

Division I (Grades 11 /12) Division II (Grades 9 /10)

California is a diverse and incredible place to live. From the lowest desert to the towering mountain peaks, the multitude of eco-regions are home to a vast variety of plants and animals as well as humans. Over 800 miles of coastline grace our state and a large agricultural economy produces two thirds of all the fruits and nuts and half of the vegetables grown in the U.S.

California has big cities as well as a landscape dotted by small towns. It is a testing ground for renewable energy and is well known for being on the cutting edge of technology. California has the largest public university system in the nation as well as world-renowned public and private universities.

California has a history that includes people from many ethnic groups around the world, who each bring unique experiences & perspective to our state. A wide range of languages, traditions, stories, arts and music can be found among Californians.

Numerous categories make up the whole experience of a state. Political, environmental, wildlife and land conservation, ethnic diversity, job opportunities, health and social services, education, and housing are just a few. Within each of these categories are the day-to-day experiences of the people who call this state their home.

Wildfires, mudslides, drought and earthquakes are all hazards of living in California. In addition to dealing with these occurrences, we must successfully meet the challenges of creating a community that allows people to live and thrive safely together.

The 2019 Peace Essay Contest invites you to reflect on the many positive things living in California offers and to also think about what might need to be improved. Write your essay of 500-1000 words following the prompt below: Begin your essay by briefly describing what makes you glad to live in California. Considering the general categories listed in the introduction, or adding one of your own, choose a specific area that you think could be improved to provide a better quality of life for those who live in California. Do some research about your choice. Then, continuing your essay,

Identify and describe the specific area that concerns or worries you.
Share some ideas from your research that might help improve it.
Explain why this improvement would make a positive difference in the lives of Californians.

Conclude your essay by explaining how working to improve life in our state is an important step toward creating a more just and peaceful world. (Include your word count at the end of your essay.

Division II Grades 9 & 10

	Student	School	Teacher
First Place			
First Place	Emily Swehla	Independent Study	Susan Janis
Second Place			
Second Place *	Paola Campos	Central Valley HS	Megan Oliveria
Third Place			
Third Place	Reza Banankhah	Independent Study	Susan Janis
Honorable Mention			
Hon Mention	Carson Carranza	Modesto HS	Kerry Castellani
Hon Mention	S. Kaur Hundal	Central Valley HS	Megan Oliveria
Hon Mention	Maymuna Sabri	Whitmore Charter	Virginia Aguilera
Finalist			
Finalist	Breana Bravo	Central Valley HS	Megan Oliveria
Finalist	Destinee Cox	Central Valley HS	Megan Oliveria
Finalist	Areli Delgado	Central Valley HS	Megan Oliveria
Finalist	Isabella Dvarte	Central Valley HS	Megan Oliveria
Finalist	Samantha Espinoza	Central Valley HS	Megan Oliveria
Finalist	Isabel Gutierrez	Central Valley HS	Megan Oliveria
Finalist	Ahtziri Martinez	Central Valley HS	Megan Oliveria
Finalist	Zaida Martinez	Central Valley HS	Megan Oliveria
Finalist	Virginia Moore	Central Valley HS	Megan Oliveria
Finalist	Aileen Padilla	Central Valley HS	Megan Oliveria
Finalist	Joshua Resurreccion	Central Valley HS	Megan Oliveria
Finalist	Jose Sanchez	Central Valley HS	Megan Oliveria
Finalist	Karanjot Singh	Central Valley HS	Megan Oliveria
Finalist	Ximena Soltero	Central Valley HS	Megan Oliveria
School Winner			
School Winner	Drake Heffington	Oakdale Charter	J. Ves'sells

* School Winner, recognized for the top essay from a school that has submitted 10 or more essays in the Division

Division I Grades 11 & 12

	Student	School	Teacher
First Place			
1st Place	Makens Turner	Peter Johansen HS	Nicole Evans
Second Place			
2nd Place	Ashish Thakur	Modesto HS	Kerry Castellani
Third Place			
3rd Place	Molly Howard	Whitmore Charter HS	Kelly Hayes
Honorable Mention			
Hon Men *	Jessie Lawrence	Hughson HS	Karalee Ruelas
Hon Men	Mary Frey	Our Lady, Gd Counsel	Michelle Frey
Hon Men	Marcos Martinez	Hughson HS	Karalee Ruelas
Finalist			
Finalist *	Cheyenne Gonzales	Patterson HS	V. Jamieson
Finalist *	Kylia Bishop Thompson	Oakdale Charter	J. Ves'sells
Finalist	Cecilia Alvarez	Central Catholic HS	Susan Dillon
Finalist	Michelle Borges	Hughson HS	Karalee Ruelas
Finalist	Kendra Boyd	Oakdale Charter	J. Ves'sells
Finalist	Clara den Dulk	Hughson HS	Karalee Ruelas
Finalist	Claire Dieker	Hughson HS	Karalee Ruelas
Finalist	Emily Fife	Hughson HS	Karalee Ruelas
Finalist	Clarissa Madrigal	Whitmore Charter HS	Kelly Hayes
Finalist	Daisy Perez	Peter Johansen HS	Nicole Evans
Finalist	Karla Perez	Patterson HS	Valerie Jamieson
Finalist	Emily Quillen	Hughson HS	Karalee Ruelas
Finalist	Maryam Sabri	Whitmore Charter HS	Kelly Hayes
Finalist	Zoe Zuidema	Peter Johansen HS	Jason Hightman

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Division III Grades 7 & 8

	Student	School	Teacher
First Place			
1st Place *	Stella Whitler	Hart Ransom Acad Chtr	Susan Janis
Second Place			
2nd Place	Francis Evans	Hart Ransom Acad Chtr	Susan Janis
Third Place			
3rd Place	Caleb Coston	Independent Study	Susan Janis
Honorable Mention			
Hon Men	Jonah Bird	Hart Ransom Acad Chtr	Susan Janis
Hon Men	Elise Hayden	Hart Ransom Acad Chtr	Susan Janis
Hon Men	Brooklynn Scott	Hart Ransom Acad Chtr	Susan Janis
Finalist			
Finalist *	Athena Envieh	Turlock Jr HS	Denise Nulph
Finalist *	Micah Kakuno	Oakdale Jr HS	D. Hawksworth
Finalist *	Audrey Kellert	Prescott Jr. High	Maia Tobin
Finalist *	Carly Kolsky	Hickman Charter Elem	Tracy Kline & Bret Bergthold
Finalist *	Angelina Lucca	Sacred Heart , Turlock	Elaine Magni
Finalist	Lauren Bowman	Hart Ransom Acad Chtr	Susan Janis
Finalist	Breanna Guillermo	Oakdale Jr HS	D. Hawksworth
Finalist	Brooke Hayden	Oakdale Jr HS	D. Hawksworth
Finalist	Alphia Jeevan	Oakdale Jr HS	D. Hawksworth
Finalist	Katelyn Kang	Prescott Jr. High	Maia Tobin
Finalist	Cole Kirschner	Oakdale Jr HS	D. Hawksworth
Finalist	Catherine Mullins	Hart Ransom Acad Chtr	Susan Janis
Finalist	Irina Putinsev	Hart Ransom Acad Chtr	Susan Janis
Finalist	Spencer von Savoye	Oakdale Jr HS	D. Hawksworth

School Winner

School Winner Norah O'Campo Hickman Middle School Michelle Blaze

* School Winner, recognized for the top essay from a school that has submitted 10 or more essays in the Division

Division IV Grades 5 & 6

	Student	School	Teacher
First Place			
1st Place *	Andrew Swehla	Hart Ransom Acad Chtr	Susan Janis
Second Place			
2nd Place	Connor Swearingen	Independent Study	Susan Janis
Third Place			
3rd Place	Claire Park	Hart Ransom Acad Chtr	Susan Janis
Honorable Mention			
Hon Men	Rylee Hull	Hart Ransom Acad Chtr	Susan Janis
Hon Men*	Erin Leamy	John Fremont OP	L. Hanzel-Sello
Hon Men*	Sabrina Toor	Agnes Baptist Elem	Toni David
Finalist			
Finalist	Kayvan Banankhah	Independent Study	Susan Janis
Finalist	Noah Bird	Hart Ransom Acad Chtr	Susan Janis
Finalist	Naseeb Deol	Agnes Baptist Elem	Michelle Danner
Finalist	Kaveri Gupta	Agnes Baptist Elem	Michelle Danner
Finalist	Leena Gupta	Agnes Baptist Elem	Michelle Danner
Finalist	Mihir Mathai	Agnes Baptist Elem	Toni David
Finalist	Jacob Miller	Agnes Baptist Elem	Michelle Danner
Finalist	Aliyah Mim	Agnes Baptist Elem	Toni David
Finalist	Aaryan Mistry	Agnes Baptist Elem	Toni David
Finalist	Mason Raposa	Agnes Baptist Elem	Michelle Danner
Finalist	Justina Shehata	Agnes Baptist Elem	Toni David
Finalist	Quinn Swearingen	Independent Study	Susan Janis
Finalist	Isabella Verdugo	Hart Ransom Acad Chtr	Susan Janis
Finalist	Landyn Wetzel	Agnes Baptist Elem	Michelle Danner
School Winner			
School Winner	Bobby Nieto	Hickman Middle School	Michelle Blaze
School Winner	Gabriel Racela	Daniel J. Savage MS	Kari Paulsen
School Winner	Payton Topie	Valley Home Elem	Debbie Stewart
School Winner	Courtney Wilson	Somerset MS	Denise Argain

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Special Thanks to 2019 Screeners and Judges

Beth Au	Peggy Hoover
Sarah Branly	Linda Knoll
Sergio Broderick	Linda Lagace
Anna Brown Hazen	Jane Manley
Indira Clark	Marian McBride-Luman
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Luella Cole	Linda Owen
Jocelyn Cooper	Dan Onorato
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Karhla Davies	Jeanne Pollard
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Annaliese Hausler-Akpovi	Leah Silvestre
Nancy Haskett	Julie TenBrink
Joe Homer	David Tucker

***T-Shirts
Fall Fund Raiser
Photographers
Refreshments***

***Peggy Hoover
John Frailing & Maria Arevalo
Jim Costello, Richard Anderson
Peace/Life Essay Committee***

First Place - Division I

**Mackensi Turner
Peter Johansen HS Nicole Evans
CALIFORNIA MY HOME**

First Place - Division II

**Emily Swehla
Independent Study Susan Janis
CALIFORNIA'S BOUNTY**

First Place - Division III

**Stella Whittler
Hart Ransom Academy Charter Susan Janis
HOME**

First Place - Division IV

**Andrew Swehla
Hart Ransom Academy Charter Susan Janis
COMMUNITY GARDENS**

Division III (Grades 7/8) Division IV (Grades 5/6)

California is a diverse and incredible place to live. From the lowest desert to the towering mountain peaks, the multitude of eco-regions are home to a vast variety of plants and animals as well as humans. Over 800 miles of coastline grace our state and a large agricultural economy produces two thirds of all the fruits and nuts and half of the vegetables grown in the U.S.

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(Include your word count at the end of your essay.)

WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS

Andrew Kranzman, MC
English Professor – MJC

CONGRATULATIONS AND CERTIFICATES

US Representative Josh Harder 10th
CA State Senator Andreas Borgeas, 8th District
CA State Senator Anna Caballero, 12th District
CA State Senator Cathleen Galgiani, 5th District
CA State Assemblyman Adam Gray, 21st District
CA Assemblymember Heath Flora 12th District

PRESENTATION AND AWARDS

Leng Nou, Presenter

~ CLOSING ~ REFRESHMENTS ~

“It was a splendid population - that gave to California a name for getting up astounding enterprises and rushing them through with a magnificent dash and daring and a recklessness of cost or consequences, which she bears unto this day - and when she projects a new surprise the grave world smiles as usual and says, "Well, that is California all over.”
— **Mark Twain, Roughing It**

The Modesto Peace/Life Center

For over 49 years the Modesto Peace/Life Center has been working to promote peace, social and economic justice, and a sustainable environment in our community, country and the world. Besides this Peace Essay Contest, the Center sponsors a number of other events:

Earth Day Graceada Park. Sat April 20 10 am - 4:30 pm
Peace/Life Center Booth with buttons, bumper stickers, and more.
Contact: Ken Schroeder, 480-4576.

Annual Pancake Breakfast Sun, June TBA 8:00 am till noon.
Church of the Brethren, 2301 Woodland Ave., Modesto,
Enjoy a scrumptious breakfast with wonderful variety of pancakes, and meet good people all to raise funds for Peace Center programs.

Family Peace Camp June 28 - 30 Fri afternoon through Sun
Camp Peaceful Pines on the Clark's Fork in the High Sierra.
Activities for adults and young people.
Relaxation, fun, and recharging for all.
Contact: Ken Schroeder, 480-4576.

Harvest Gathering (October)
Holiday Potluck Song Fest (December)
John McCutcheon Music Concert (Jan/Feb).
Vigil for Peace and Economic Justice (the first Wed)
Modesto's Martin Luther King, Jr. Event, Mar 30, 2018
On-line newspaper, **Stanislaus Connections**

The Center is committed to helping make a better society and world through nonviolence. We welcome everyone who wants to join us in this vital work. Thank you for your involvement in the 2019 Peace Essay Contest. Your encouragement of a child's thinking and writing contributes to our becoming a more thoughtful, kind and peaceful society.

To learn more:
Check out our website online: <http://peacelifecenter.org/> ,
Check out the newspaper <http://stanislausconnections.org/> ,
Look at our online videos at <http://vimeo.com/user9154856/> videos ,
Call the Center at 529-5750.

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2019 Award Reception Friday, March 8, 2019



Sponsored by:
Modesto Peace/Life Center
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and
Division of Literature and Language Arts
Modesto Junior College
2019 Peace Essay Committee

Indira Clark, Peggy Hoover, Linda Lagace, Deborah Roberts,
Sandy Sample, Shelly Scribner and David Tucker