Attachment C

Connecticut Bar Foundation James W. Cooper Fellows
Quintin Johnstone Statewide High School Essay Contest
2026-2027 JUDGING CRITERIA AND PROCEDURES

JUDGING CRITERIA

Entries will be judged on a scale of seventy (70) points using the following criteria:

1) Content/Originality: Does the entry address the topic? Does the entry demonstrate concern for the topic? Does the entry present a fresh idea or present its idea in a new way, and/or use diverse resource material to present its idea? Is the entry interesting? *Note that if a judge or a CBF staff member determines that an essay is not responsive to the topic, that essay may be disqualified; disqualified essays will be eliminated from the contest, and will not be scored by the judges. **25 point maximum**

2) Organization: Are the ideas in the entry clearly articulated? Is the entry well-structured? Does the entry follow a logical and easily understood progression? Does the entry have an effective beginning and end? Does it support the conclusions it draws? **20 point maximum**

3) Use of research/resource material: Does the entry utilize resource material accurately and effectively? Is resource material appropriately cited within the entry? **10 point maximum**

4) Writing: Are spelling, grammar, and punctuation reasonably correct? Is vocabulary used appropriately? **15 point maximum**

Maximum Score = 70

JUDGING PROCEDURES

1) So that it may remain anonymous, each entry submitted for screening and judging in accordance with these Judging Procedures shall be identified only by the identification number assigned to it by the Foundation pursuant to the Rules.

2) The submitted essays will be judged by a Selection Panel composed of Fellows and other members of the Bar. Each of the entries will be judged independently by at least four members of the Selection Panel in accordance with the Judging Criteria.

    a. In the event that the Foundation staff and/or Essay Contest Committee deem the total number of submissions to be unduly burdensome for the contest judges, the Foundation reserves the right to have a Prescreening Panel review all submissions with reference to the Judging Criteria. The Prescreening Panel will be composed of Foundation staff and/or members of the Essay Contest Committee, and will select the essays to be judged in the main round of competition; if the Prescreening Panel is employed, the number of essays selected will not exceed 150.

3) The total number of points assigned to an entry by the reviewing judges of the Selection Panel shall be added together to determine the entry's total score. The entries receiving the ten highest scores (plus ties) shall be reviewed solely for the purpose of confirming that resource materials cited in the entry have not been fabricated in form or content and that language and concepts are not plagiarized. In the event that two or more panel members (the "Qualifying Panel") conclude that the entry has cited fabricated resource material, or that language or concepts have been plagiarized, the entry shall be disqualified.

4) Qualified entries receiving the six highest scores (plus ties) shall be submitted to a panel (the "Final Panel") of five Fellows and/or members of the bench who have not served as members of the Prescreening Panel, the Selection Panel, or the Qualifying Panel. The Final Panel will not be advised of the score assigned to the entries submitted to it by the Selection Panel.

5) Each member of the Final Panel will judge each of the entries submitted in accordance with the Judging Criteria. The entry receiving the highest cumulative score shall be deemed the Statewide Winner and, thereafter, the two entries receiving the next highest scores shall be designated as Runner-Up Winners.

6) The decisions of the Prescreening Panel, the Selection Panel, the Qualifying Panel, and the Final Panel are final.