

State History Day Topical Prize Catalog

State Qualifiers are also eligible to apply for topical prizes. Students must complete the separate Topical Prize Nomination Form, and include any additional materials required to be eligible for these prizes. Topical prizes are judged separately from the regular History Day competition. Topical prize judging has no impact on other History Day judging.

Please note: Cash prizes will require that the students provide a Social Security number by completing a W9 form and returning it to the State History Day office. This information is kept confidential at the Minnesota Historical Society. Students will not receive awards until their forms are returned.

To Apply: Nominations are due with registration by Thursday, April 10, 2025 by 7:59 pm - <https://www.mnhs.org/historyday/contests-and-judging/state-history-day>

Prize Descriptions

Africa Studies

This prize recognizes outstanding State History Day entries that examine how this year's annual History Day Theme relates to the history of an area in Africa.

- **Awards:** Two \$150 awards, one in the Junior Division and one in the Senior Division
- **Sponsors:** African Studies Initiative, University of Minnesota

Agricultural History of the Upper Midwest

This prize recognizes outstanding State History Day entries that focus on the history of agriculture in the Upper Midwest, with a preference for projects featuring the farming, shipping, marketing, or use of grains.

- **Awards:** Two \$100 awards, one in the Junior Division and one in the Senior Division, invitation to display entry on Artisan Grain Collaborative website or at Artisan Grain Collaborative events and businesses
- **Sponsor:** Artisan Grain Collaborative

American Indian History

The American Indian History prize will be awarded to outstanding State History Day entries that demonstrate the importance of American Indian individuals, organizations, or nations in history, within this year's theme.

- **Awards:** Two \$150 awards, one in the Junior Division and one in the Senior Division
- **Sponsor:** Minnesota Historical Society

Arrowhead, William E. Culkin History of the

This prize is to recognize exceptional entries with a focus on the history of the Great Lakes region. Special preference will be given to topics concerning Northeastern Minnesota.

- **Awards:** Two \$50 awards, one in the Junior Division and one in the Senior Division, an opportunity to present their work at an upcoming Board of Governors meeting, and individual memberships to the St. Louis County Historical Society
- **Sponsors:** St. Louis County Historical Society

Baseball History

This prize will be awarded to an outstanding entry on baseball history.

- **Awards:** One \$150 award, open to either division with a preference for Senior Division, recognition in a future chapter newsletter
- **Sponsors:** Society for American Baseball Research, Halsey Hall Chapter

Civil War History

This prize recognizes entries related to Civil War history. Entries that highlight Minnesota's role in the war and Civil War military history relating to the current year's theme will receive special consideration.

- **Awards:** One \$100 award in either Division, a one-year paid membership in the First Regiment of Minnesota Volunteer Infantry, and an invitation for student and parent/guardian to attend the Twin Cities Civil War Roundtable May 2025 dinner and presentation.
- **Sponsor:** First Regiment of Minnesota Volunteer Infantry, The Twin Cities Civil War Roundtable

Educational History, Susie Elwell Kurtzman Memorial Prize for

Entries must be an outstanding study and discussion of the history of education. The historical subjects may relate to formal or informal education, changes in a curriculum, legal decisions, economic pressures, political decisions, community pressures, dress codes, benefits or losses resulting from outstanding teachers, various testing methods,

establishment of new institutions, new subjects, required reading, required courses, required tests, banned books, or banned subjects, among others.

- **Awards:** Two \$150 awards, one in the Junior Division and one in the Senior Division, in memory of Susie Elwell Kurtzman
- **Sponsors:** Ralph and Virginia Kurtzman Endowment

Environmental History, Tallmadge and Geo. H. Elwell Memorial Prize for

Entries must be an outstanding study and discussion of the history of destruction or conservation of the natural environment. The historic events may be biological, geological, archeological or others that may be shown to be important. Events may be long-term or catastrophic.

- **Awards:** Two \$150 awards, one in the Junior Division and one in the Senior Division, in memory of Tallmadge and Geo. H. Elwell
- **Sponsors:** Ralph and Virginia Kurtzman Endowment

Europe Before 1914, History of

Entries must relate to a historical event or development taking place in Europe between the fall of the Western Roman Empire and the outbreak of World War I, during the period from 476 CE to 1914 CE.

- **Awards:** Two \$150 awards, one in the Junior Division and one in the Senior Division
- **Sponsors:** Steven Potach and Judith Horn

Global Studies

Student entries should examine how the year's theme relates to the history of an area outside the United States.

- **Awards:** Two \$150 awards, one in the Junior Division and one in the Senior Division
- **Sponsors:** Institute for Global Studies, University of Minnesota

History Day Scholarship

In recognition of the academic achievement of an outstanding student participant in the National History Day program, the College of Liberal Arts (CLA) at the University of Minnesota presents one \$1,500 freshman-year prize at Minnesota State History Day.

The award is presented to an individual student who satisfies the following criteria:

- The award recipient is an 11th-grade student participating in an individual category.
- The student applies for admission to CLA by January 1, 2026 and is admitted to the College of Liberal Arts.
- The student enrolls in the College of Liberal Arts and begins classes in fall 2026.

History Day award-winners are not required to major in history but must enroll in the College of Liberal Arts. To receive your award, you must:

- Utilize the award in your first semester.
- Enroll full time (12 or more credits) in your first semester. Note that Independent and Distance Learning (IDL) courses do not count towards the 12-credit requirement.
- **Awards:** One \$1,500 award to a 11th-grade prospective CLA student.
- **Sponsors:** College of Liberal Arts, University of Minnesota

Holocaust History (1933-1949)

Entries must relate to a significant event or development taking place in Europe between 1933-1949 that led to or contributed to the events of the Holocaust.

- **Awards:** Two \$100 awards, one in the Junior Division and one in the Senior Division
- **Sponsor:** Jewish Community Relations Council of Minnesota and the Dakotas

Humanitarian History, Raoul Wallenberg Prize in

This prize is to recognize two outstanding Minnesota History Day entries, one Junior Division and one Senior Division, on a topic of humanitarian action in history. Entries will be considered that study a person or group of people who made a significant historical contribution with their work to improve the welfare of others. The prizes, sponsored by the American Swedish Institute, will grant \$100 to each winning entry. The prize is dedicated to the life and example of Raoul Wallenberg, a Swedish diplomat who heroically led the rescue of approximately 100,000 Hungarian Jews from July 1944 to January 1945.

- **Awards:** Two \$100 awards, one in the Junior Division and one in the Senior Division, and family passes to the ASI
- **Sponsors:** American Swedish Institute (ASI)

Ideals from America's Founding Through Time

Prize recognizes outstanding entries that investigate how the ideals of justice and equality have been extended since America's founding through time to different populations, specifically from the principles referenced in the US Declaration of Independence, the Constitution, or the Bill of Rights.

- **Awards:** Three \$250 awards: one in the Junior Division, one in the Senior Division, and one from either Division. Winners will also receive an invitation to present to the organization
- **Sponsor:** The National Society of the Colonial Dames of America in the State of Minnesota

Labor History

Prizes recognize projects that focus on the history of organized labor, including advocacy for change in working conditions or the rights of workers. The sponsors of this prize encourage students to examine labor history through a local lens and to research and explore topics in Minneapolis, St. Paul, and Minnesota labor history. The prize sponsors also encourage students to make use of primary sources available in the online digital archives of the *Minneapolis Labor Review* newspaper (minneapolisunions.org) and *St. Paul Union Advocate* newspaper (advocate.stpaulunions.org).

- **Awards:** A total of eight \$100 awards may be presented in the Junior and Senior Division for: 1) Best Exhibit 2) Best Documentary 3) Best Performance 4) Best Website or Research Paper; winners will be announced in the three Minnesota labor newspapers (*Duluth Labor World*, *Minneapolis Labor Review*, *St. Paul Union Advocate*) and may be invited to share their project at one of the monthly meetings of the Duluth Central Labor Body, Minneapolis Regional Labor Federation, or St. Paul Regional Labor Federation.
- **Sponsors:** *Duluth Labor World*, *Minneapolis Labor Review*, *St. Paul Union Advocate*, University of Minnesota Labor Education Service

Lesbian Gay Bisexual Transgender Queer (LGBTQ) History

Prizes will be awarded to entries studying issues that connect LGBTQ people, politics, and events to this year's theme.

- **Awards:** Two \$150 awards, one in the Junior Division and one in the Senior Division
- **Sponsor:** Minnesota Historical Society

Minneapolis History

Prizes will be awarded to entries that address the year's theme by examining events and issues that demonstrate the rich history of Minneapolis and its people. Students are encouraged to consider topics involving persons, businesses, organizations, institutions, events, buildings, land use or environmental issues in Minneapolis.

- **Awards:** Two \$100 awards, one in the Junior Division and one in the Senior Division
- **Sponsors:** Hennepin History Museum and the Linden Hills History Study Group

Minnesota Experience Documentary Prize

Prize recognizes excellence in documentary filmmaking related to Minnesota history. Documentaries that illustrate Minnesota's rich history through a variety of source materials, interviews, and film footage will receive special consideration. Documentaries submitted for this prize may be considered for inclusion on TPT multimedia platforms.

- **Awards:** Two \$200 awards, one in the Junior Division and one in the Senior Division
- **Sponsors:** Twin Cities Public Television's *Minnesota Experience*

Minnesota Historical Society Collections, Best Use of

There are no limitations on topic, and collections materials may be viewed in-person or online. Projects should use materials from the Minnesota Historical Society (MNHS) Collections to provide information, detail, or perspective, not just for illustrative purposes. To be eligible, a student must submit a copy of their thesis statement and a copy of their bibliography--with all MNHS materials highlighted--to Kyle Imdieke (kyle.imdieke@mnhs.org). For assistance with research or accessing collections materials, please contact the Library in person, by phone (651-229-3300), or via email (reference@mnhs.org).

- **Awards:** Two \$200 awards, one in the Junior Division and one in the Senior Division
- **Sponsors:** The Gale Family Library at the Minnesota Historical Society

Minnesota History

Prizes will be awarded to entries that address the year's theme by examining events and issues that demonstrate the rich history of Minnesota and its people.

- **Awards:** Two \$200 awards, one in the Junior Division and one in the Senior Division
- **Sponsors:** Minnesota Historical Society, *Northern Lights* Curriculum

Minnesota History Paper Award

The paper must be directly and primarily concerned with a Minnesota history topic. *Minnesota History* reserves the right to grant no award if no History Day entry is deemed eligible.

- **Awards:** One \$50 award, open to either division, and recognition in a future issue of *Minnesota History*
- **Sponsors:** *Minnesota History Journal*

Minnesota's Laws and Courts

To be eligible for these awards, students' entries must demonstrate and/or celebrate the contribution that the judiciary has made to the state of Minnesota. The entries may consider any way in which the Minnesota courts have impacted local, state or national history. Entries that focus on Minnesota cases are preferred. Entries that concern specific laws or parts of the constitution without discussing a case(s) or the judiciary are ineligible.

- **Awards:** Two \$500 awards, either in the Junior Division or the Senior Division, and an invitation to post projects online and present at an annual event held by the Minnesota Supreme Court Historical Society
- **Sponsors:** Minnesota Supreme Court Historical Society

Quantitative History

Prizes will be awarded to projects that demonstrate outstanding use or creation of quantitative methods in developing historical arguments. Use of quantitative methods may include statistics, graphs and charts, among others. Good sources of quantitative information are government documents, newspapers, polls (e.g. Gallup Polls), surveys and census data.

- **Awards:** One \$100 award, open to either division
- **Sponsors:** Minnesota Population Center, University of Minnesota

Travel and Cultural Exchange Before 1825 CE, History of

Travel and trade have through the ages resulted in the exchange of cultures. Sometimes between one neighboring village and another, other times between peoples on opposite sides of the globe. Not all of these exchanges are equal, and some have tragic consequences, but all have led to the cultures that exist around the world today. In cooperation with the James Ford Bell Library at the University of Minnesota, which specializes in books, maps, manuscripts, and other primary sources that document the history and impact of trade and cultural exchange before modern times, the Associates of the Bell Library may award two prizes of \$100 each to the Minnesota State History Day entrants whose outstanding work best links the year's theme to travel and cultural exchange and its impact prior to ca 1825 CE. Interpret "impact" broadly, but any discussion of the modern day must offer significant ties to its premodern causes or triggers. Should no entrant meet the above-stated qualifications, prize sponsors may choose not to make an award in any given year, or award both prizes in a division.

- **Awards:** Two \$100 awards, in either Division, with the possibility of a \$50 honorable mention in either division, and a letter of congratulations
- **Sponsors:** Associates of the James Ford Bell Library, University of Minnesota

United States Military History Prize

This prize recognizes exceptional entries that analyze any aspect of United States military history and connects to the History Day annual theme. Preference will be given to topics outside of the scope of other State History Day Topical Prizes.

- **Awards:** Two \$150 awards, one in the Junior Division and one in the Senior Division
- **Sponsor(s):** Minnesota Military & Veterans Museum

Women of Color in History

This prize will be awarded to an outstanding entry on a woman of color in history. Topics may range from advocacy to political action for women's rights and representation, health care, education, athletics, the arts, voting reform and more. The sponsor encourages students to examine the role of women as changemakers and how their actions have positively impacted members of their community and/or at large. The sponsor is especially interested in lifting up absent narratives - women's stories and experiences that have previously been (or are) marginalized and excluded from mainstream history.

- **Awards:** Two \$150 awards, one in the Junior Division and one in the Senior Division, and free passes to the exhibit *Girlhood (It's complicated)* at the Minnesota History Center
- **Sponsor(s):** Anonymous