2024 Workers' Memorial Day Scholarship Essay Contest

Sponsored by the CT AFL-CIO Health and Safety Committee

Each year during Worker Memorial Day ceremonies on April 28th, workers, legislators, members of organized labor unions, worker advocates and others gather to honor the memory of those workers who have lost their lives because of workplace injuries or illnesses. The ceremonies highlight the sacrifices made by these workers and of the families left behind and inspire us all to work harder on behalf of the welfare of all workers.

This year the Connecticut AFL-CIO Health and Safety Committee, as part of its efforts to "mourn the dead but fight like hell for the living", is offering a scholarship essay contest to inspire high school seniors to think about the importance of workplace health and safety, of the consequences that arise when workers are forced to toil in unsafe working conditions and of the role that organized labor has played in protecting workers both in the past and present.

In this year's scholarship essay contest, Connecticut high school seniors are asked to respond in **1,000** words or less to **ONE** of the three questions below with serious thought, some research (with cited sources), and, most importantly, awareness of the true cost of workplace hazards on the lives of workers.

1st Prize is $2,000

2nd Prize is $1,500

3rd Prize is $1,000

All entries will be judged anonymously on content, originality and clarity of vision. The winners of this contest will be asked to share a portion of their essay during our 2024 Worker Memorial Day event on Sunday, April 28, 2024, at 12 pm, at the Bushnell Park Worker Memorial, Hartford.

In 1,000 words or less please respond to ONE of the following scenarios:

1) My _____ (parent/family member) is an Emergency Responder. He/She is a_____ Fire/Police/EMT/Dispatcher). What types of health and safety risks are they exposed to in their work, whether it be physical injury, exposure to toxic or infectious agents, mental stress, or other factors. As a child or relative of a first responder, does their work affect you and/or your family members? In what ways?

2) Workers at highway construction and maintenance projects are at risk from vehicle accidents. According to the Connecticut Department of Transportation and others, what are the primary causes of these accidents? How should employers enhance work zone safety? To the extent that some of these accidents are caused by distracted drivers (for example, using their phone, eating, etc.), what are some solutions to address this problem?

3) High numbers of Connecticut residents are overdosing on opioids on and off the job. What work-related factors cause workers to use opioid drugs, for example workplace stress, injuries, or other factors? Do you believe that Narcan should be made available in every workplace? Why or why not? Would there be any negative consequences to having Narcan available in every workplace?

This essay contest is open to all Connecticut high school seniors. Please email the completed essay and application to pamela@ctcosh.org or send to

ConnectiCOSH
683 North Mountain Road
Newington, CT 06111
ATTN: Pamela Puchalski

The completed essay and application must be received by April 1, 2024.

2024 Worker Memorial Day Scholarship Essay Contest Application

Student's Name _____

Home or Mailing Address _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip Code: _____

Home Phone: _____ Cell Phone: _____

Email address: _____

Parent(s)/guardian(s) name(s): _____

High School Name: _____

High School Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip Code: _____