

# 2026 ESSAY CONTEST OUR HISTORY OUR FUTURE

E·R·A·S·E



RACISM

As high school seniors preparing to step into adulthood, you have a unique opportunity to reflect on the past while helping shape the future. Long Island's history—from early settlement and segregation to the civil rights movement—continues to influence who is heard, represented, and given opportunity in our region today.

In **400–500 words**, we invite you to write an essay that explores the connection between Long Island's history and the future of racial equity and inclusion in our communities.

Your essay should:

- reflect on a historical event, policy, or personal experience that has contributed to racial inequality on Long Island.
- explain how this history continues to affect individuals or communities today.
- share your vision for the role young people, including yourself, can play in shaping a more inclusive and equitable future on Long Island.
- incorporate both personal reflection and historical understanding to present thoughtful ideas for positive change.

## **Awards:**

1. Four winning essays will be selected. Each winner will receive a \$500 scholarship presented at the 25th Anniversary Benefit Gala on June 3, 2026 at the Garden City Hotel.
2. Essays will be judged on originality and creativity of ideas.
3. Essays must be submitted no later than **April 24, 2026 [EXTENDED DEADLINE]**.
4. Winners must provide proof of enrollment to a college or vocational school to receive award funds.

All submissions should be emailed to [scholarships@eraseracismny.org](mailto:scholarships@eraseracismny.org) with the subject heading ***Our History Our Future Essay Contest***. Go to [eraseracismny.org](http://eraseracismny.org) for more information.

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