

CEDAR RAPIDS CIVIL RIGHTS COMMISSION **POETRY CONTEST**

SUBMISSIONS DUE BY APRIL 7!

**Win up to
\$1,000 in
scholarships!**

Students in grades 9–12 may submit original spoken word or written poetry.

This contest is open to all students in grades 9–12 who attend Cedar Rapids area schools, including those who are not U.S. citizens and those who are homeschooled.

For more information, visit
www.cedar-rapids.org/CivilRights

2023 Theme

Access for All: Opening Doors to the Future

SUBMISSION CATEGORIES

1. **Written Poetry/Prose:** An original poem or prose written, not performed by the author.
 2. **Spoken Word:** An original poem or prose performed as a monologue.
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QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER

1. What does **equal access** to housing look like to you?
 2. How can access to housing impact a person's **future**?
 3. Why is it important for communities and neighborhoods to be **welcoming** to everyone?
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WHY SUBMIT A POEM?

- The Cedar Rapids Civil Rights Commission envisions a community based on fairness, equity, and belonging. The Commission recognizes and celebrates the unique beauty each individual brings to our community.
 - Your poem will help educate community members on the importance of ensuring housing is free from discrimination.
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DEADLINE

- Entries must be emailed to civilrights@cedar-rapids.org by 4pm on Friday, April 7.
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PRIZES

Winners in each category will be awarded the following toward Post Secondary Education through a College Savings Iowa 529 Plan:

- 1st Place: \$1,000
- 2nd Place: \$500
- 3rd Place: \$250

These funds can be used for any qualified educational institution in the US or abroad, including 4-year colleges, community colleges, trade and vocational schools, graduate schools, and online degree programs.

WHO CAN PARTICIPATE?

- This contest is open to all students in grades 9-12 who attend Cedar Rapids area schools, including students who are not U.S. citizens and those who are homeschooled.

CONTEST INFORMATION

HOW TO SUBMIT YOUR ENTRY

Submitting a written piece

- Poetry can be written in any poetic style as long as the poems fits the theme.
- Entries must be submitted via email to civilrights@cedar-rapids.org.
- Poems must be submitted in a Word document (.doc) file, 1 page maximum, double-spaced, and in 12 point font.
- The document should include your first and last name and email address at the top left.

Submitting a spoken piece

- Entries must be submitted via email to civilrights@cedar-rapids.org.
 - Text of the spoken word poem must also be submitted in a Word document (.doc) file, double-spaced, and in 12 point font.
 - The document should include your first and last name and email address at top left.
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CONTEST RULES AND REQUIREMENTS

- All entries must be the original work of the contestant.
 - Non-English submissions must include English translation.
 - Questionable entries may be disqualified.
 - Past participants who have received two first place prizes are ineligible to participate.
 - Immediate family and/or members of the households of judges, Cedar Rapids Civil Rights Commissioners, and employees are ineligible to participate.
 - Please include any appropriate content warning. For example: "This work engages with sexual violence" or "This work employs racist and homophobic language."
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HOW ENTRIES ARE JUDGED

All submissions will be judged by a panel of qualified professionals. Art will be judged based on the following criteria:

- **Originality:** The theme or message is conveyed in a way that is original and unique.
- **Creativity:** There is creative use of imagery and messages.
- **Evidence of Understanding:** The content accurately and clearly conveys messages about Fair Housing and the theme.
- **Impact:** The poem creates an overall impression, provokes discussion, or engages the audience.
- **Mechanics/Technique:**
 - **Written:** Coherence of form and structure, appropriate punctuation, spelling, and grammar.
 - **Spoken:** Voice and articulation, physical presence/stage presence, dramatic appropriateness.

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

WHAT IS FAIR HOUSING?

Fair housing is everyone's right to choose housing free from discrimination. Fair housing laws protect people from discrimination in housing transactions such as rentals, sales, lending, and insurance. The Cedar Rapids Civil Rights Commission enforces laws prohibiting discrimination based on:

- Age
 - Association (with persons)
 - Color
 - Creed
 - Disability (mental & physical)
 - Familial status
 - Gender identity
 - Marital status
 - National origin
 - Race
 - Religion
 - Retaliation
 - Sex (Gender)
 - Sexual Orientation
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WHERE CAN I LEARN MORE ABOUT FAIR HOUSING?

The Cedar Rapids Civil Rights Commission offers presentations on fair housing and the art contest to groups of students by request. Feel free to contact us at (319) 286-5036 or civilrights@cedar-rapids.org for more information. We would love to present to your group!

ARE THERE ANY ADDITIONAL FAIR HOUSING RESOURCES I CAN EXPLORE?

See below for several resources on fair housing.

- A Matter of Place Documentary. This film tells the stories of three people who experienced and challenged the injuries of housing discrimination. <https://vimeo.com/77785957>
- Seven Days Video (National Fair Housing Alliance) <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0EKo5rBBzpl>

Poetry Contest Applicant Entry Form

Grades 9-12

Please complete the Applicant Entry Form below and submit with your work.

If you have any questions and/or are in need of any special accommodations, please do not hesitate to contact us at (319) 286-5036 or civilrights@cedar-rapids.org.

We are excited you decided to participate and wish you the best of luck in this year's contest!

Instructions:

- Please fill out the below requested information, have a parent or guardian sign (if student is under 18), and submit with your work.
- If working with another student, two separate applicant entry forms must be completed for each student and submitted with the pair's poster.

NOTE: Participants may work individually or in groups of two (maximum). Only one entry is allowed per individual and/or pair. Scholarship prizes will be divided equally among paired winners.

STUDENT INFORMATION

First and Last Name: _____ Grade: _____

Address: _____ City: _____

Zip: _____ School/Organization: _____

Student's E-mail: _____

TEACHER INFORMATION (If applicable:)

Teacher's Name: _____ Teacher's Phone: _____

Teacher's E-mail: _____

PARENT/GUARDIAN INFORMATION (if participant is under 18)

First and Last Name: _____

E-mail: _____ Phone: _____

Please check the following:

_____ No copyrighted material or content is contained in the artwork.

By signing this, I am acknowledging art submitted to the Cedar Rapids Civil Rights Commission is original work by the student.

Signature of Parent/Guardian (or student if 18 years of age or older)

Date