

The South Carolina Baptist Congress of Christian Education

Guidelines for The C.O. Jackson Oratorical Contest

Thank you for your interest in the South Carolina Baptist Congress of Christian Education Annual C. O. Jackson Oratorical Contest. This event takes place at the Annual Session in July. The Congress theme for the year is posted on the website and is updated after the Annual Session. The finalist representing your association should register online at www.sccongress.org in the ORATORICAL CONTESTS *Online Registration: Personal Data Information* tab. You will receive registration confirmation from the Oratorical Coordinator confirming your plans to participate.

The contest guidelines and instructions are provided for your convenience. They are for youth who are members of the churches affiliated with the Congress in a Christian, educational, competitive experience in oratory when the Congress convenes. We encourage participation from each registered association.

I. Plans for Preliminary Contestants

The winner from each associational Congress competition will be sent to the South Carolina Baptist Congress of Christian Education in July to compete in the state contest. Each associational Congress must see to it that its winner's name is submitted to the South Carolina Baptist Congress of Christian Education website **two weeks prior** to the start of the Annual Session.

II. Requirements

- A. The contestant's associational Congress and church must be registered in the South Carolina Congress of Christian Education.
- B. Graduating 12th graders from secondary schools and college freshmen, sophomores, and juniors are eligible.
- C. The contestant's speech must show creativity and originality and pertain to the theme of the Congress.
- D. The contestant must be currently enrolled in a secondary school, college, or university.
- E. Winners are not eligible to enter the contest again once they have won at the state level.
- F. A contestant must have won his/her associational Congress contest to be eligible to compete in the state eliminations. On the morning of the elimination, the contestant, with his/her mentor must bring a copy of the paid registration form.
- G. The six (6) contestants earning the highest points will be selected to compete in the state finals, which will be held on the same day.
- H. Altering speeches from the eliminations to the finals will not be permitted. A typed copy of each contestant's speech must be submitted online to the Oratorical Coordinator prior to the eliminations. The location for submitting speeches is within the Online Registration tab.

III. Topics for Speeches

Generally, all contestants must adhere to the Congress theme at the local, district, and state levels. This does not mean that the contestant has to use the exact words of the theme; however, he/she is required to use a topic that is closely related to the theme. A contestant will be disqualified if he/she speaks on a non-Christian topic or on one that is totally unrelated to the theme. Specifically, each topic must be related to Christian Education.

IV. Time Limit

A. Each contestant should limit his/her speech to a minimum of three minutes and to a maximum of five minutes. If a contestant speaks fewer than three minutes or more than five minutes, he/she will be penalized by the judges. Ten points will be subtracted from the Contestant's total score for each minute he/she speaks under or over time.

B. Timekeepers will time the presentations.

V. Judges

A. The panel of judges will consist of three to five persons who are professionally trained and who are involved in Christian Education.

B. The judges will be knowledgeable in speech, oratory, composition, and the performing arts.

C. The judges and the timekeepers will tally their score sheets to determine the final ratings of the contestants.

D. It is the winners' responsibility to inform the coordinator of the contest committee of the name and address of the institutions at which they matriculate.

E. The maximum number of points a contestant can earn 110. He/she cannot receive more than 10 points for each item on which the judge evaluates him or her. { **CHECK THE WEBSITE FOR THE SCORING SHEET** }

F. Each contestant will be introduced according to number. The contestant should **not** identify himself/herself, nor give any indication of his/her church nor locale.

G. There will be no ties. In the event of a tie, the judges will make a final decision.

VI. Evaluation and Selection of Winners

A. Each contestant will receive a participation award at the Congress.

B. Three contestants will be chosen as winners in the state competition in July. The first place winner will receive a \$1,500 scholarship; the second place winner will receive a \$1,300 scholarship; and the third place winner will receive a \$1,000 scholarship. Upon receiving enrollment verification from the college, all scholarships will be sent directly to the student.

Note: Winners who elect to attend Benedict or Morris Colleges are eligible to receive the South Carolina Baptist Congress of Christian Education Award, a financial award established at each institution designed to match the winner's earned scholarship amount.

C. Scholarships will be awarded to the winners during the first semester following the contest. Any winner who elects not to attend college will forfeit his/her scholarship. It will be awarded to the next highest-ranking contestant.