

Black History Month Essay Contest 2010 Vision for America/Creating a New Dream



Excerpt from Martin Luther King's, I have a dream speech: And so even though we face the difficulties of today and tomorrow, I still have a dream. It is a dream deeply rooted in the American dream. . . I have a dream that one day this nation will rise up and live out the true meaning of its creed: "We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal." . . And if America is to be a great nation, this must become true.

John Fitzgerald Kennedy's Inaugural Address 1-20-1961: In your hands, my fellow citizens, more than mine will rest the final success or failure of our course. Since this country was founded, each generation of Americans has been summoned to give testimony to its national loyalty. The graves of young Americans who answered the call to service surround the globe. . . . Now the trumpet summons us again—not as a call to bear arms, though arms we need—not as a call to battle, though embattled we are—but a call to bear the burden of a long twilight struggle, year in and year out, "rejoicing in hope, patient in tribulation"—a struggle against the common enemies of man: tyranny, poverty, disease and war itself. . . . And so, my fellow Americans: ask not what your country can do for you—ask what you can do for your country. . . . My fellow citizens of the world: ask not what America will do for you, but what together we can do for the freedom of man. . . . Finally, whether you are citizens of America or citizens of the world, ask of us here the same high standards of strength and sacrifice which we ask of you. With a good conscience our only sure reward, with history the final judge of our deeds, let us go forth to lead the land we love, asking His blessing and His help, but knowing that here on earth God's work must truly be our own.

Robert F. Kennedy – statement on the assassination of King...What we need in the United States is not division; what we need in the United States is not hatred; what we need in the United States is not violence and lawlessness but is love and wisdom, and compassion toward one another, and a feeling of justice toward those who still suffer within our country, whether they be white or whether they be black. So I ask you tonight to return home, to say a prayer for the family of Martin Luther King – yeah, it's true – but more importantly to say a prayer for our own country, which all of us love – a prayer for understanding and that compassion of which I spoke. We can do well in this country. We will have difficult times. We've had difficult times in the past, but we – and we will have difficult times in the future. It is not the end of violence; it is not the end of lawlessness; and it it's not the end of disorder. But the vast majority of white people and the vast majority of black people in this country want to live together, want to improve the quality of our life, and want justice for all human beings that abide in our land. And let's dedicate ourselves to what the Greeks wrote so many years ago: to tame the savageness of man and make gentle the life of this world. Let us dedicate ourselves to that, and say a prayer for our country and for our people. Thank you very much.

President Obama's Inaugural Address 1-20-09. . . In reaffirming the greatness of our nation we understand that greatness is never a given. It must be earned. Our journey has never been one of short-cuts or settling for less. It has not been the path for the faint-hearted, for those that prefer leisure over work, or seek only the pleasures of riches and fame. Rather, it has been the risk-takers, the doers, the makers of things—some celebrated, but more often men and women obscure in their labor — who have carried us up the long rugged path towards prosperity and freedom. . . . The question we ask today is not whether our government is too big or too small, but whether it works – whether it helps families find jobs at a decent wage, care they can afford, a retirement that is dignified. Where the answer is yes, we intend to move forward. Where the answer is no, programs will end. And those of us who manage the public's dollars will be held to account, to spend wisely, reform bad habits, and do our business in the light of day, because only then can we restore the vital trust between a people and their government. . . . This is the price and the promise of citizenship. This is the source of our confidence – the knowledge that God calls on us to shape an uncertain destiny. This the meaning of our liberty and our creed, why men and women and children of every race and every faith can join in celebration across this magnificent mall; and why a man whose father less than 60 years ago might not have been served in a local restaurant can now stand before you to take a most sacred oath.

BLACK HISTORY MONTH “VISION FOR AMERICA/CREATING A NEW DREAM” ESSAY CONTEST

THEME:

Dr. King had a dream about racial equality, social justice and ending poverty. What do you think Americans today could do or are doing to help with these issues, either in your community or nationwide? What is your dream for America?

CRITERIA:

1. **Essays** should be typed and titled
2. Do not put your name on the **essay**; provide a cover sheet with your name.
3. **Essays** should not exceed **500 words**.
4. **Essays** should address the theme: “Vision For America/Creating A New Dream.”
5. Essays must be submitted to Monica Dubrey/Counselors’ Office/Orange Park Campus or to Professors Melody Hargraves/Dawn Bergeron by the due date.

Judging your essay

1. Essays will be judged by originality of ideas.
2. A panel of judges will decide the winning essays.
3. First, second, and third place winners’ essays will be published on SJRCC Web site and receive prizes.

Deadline is February 18th, 2010 – Winners will be announced and prizes awarded Wednesday, February 24th, 2010.

Contest is open to all SJRCC faculty, staff and students. However, prizes are awarded only to students; faculty and staff will receive recognition.



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Student Name (printed): _____

Student Signature: _____

Date: _____