

2025 ESSAY CONTEST

E·R·A·S·E



RACISM

"Once you do away with the idea of people as fixed, static entities, then you see that people can change, and there is hope." bell hooks

What does it mean to shape change? Think about your time on Long Island – whether it's at school, in your community (i.e. neighborhood, religious, extracurricular, etc.). What are the biggest issues you face, or that your school or community is dealing with? Now, imagine how these issues could be turned into solutions. What would a world without these issues look like? How would it feel? Why does this issue matter to you, and why do you want to change it? What's the way forward?

Be specific and be creative – this scholarship is dedicated to John Wenzel, whose fascinating career spanned practicality and passion. After the bombing of Pearl Harbor, he was forced to join the air force and ultimately pursued a corporate career, advocated for clean energy, and eventually joined the Rauch Foundation to underscore his activism. Meanwhile, he maintained his passion for painting even while working and fighting for equity, justice, and freedom. Think about creative ways you can be an advocate for justice and change in your schools and communities.

The contest is for public high school seniors who have plans to attend a four-year college, two-year college, or an accredited vocational program. Students must provide official proof of enrollment to a college or program (such as verification form/letter) to receive scholarship award funds.

This year, submissions can be submitted in one of the following forms:

- An essay between 400-500 words, submitted in Word format.
- A "campaign," possibly for social media, which could take the following forms:
- A TikTok series of 5-6 short videos (1-3 minutes long)
- A series of Instagram posts (10 posts)
- A photo or video series documenting inequity
- A video (e.g. for Youtube), 5 minutes long
- An action plan for your community
- Educational Pamphlets
- Specific Policy suggestions
- Proposed/possible petitions



All submissions should be emailed to scholarship@eraseracismny.org with the subject heading "Raise your Voice Scholarship Submission" by **May 15th, 2025. Go to eraseracismny.org for more info.**

THE GRAND PRIZE WILL RECEIVE THE JOHN WENZEL SCHOLARSHIP: \$1500 SCHOLARSHIP AND A LAPTOP
FOUR OTHER WINNERS WILL RECEIVE A \$500 SCHOLARSHIP

We thank John Wenzel's family, The Rauch Foundation , and SCOPE for their generous sponsorship of our essay contest.