Writing-related Competitions, Internships, Fellowships, and Other Awards for College Students

Compiled for The Honors Opportunities Conference
Macaulay Honors College
The City University of New York

November 3, 2009

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**Introduction/Advice for Students**

Before embarking on any writing contest or competition, please take a few moments to read these ten tips:

1) Always learn about the sponsoring organization and, if an award program includes publication, familiarize yourself with that publication before submitting any contest entry. Just as you must research potential publishers for your short stories, essays, or books in other situations, you’ll want to understand—and perhaps even better “match” your submissions—to a given opportunity. At the same time, especially with programs and publications that may be new or unfamiliar to you, it’s important to assure yourself that these are, indeed, places where you’ll be happy to see your work find a home and recognition.

2) Check with the sponsoring organization’s Web site (or by mail or phone if necessary) to learn about any changes in a program’s guidelines or policies. Deadlines in particular may shift from year to year, even just to accommodate a weekend or holiday.

3) If you request additional information or guidelines by mail, be sure to enclose a self-addressed, stamped envelope (SASE) with proper postage.

4) Plot the deadlines in your calendar. Plan ahead. Some writers use contest deadlines to spur them on to finish a project—or start a new one. Some set goals (one competition per month, one competition per quarter, etc.). But if there’s an opportunity that’s just perfect for you, don’t miss it because you “forgot” to note it when it first caught your eye.

5) Double-check every opportunity you’re interested in pursuing for required entrance forms and specific instructions on manuscript preparation and mailing.

6) Speaking of manuscript preparation and mailing—always follow the individual guidelines. Don’t assume that all contest policies are created equal! And don’t antagonize or irritate a contest administrator (or judge) before s/he has even read your work. Do not e-mail submissions to competitions that do not accept submissions via e-mail. Do not send a manuscript with your name on every page if the guidelines explicitly state that your name should appear nowhere on the manuscript. Do not staple manuscripts that should be paper-clipped or bound. And so on.
7) Proofread, proofread, proofread. Then proofread again. Read your
work aloud to catch the errors spellcheck or other computer programs
may not have noticed.

8) Keep a record—and a copy—of all your submissions.

9) If and when you find yourself in the happy position of having your
work win a competition, it is the kind (and polite) thing to do to notify
any other publication or publisher who may be considering that work
that it is no longer available (or, in the case of an internship, once
you’ve won and accepted one position you should remove yourself
from consideration for any others you may have been pursuing). Most
organizations will indicate in their guidelines whether such a
simultaneous submission was acceptable in the first place). Take care
of any such notifications immediately.

10) Celebrate! (Whether you’ve “won” or not!) You’ve accomplished
something pretty important just by taking the risk of putting your work
out there and taking this chance. Give yourself some credit. And then
get back to writing.

What follows is a compilation of contest, internship, and related opportunities
for undergraduates with demonstrated skills and interests in writing and/or
journalism. When last checked (fall 2009), none of these programs charged
submission or application fees.
Lex Allen Literary Festival Prizes (poetry and fiction)
Hollins University
PO Box 9677
Roanoke, VA 24020-1677
(e-mail submissions accepted)
http://www.hollins.edu/news-events/litfest/litfest.htm
Deadline: February 8 (2010)

As part of its daylong literary festival (scheduled in 2010 for March 6), Hollins University runs a contest for undergraduate college students, who are invited to submit up to three poems and/or up to two short stories for the $100 prizes in each genre. All entries must include the name and city and state of the author’s college and the author’s contact information (e-mail or phone number).

American Association for the Advancement of Science (AAAS) Mass Media Science & Engineering Fellows Program
1200 New York Avenue, NW
Washington, DC 20005
http://www.aaas.org/programs/education/MassMedia/program.shtml
Deadline: January 15 (2010)

“Increasing public understanding of science and technology is one of the principal goals of AAAS. The association has improved coverage of science and technology in mass media for more than 30 years through the Mass Media Science & Engineering Fellows Program. This highly competitive program strengthens the connections between scientists and journalists by placing advanced science, mathematics and engineering students in newsrooms across the country. The AAAS Fellows use their academic training in the sciences as they research, write and report today’s headlines, sharpening their abilities to communicate complex scientific issues to non-specialist.” This 10-week program is open to college or university students (in their senior year, or in any graduate or post-graduate level) in the natural, physical, health, engineering, computer, or social sciences or mathematics to apply. “AAAS typically selects from 15-20 Mass Media Fellows each summer. Fellows are provided a weekly stipend of $450 as well as travel expenses to and from AAAS and their sites.” See the Web site for more information and the downloadable application form.

AAAS (American Association for the Advancement of Science)
Minority Science Writers Internship
1200 New York Avenue, NW, Room 608
Washington, DC 20005
http://www.aaas.org/careercenter/internships/scienceminority.shtml
Deadline: March 1 (this was the 2009 deadline; check for updates)

This program, based at the headquarters of AAAS’s *Science* magazine, is open to college undergraduates and offers paid, 10-week internships under the guidance of professional science writers and editors. Internship includes travel to and from the internship site in Washington, DC. Check the Web site for more information and the application.

**AAAS (American Association for the Advancement of Science)**

**Science News Writing Internship**

Attn: Dawn Graf, Senior Human Resources Officer  
Science Intern Program  
1200 New York Avenue, NW, #102  
Washington, DC 20005  
http://www.aaas.org/careercenter/internships/science.shtml  
Deadline: Not precisely indicated: “The editors will make a final selection of the January intern in the middle of November; of the July intern, in the middle of April.”

*Science* magazine offers internships for six-month periods. “Candidates should have completed their undergraduate education or be in the senior year of college when they apply.” “The Science intern will join the regular news staff in Washington, DC, and devote most of his or her time to contributing to the magazine and to ScienceNow, our daily online news service. In addition, the intern will research and write other news stories, assist in production, fill in for absent staffers, and provide help as needed to staff writers and editors. *Science* pays a modest salary.” Check the Web site for more information.

**Abroad View Student Writing Contest**

(prefers submissions via e-mail per the guidelines)  
http://www.abroadview.org/initiatives/writingcontest.htm  
Deadline: April 1 (annual)

“The Abroad View Foundation hosts a Writing Contest for all currently enrolled undergraduate and graduate students and students who have graduated within the past year. The winner for each category will receive $100, and his or her submission will be published in *Abroad View*.” All submissions entered into the contest will be eligible for further review for magazine and website publication. Categories include Crossing Borders, Immersion, International Relations, and Inspiration. Check the Web site for detailed guidelines. No simultaneous or previously published publications. Note that Abroad View Foundation promotes education abroad, global awareness, and cross-cultural understanding.
Atlantic Monthly Student Writing Contest
The Watergate
600 New Hampshire Avenue NW
Washington, DC 20037
http://www.theatlantic.com/a/contest.mhtml
Deadline: December 1 (postmarked, 2009)

For “full-time undergraduate or graduate students currently enrolled in an accredited degree-granting U.S. institution.” Welcomes unpublished submissions (work may have appeared in student periodicals) in poetry, fiction, and personal or journalistic essays. Prizes in each category include a $1,000 first prize, a $500 second prize, a $250 third prize, and one-year subscriptions to the magazine for seven runners-up.

Bucknell Seminar for Younger Poets
Stadler Center for Poetry
Bucknell Hall
Bucknell University
Lewisburg, PA 17837
http://www.bucknell.edu/x3724.xml
Deadline: February 1 (postmarked, 2010)

“Held for three weeks in June, the Seminar provides an extended opportunity for undergraduate poets to write and be guided by established poets.” Applicants (who must be students completing their sophomore, junior, or senior year in a U.S. college/university) compete for 10 fellowships, which include tuition, housing, and meals. “A limited number of travel scholarships are available on the basis of need.” See Web site for more information and application instructions.

Sylvia K. Burack Scholarship
The Writer
21027 Crossroads Circle
PO Box 1612
Waukesha, WI 53187-1612
http://www>writermag.com
(Check “Announcements” section on the home page)
Deadline: March 1 (postmarked, 2010)

Open to full-time students in universities or colleges in the United States or Canada. The award includes a $500 scholarship and a one-year subscription to the author of a winning entry (600-800 words). Topic for 2010: “Select a work of fiction or poetry that has influenced the way you view the world and the way you view yourself. Discuss the work and explain how it affected you.”
Chronicle of Higher Education Editorial Internships
Attention: Beth McMurtrue, Internship Coordinator
1255 23rd Street, NW
Washington, DC 20037
http://chronicle.com/section/Editorial-Internships/158
(Check for seasonal deadlines)

These stipendiary ($500/week) internships take place in the Chronicle’s Washington, D.C. office. Primary responsibilities include “reporting and writing daily news articles for The Chronicle’s Web site (which usually appear subsequently in print), contributing brief features to the “Short Subjects” section, writing news articles for other sections of the newspaper, and doing research for special projects. There is very little grunt work. Interns who prove themselves as reporters and writers are often asked to write full-length features.” The Chronicle is also offering a Diversity Internship, which “aims to bring greater diversity to the field of journalism by reaching out to students who are members of minority groups underrepresented in the industry.”

Dante Prize
Dante Society of America
(submit via e-mail)
http://www.dantesociety.org/prizes.html
Deadline: June 30 (annual)

The Dante Society offers a $250 award for the best essay on a subject related to the life and works of Dante written by an undergraduate in an American or Canadian college or university. Also eligible are recent graduates (within the past year) who are not enrolled as graduate students. (Another prize, for $500, the Grandgent Award, is offered for a graduate essay.) Winning essays are published in the Dante Society’s Newsletter and in Dante Studies. Essays must be submitted by e-mail attachment to the Dante Society. See web guidelines for specific instructions.

Institute for Humane Studies Journalism Internship Program
(apply online)
http://www.theihs.org/internship_programs
Deadline: January 31 (2010)

Eight-week program offers a $3,200 stipend and a travel allowance, plus participation in a week-long summer workshop.

Charles Johnson Student Fiction Award
Attention: Allison Joseph
English Department-Mail Code 4503
This annual award competition presents $1,000 and a signed copy of a Charles Johnson book to the winner. The winning entry is also published in Crab Orchard Review. The competition is “intended to encourage increased artistic and intellectual growth among students, as well as reward excellence and diversity in creative writing.” It’s open to all undergraduate and graduate students who are U.S. citizens or permanent residents, currently enrolled (full- or part-time) in a U.S. college or university. Submit one unpublished story only.

Ruth Lilly Poetry Fellowships
The Poetry Foundation
444 North Michigan Avenue, Suite 1850
Chicago, IL 60611-4034
http://poetryfoundation.org/programs/prizes_fellowship.html
Deadline: “Guidelines and applications for the 2010 Ruth Lilly Fellowships will be available February 1, 2010.”

“Established in 1989 by Ruth Lilly to encourage the further writing and study of poetry, the Ruth Lilly Poetry Fellowship program has dramatically expanded since its inception. Until 1995, university writing programs nationwide each nominated one student poet for a single fellowship; from 1996 until 2007, two fellowships were awarded. In 2008 the competition was opened to all U.S. poets between 21 and 31 years of age, and the number of fellowships increased to five, totaling $75,000.”

Lincoln Forum/Platt Family Scholarship Prize Essay contest
(submit via e-mail or regular mail per the guidelines)
Deadline: July 31 (2009 deadline; check for 2010 updates)

This contest is designed for full-time, undergraduate students in an American college or university (students need not be American citizens to enter the contest). Prizes: $1,000 (first prize), $500 (second prize), and $250 (third prize. The essay topic for 2009 was “Barack Obama and Abraham Lincoln: Getting Right with Lincoln.” Check the site for the 2010 topic and guidelines.

The Lyric College Poetry Contest
c/o Tanya Cimonetti
1393 Spear Street
South Burlington, VT 05403
http://www.thelyricmagazine.com/colleage_all.html
Deadline: December 1 (postmarked, 2009)

This competition is open to full-time undergraduates enrolled in American or Canadian colleges or universities. “Poems must be original and unpublished, 39 lines or less, written in English in traditional forms, preferably with regular scansion and rhyme.” Prizes: $500 (first prize), $100 (second prize), $50 (third prize), plus a $100 honorarium to the library of the first-prize winner.

**Norman Mailer College Award**  
(apply online)  
http://wwwncte.org/awards/student/nmwa  
Submissions: late March-early May (March 23-May 10, 2009; check for 2010 updates)

Jointly sponsored by the Norman Mailer Writers Colony and the National Council of Teachers of English, this award was launched in 2009 (creative nonfiction was the inaugural genre). The first College Award included $10,000 plus a summer scholarship to the Norman Mailer Writers Colony.

**The Nation Institute Internship Program**  
116 East 16th Street, 8th Floor  
New York, NY 10003  
http://www.nationinstitute.org/p/internships  
Deadlines: vary depending on the program season. Check the website for the next upcoming deadline.

In conjunction with *The Nation* magazine, The Nation Institute provides an internship program for college students and recent graduates interested in magazine journalism and publishing. The internships are full-time, with ten intern positions available per session (nine in New York and one in Washington). Applicants must have completed their junior year of college. (Note that the Nation Institute “separately offers an internship position for qualified Hispanic or Latino candidates,” which you can also learn about at the Web site.) Stipends of $150/week are provided, plus a limited number of housing/travel grants (these are based on financial need). It’s also possible to arrange for academic or work-study credit. More information is available at the Web site.

**The Nation Student Writing Contest**  
(apply via e-mail)  
http://www.thenation.com/about/student_writing_contest.mhtml  
Deadline: June 15 (2009; check for 2010 information)
According to the 2009 guidelines, this contest was open to all matriculating high school students and undergraduates at American schools, colleges, and universities, as well as those receiving high school diplomas or college degrees in 2009. The question students were asked to answer in essay format was: “How has the recession affected you, your family, or someone you know.” Five finalists and two winners (one from college, one from high school) were selected. Each winner was awarded a $1,000 cash prize, a magazine subscription, and publication; each finalist won $200 and online publication.

**National Federation of State Poetry Societies College/University Level Poetry Competition Awards**
N. Colwell Snell, Chairman
P.O. Box 520698
Salt Lake City, UT 84152-0698
http://www.nfsps.com/scholarship.htm
Deadline: (including notarized entry form): February 1 (received, 2009; check for 2010 updates)

For freshmen, sophomores, juniors and seniors at accredited colleges and universities. Two students will win $500 awards and stipend to travel to the June NFSPS convention, where they will be invited to read from their work. The award manuscripts are published, with each recipient receiving 75 copies of the published work. Submission package must include notarized application form, available on the website.

**Oregon Quarterly Northwest Perspectives Essay Contest**
5228 University of Oregon
Eugene, OR 97403-5228
http://www.oregonquarterly.com/essay.php
Deadline: January 31 (postmarked, 2010)

Seeks unpublished nonfiction entries (1,500 words maximum for the student competition) addressing “ideas that affect the Northwest.” Winning essay will receive $500 prize and will be published in the magazine. Second-place winner receives $200; third-place winner receives $75. Selected essayists are also featured in a public reading. Five student finalists are invited to a writing workshop with the contest judge. The student competition is open to students currently enrolled and pursuing a graduate or undergraduate degree, subject to exclusions mentioned in the contest guidelines.

**Overseas Press Club (OPC) Foundation Scholarships**
40 West 45th Street
New York, NY 10036
http://www.opcofamerica.org/content/view/33/158/
Deadline: December 1 (2009)

“Graduate and undergraduate students, studying at American colleges and universities are invited to apply for one of twelve $2,000 scholarships to be awarded by the Overseas Press Club Foundation. Winning an OPC Foundation scholarship is more than a cash award. Winners are invited to join the Overseas Press Club family. They are encouraged to network and keep the organization informed of their career moves. From among the scholarship winners, the Foundation also selects up to six scholars and pays travel and living expenses for them to intern at foreign bureaus at such leading news organization as the Associated Press and Reuters and foreign English-language media like Cambodia Daily and the South China Morning Post. In many cases, winning a prestigious OPC Foundation award has helped launch careers.” Check the site for more information and required application.

**Ayn Rand Institute Annual Essay Contest on Ayn Rand’s Novel *Atlas Shrugged***
Dept. W
PO Box 57044
Irvine, CA 92619-7044
(may also submit online)
http://www.aynrand.org/site/PageServer?pagename=education_contests_atlas
Deadline: September 17 (2009)

Competition offers choice of essay topics focused on *Atlas Shrugged*. Entrants must be enrolled in a college/university (or 12th grade) at time of entry. International entrants welcome. First prize, $10,000; three second prizes, $2,000; five third prizes, $1,000; 20 finalist awards, $100; 20 semifinalist awards, $50. Check site for full guidelines and information.

**Society for the History of Discoveries Prize Essay Contest**
SHD Prize Essay Contest
James Ford Bell Library
University of Minnesota
309 19th Avenue South
Minneapolis, MN 55455
(prefers e-mail submissions per the guidelines)
http://www.sochistdisc.org/essay-contest.htm
Deadline May 15 (2010)

A $600 prize plus an invitation for the winning writer to speak at the Society’s annual meeting and possible publication will be awarded for an essay on a topic “embraced by the Society’s name: the history of discoveries. Essays may deal with voyages, travel, biography, history, cartography,
techniques and technology, or other aspects of discovery.” The prize is open to post-secondary (college and university) students from around the world who have not yet received the doctoral degree.

**Society of Professional Journalists Pulliam/Kilgore FOI Internships**

Society of Professional Journalists  
Eugene S. Pulliam National Journalism Center  
3909 N. Meridian Street  
Indianapolis, IN 46208  
[http://spj.org/i-pullkilgore.asp](http://spj.org/i-pullkilgore.asp)  
Deadline: January 5 (postmarked, 2009)

Two internships awarded annually to students (must be journalism students entering or just completing their senior year, a graduate journalism student, or a law student with a journalism background). One intern is assigned to the Washington, DC offices of the Society's First Amendment legal counsel; the other works at the Society's headquarters in Indianapolis. “The interns research and write about freedom of information issues while assisting the Society's Freedom of Information Committee and First Amendment legal counsel in preparing SPJ's annual Freedom of Information Report.” Interns work for 10 weeks and receive a $400/week stipend. More information available online.

**South Asian Journalists Association (SAJA) Journalism Scholarships**

(apply via online form)  
[http://www.saja.org/programs/scholarships](http://www.saja.org/programs/scholarships)  
Deadline: March 10 (2009; check for 2010 updates)

Annual scholarships ($1,000 to a high school senior about to enter college; $1,500 to a college student (four-year or community college); $1,500 New Media scholarship to a college student (four-year or community college); $1,500 New Media scholarship to graduate-level students; two $2,000 scholarships to graduate students) are awarded to applicants of South Asian descent who are “serious about pursuing journalism as a career and provide events they plan to through courses, internships or freelancing.” See the guidelines for more information, including details on eligibility and an application form.

**Stony Brook Short Fiction Prize**

John Westermann, Director of the Short Fiction Prize  
Stony Brook Southampton  
MFA in Writing and Literature  
239 Montauk Highway  
Southampton, NY 11968  
[http://www.stonybrook.edu/fictionprize](http://www.stonybrook.edu/fictionprize)
Deadline: March 1 (postmarked, 2010)

Open to undergraduates enrolled full-time in American and Canadian universities and colleges. “This Prize has always encouraged submissions from students with an Asian background, but we urge all students to enter.” Submissions, maximum 7500 words, should also include proof of writer’s current undergraduate status and permanent address, phone number, and e-mail address. Prize of $1,000 and publication of winning story on the Stony Brook Web site to the winner, plus publication consideration in The Southampton Review.

Sir John M. Templeton Fellowship Essay Contest
(submit electronically per the guidelines)
http://www.independent.org/essay
Deadline: May 3 (2010)

This competition is open to “college or university students – part-time or full-time, undergraduate or graduate, from all nations and academic disciplines,” who are no older than 35 years. The contest encourages the study of “the meaning and significance of economic and personal liberty.” Cash prizes: $2,500 (first prize), $1,500 (second prize), and $1,000 (third prize). NB: This competition is also open to junior faculty, who are judged in a separate category and awarded other prizes. There is a great deal of additional information available at the Web site, including the current essay topic.

Transitions Abroad Student Writing Contest
(submit via e-mail per the guidelines)
http://transitionsabroad.com/information/writers/student.shtml
Deadline: March 1 (2010)

Billed as “the only student travel writing contest on study, volunteering, internships, and work abroad,” this competition is open to “all currently enrolled undergraduate and graduate students, students who have graduated within the last year, and students currently on leave.” Winning submission is awarded $500; 2nd place winner is awarded $150; 3rd place winner is awarded $100; all three pieces are published online. Runners-up will be awarded $50 and publication online. Check site for details.

Elie Wiesel Prize in Ethics Essay Contest
Elie Wiesel Foundation for Humanity
555 Madison Avenue
New York, NY 10022
http://www.eliewieselfoundation.org/information.aspx
Deadline: January 8 (2010)
Open to full-time undergraduate juniors and seniors at accredited four-year colleges and universities in the United States, this competition is “designed to challenge college students to analyze the urgent ethical issues confronting them in today’s complex world.” Essay topics suggested in the guidelines. First prize ($5,000); Second Prize ($2,500); Third Prize ($1,500); two Honorable Mentions of $500 each. Comprehensive submission guidelines, including entry form, available on the Web site.
Additional Resources and Information

CubReporters.org compilation of fellowship/award opportunities for students interested in journalism
http://cubreporters.org/fellowships.html#SKUL

National Association of Hispanic Journalists student resources page
http://www.nahj.org/educationalprograms/studentresources.shtml

The Practicing Writer (free monthly newsletter)
http://www.practicing-writer.com
and
Practicing Writing (blog)
http://practicing-writing.blogspot.com

WinningWriters.com (especially for poets; look for the free monthly newsletter)
http://www.winningwriters.com