

2025 Wisconsin Civics Games dates announced

MADISON — The 2025 Wisconsin Newspaper Association (WNA) Foundation's Wisconsin Civics Games dates have been set.

The competition, which aims to promote civics education and encourage Wisconsin high school students to develop an interest in public service, will host play-off competitions virtually on April 9-10, 2025.

The top-performing teams will advance to the state finals on Friday, May 2, at the Wisconsin State Capitol. Members of the state championship-winning team will receive \$2,000 scholarships to the Wisconsin college or university of their choice.

Once teams have identified their participants, they can sign up to participate online. Following registration, participating teams will receive "The Framework of Your Wisconsin Government" textbook and access to several online resources to help them prepare for the competition(s).

A team may have any number of players who meet all eligibility requirements, but only up to four players can actively compete at any given time. Teams may compete with as few as one player. This year, schools are allowed to enter multiple teams in the regional competitions. A winning team will have a maximum of four players eligible for a scholarship.

Individuals interested in receiving general email alerts regarding Civics Games news and information can do so online at wnanews.com.

Support the Civics Games

Those interested in supporting the Civics Games can do so in the following ways:

- Volunteer: Help with registration, supervising student participants and other tasks
- Donate: Make a monetary contribution to the Civics Games
- Sponsor: Become a Wisconsin Civics Games sponsor

About the Civics Games

Launched by the WNA Foundation in 2018, the first-ever Wisconsin Civics Games drew more than 100 students from 25 schools across the state. Platteville High School won the inaugural state championship, which was held on March 29, 2019, at the Wisconsin state Capitol. Team members were awarded \$2,000 toward tuition to a Wisconsin college or university.

The idea was the brainchild of Eve Galanter, a WNAF board member who previously served on the Madison Common Council and as district director for the late U.S. Senator Herb Kohl. She proposed the concept to the Foundation's board of directors after learning of the increasing challenges facing municipalities that had seen a diminishing interest in public service. It was a trend that followed decades of declining civics education in schools.

Galanter's idea coincided with the Wisconsin legislature's adoption of a requirement that high school students pass the U.S. citizenship test to graduate — but the mandate didn't address how school districts should prepare students. By offering study materials and resources to participants in the Games, the Foundation was able to fill this gap.

Although COVID-19 restrictions and considerations prompted the WNA Foundation to temporarily suspend the Civics Games, the Foundation has continued to encourage civics education and engagement through an editorial writing and cartoon contest.

Students have been asked to convey their thoughts on the First Amendment through a writing sample or illustration. Sixteen students, including middle schoolers, received cash awards and the opportunity to be published by newspapers across the state.

Wis. Civics Games Editorial Writing & Cartoon Contest now accepting entries

The WNA Foundation is excited to announce the fourth annual Editorial Writing & Cartoon Contest, which aims to increase civic education and engagement while celebrating the rights established by the First Amendment.

The contest is open to all Wisconsin middle and high school students, including home-schooled students. Essays and cartoons should focus on the importance of the First Amendment. Students are encouraged to draw from personal experiences, current events and historical examples.

The deadline for submissions is 11:59 p.m. Wednesday, Dec. 4, and winners will be announced in early January.

First-place winners in each contest will receive \$500, second-place winners will receive \$250, third-place winners will receive \$100 and honorable mention recipients will receive \$50. Winning entries also will be published by newspapers across the state.

Writing contest

For the writing contest, high school students will be asked to write a "guest column" (500 words or less) about the First Amendment, and middle school students will be asked to write a "letter to the editor" (200 words or less) on the same topic.

Cartoon contest

Students wishing to compete in the editorial cartoon contests may do so by submitting one First Amendment-themed editorial cartoon.

Additional information can be found at wisconsincivicsgames.com. Those interested in providing support through a donation or sponsorship can also find more information on the Civics Games website.

ABOUT THE WNA FOUNDATION

The Wisconsin Newspaper Association Foundation is a not-for-profit organization created in 1980 to support programs that foster excellence in journalism, engage current and future newspaper leaders and invest in our communities. The foundation solicits, manages and disburses funds and other resources for the benefit of Wisconsin's newspaper industry.

