**Lake County Right to Life Oratory Contest Rules**

1. Highschoolers in 11th and 12th grade on February 1st of the year of the national contest are eligible to compete. In the case of advanced students, non-traditional students, or home-schooled students, the school must recognize the student as an 11th or 12th grader or include the year the student will enter college to determine eligibility.
2. Students who have competed their sophomore or junior year may compete the following year (with an entirely new speech) EXCEPT a student who has won the national contest may not compete again. Second place winners may compete again.
3. Contestants are to research, write, and present an original pro-life speech on abortion, infanticide, euthanasia, or embryonic stem cell research.
4. The speech is to be 5-7 minutes in length. A contestant will be disqualified if the speech is timed to be less than 4 minutes or over 8 minutes in length. Judges are instructed to use their judgment regarding over or under time limit speeches. It is left to the discretion of the judges how the 4-5 minute and 7-8 minute speech will be reflected in the contestant's score.
5. Appropriate gestures are permitted. Props are not permitted.
6. Speech content may not be significantly changed as a contestant advances. Fine-tuning for minor corrections or to adjust time is allowed and encouraged. A written copy of the winning speech must be forwarded to the state contest.
7. The contestant should use up-to-date, factual information.
8. The style or speech type should be appropriate to the message of the speech. A dramatic presentation is not acceptable. A dramatic presentation is considered anything read or performed that has been previously written by another author; a short story, poem, etc. Although quotes to support a position or statement are appropriate, they may not dominate the speech, and should be appropriately cited. Dramatic presentations are also defined, for the purposes of this contest, as including use of a prop or another person, such as acting out the life of an unborn baby. This rule is not to be interpreted as ruling out the use of emotions.
9. The judges' background and qualifications may differ. Although all are pro-life, the speech should appeal to a broad audience.
10. No copyrighted speeches shall be used in the contest.
11. The contest may be videotaped or recorded. The tape will remain the property of Lake County Right to Life and of Indiana Right to Life of Indianapolis, Inc.
12. Contestants may use notes.
13. The use of the podium is optional.
14. The use of microphones will not be allowed. The Contest Director may make an exception if the contest room creates the necessity for the use of microphones.
15. The contest will have three (3) judges and one (1) timekeeper.
16. The judges score contestants in four areas: Introduction, Content, Presentation, and Conclusion. Contestants are given a score of 1-10 in each area (10 being the best.). The scores are then added together for a perfect score of 40. The total scores from all three judges are added together to achieve a grand total. The grand total will determine which contestants move to the next level.
17. The judges' decisions will be FINAL.
18. All efforts will be made to assure accuracy. In the event of a mistake, every effort will be made to correct it.
19. Ties will be handled by the Contest Director.
20. The decision of the Contest Director concerning application of these rules is FINAL.