociology professor, was an FFRF officer and active atheist known by generations of University of Wisconsin-Madison students for fine-tuning their reasoning abilities.