



The Arlington Martin Luther King Jr. Celebration Committee presents:

# ADVANCING THE DREAM

## "A Journey Toward Unity"

The **2026 MLK ESSAY CONTEST** is open to high school seniors attending Arlington schools or residing within Arlington city limits. The winning essay writers will be awarded scholarships to help defray the cost of college tuition and books.

**First Place — \$1,000 Scholarship**  
**Second Place — \$750 Scholarship**  
**Third Place — \$500 Scholarship**



### Essay Contest Rules

1. **Essays must be submitted by 5 pm Friday, Nov. 14, 2025**
2. One original, typed, double-spaced essay per student, not exceeding 1,500 words. Cite sources using APA in-text citations & include a references list (excluded from word count).
3. Each submission must include a signed entry form
4. Essay must be the students original work. Use of AI tools is prohibited and will result in disqualification.
5. Drawing from the speeches and writing of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., explain how his dream remains relevant today. Within your essay address the following:
  - *Non-violence and Love*: How Dr. King's philosophy offers solutions to division and conflict.
  - *Justice and Unity*: Why unity requires justice, and the ongoing importance of confronting inequality.
  - *Youth Responsibility*: The role of your generation in fulfilling Dr. King's dream.
6. Email submissions in PDF format to [arlingtonmlkessay@gmail.com](mailto:arlingtonmlkessay@gmail.com). Late entries will not be accepted.
7. All decisions are final and not subject to appeal.
8. For questions/more information, please email [arlingtonmlkessay@gmail.com](mailto:arlingtonmlkessay@gmail.com).

**Winners will be notified in December and formally recognized at the 2026 Martin Luther King Jr. Kick-Off Event. Find more details:**

**[www.ArlingtonMLK.com](http://www.ArlingtonMLK.com)**

**ENTRY FORM** Complete and firmly affix to the back of entry.

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Age \_\_\_\_\_ Grade \_\_\_\_\_

School \_\_\_\_\_ Teacher \_\_\_\_\_

Home Address \_\_\_\_\_ Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Email Address \_\_\_\_\_ Alternate Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Submission of an essay grants permission for your student's photograph, likeness, video footage, and/or work to be used by Arlington MLK Celebration Committee, Inc. for MLK Advancing the Dream Four-Day Celebration related purposes including but not limited to PROGRAMS, WORK DISPLAYS, ART EXHIBITIONS, WEB PAGES and SOCIAL MEDIA PLATFORMS.

Parent/Guardian Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_