



Armed Services YMCA of the USA

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EMBARGO: Media may not announce this until 1 November 2011.

Armed Services YMCA announces guidelines for annual essay contest.

ALEXANDRIA, Va. – The Armed Services YMCA **Essay Contest 2012** seeks students who can write about their **Military Hero** for its annual contest.

Co-sponsored by Lockheed Martin, the essay contest promotes reading and writing among children and teen dependents of active duty military or retirees from the Army, Navy, Marines, Air Force, Coast Guard, or National Guard/Reserve families.

One \$500 first place and one \$100 second place bond will be awarded in categories for first and second grade; third and fourth grade; fifth and sixth grade; and seventh and eighth grade. Students in two high school categories, ninth and tenth, and eleventh and twelfth, will be awarded \$1,000 bonds for first place, and \$200 bonds for second place.

Students are asked to write about '**My Military Hero**'. Grades eight and below should submit entries of at least 100 words but no more than 300 words. High school students (9th through 12th grade) should write essays of not more than 500 words but no less than 300. The essay can focus on any person who is/has served in the U.S. military. As an example, the essay could be about a parent, sibling, son/daughter, grandfather, etc., or an unrelated figure from U.S. military history such as Dwight Eisenhower, George Patton, George Washington, etc. The person need not be well known. They could have been an Army cook during Korea, an Ensign in WW2, a medic in Vietnam or a truck driver in the Gulf. As long as the individual served in the U.S. military the student can write about them. So, from the founding of America to the present, anyone who served can be the focus of the essay. Judges like **creative entries**, where the writer has put some thought into his or her entry. Poetry, stories, and news articles are different formats that have caught judges' attention in the past.

Entries should be **postmarked no later than March 16, 2012** to be eligible.

Send them to:

Armed Services YMCA
Attn: Essay Contest
6359 Walker Lane, Suite 200
Alexandria, VA 22310

All entries should include the official entry form **completely** filled out and found on the Armed Services YMCA website: www.asymca.org .

For any additional information not found on the website email the questions to tharper@asymca.org.

Since the Civil War, the Armed Services YMCA has consistently provided educational, recreational, social and spiritual programs to military members and their families. Celebrating 150 years, the Armed Services YMCA, an affiliate of the YMCA of the USA and headquartered in Alexandria, Virginia has more than 80 program locations around the world. ASYMCA – *Making Military Life Easier*.

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