



Everything You Want to Know About

2015-2016 Optimist International

PROGRAMS & COMMUNITY ACTIVITIES





2015-2016 Optimist International Essay Contest

The International Essay Club and District Planning Guides are on the Optimist International website at www.optimist.org. The Planning Guides contain instructions, applications and judging forms.

What is the 2015-2016 topic?

“Lead by Example: Reality or Fiction”

Club level awards may be given in the form of a scholarship, savings bond or cash prize but are completely discretionary.

New Age Rule! Students under the age of 18 as of October 1, 2015 are eligible to compete.

Each District is given one **\$2500** scholarship for their first place winner. Dates for each District's judging are set by the District Essay Chair. The winner's paperwork must be turned in by each District to the Optimist International Programs Department by **April 15, 2016**. Upon receipt of **all** winner's paperwork, the student will be sent a congratulatory letter, an Enrollment Confirmation Statement, and a scholarship provisional.

When is the Club deadline to submit the essay winner to the District contest?

The Club deadline for 2015-2016 is **February 28, 2016**.

Where do I order medallions, etc.?

US and Caribbean Clubs can order materials from Shumsky by calling toll free 877.678.2582 or programs@shumsky.com. Canadian Clubs can order materials from Ansell Awards & Specialties by calling 800-565-7062 or email at info@ansellsawards.com.

What if my District wants to raise the amount of the scholarship or award additional scholarships?

Districts choosing to increase funding for scholarships or fund additional scholarships will need to manage those funds through other resources, such as District accounts or contributing those funds to the appropriate Optimist International Foundation.

If I have a question about the Essay Contest, who do I contact?

If you cannot reach your District Essay Chair, contact the Programs Department at 800-500-8130, ext. 201, or email programs@optimist.org.



2015-2016

Optimist International Oratorical Contest

The International Oratorical Club and District Planning Guides are on the Optimist International website at www.optimist.org. The Guides contain instructions, applications and judging forms.

What is the 2015-2016 topic?

“How My Best Brings Out the Best in Others”

New Age Rule! Students under the age of 18 as of October 1, 2015 are eligible to compete.

Club level awards may be given in the form of a scholarship, savings bond or cash prize but are completely discretionary.

Each District is given \$5,000 in scholarships. Districts with separate gender contests shall award the top boy and girl winner with a \$2,500 scholarship. Districts with combined gender contests may award two \$2,500 scholarships or a \$2,500, a \$1,500 and a \$1,000 scholarship to the first, second and third place winners respectively.

The District winners' materials must be turned in to the Programs Department no later than **May 15th, 2016**. Upon receipt of **all** the winner's paperwork, each student will be sent a congratulatory letter, an Enrollment Confirmation Statement, and a scholarship provisional. Districts will need to determine which of the District's winners will be competing in the Optimist Oratorical World Championship contest. Upon completed paperwork the contestant will receive information from Optimist International and Saint Louis University on the details of the contest.

Where do I order medallions, etc.?

US and Caribbean Clubs can order materials from Shumsky by calling toll free 877.678.2582 or programs@shumsky.com. Canadian Clubs can order materials from Ansell Awards & Specialties by calling 800-565-7062 or email at info@ansellsawards.com.

What if my District wants to raise the amount of the scholarships or award additional scholarships?

Districts choosing to increase funding for scholarships or fund additional scholarships will need to manage those funds through other resources, such as District accounts or contributing those funds to the appropriate Optimist International Foundation.

If I have a question about the Oratorical Contest, who do I contact?

If you cannot reach your District Oratorical Chair, contact the Programs Department at 800-500-8130, ext. 201, or email programs@optimist.org.



NEW OPTIMIST REGIONAL / WORLD CHAMPIONSHIP ORATORICAL CONTEST

Optimist International and Saint. Louis University have partnered to host an exciting new enhancement to the Optimist Oratorical Contest and scholarships. Each Optimist District will have the exciting opportunity to send one of their District Oratorical Winners to St. Louis to compete with the winners of the Districts in their Region for at least a \$5000 scholarship. The winner of each Region (8) will compete with the winner from Saint. Louis University's Global Region for a \$15,000, \$10,000, or \$5,000 World Championship scholarship. **There is the potential for a student to win \$22,500 or more in scholarships!**

The first annual Regional/World Championships Oratorical Contest is scheduled for Thursday, June 23 and Friday, June 24, 2016. Please keep in mind that the 2015-2016 District Oratorical contests will need to be conducted earlier than usual to accommodate this timeframe. **Districts must submit the 2015-2016 winners' paperwork to Optimist International no later than May 15, 2016.** Start planning now to adjust your Oratorical timelines if your District's contest is held at a 3rd Quarter meeting.

With the partnership with Saint Louis University, we are increasing funds for youth scholarships, giving our Optimist organization a higher profile, and Bringing out the Best in Kids!



2015-2016

Optimist International

Communication Contest for the Deaf & Hard of Hearing (CCDHH)

The International Club and District Planning Guides are on the Optimist International website at www.optimist.org. The CCDHH Guides contain instructions, applications and judging forms.

What is the 2015-2016 topic?

“How My Best Brings Out the Best in Others”

Clubs are allowed to give monetary awards of up to \$500 per winner for the Essay, CCDHH and Oratorical contests in addition to the official medallions. The Club level awards may be given in the form of a scholarship, savings bond or cash prize but are completely discretionary.

Each District is given one \$2,500 scholarship. The District winner's paperwork must be turned in to the Programs Department no later than **June 16th**. Upon receipt of **all** winner's paperwork, the student will be sent a congratulatory letter, an Enrollment Confirmation Statement, and list of scholarship provisions.

Where do I order medallions, etc.?

US and Caribbean Clubs can order materials from Shumsky by calling toll free 877.678.2582 or programs@shumsky.com. Canadian Clubs can order materials from Ansell Awards & Specialties by calling 800-565-7062 or email at info@ansellsawards.com.

What if my District wants to raise the amount of the scholarships or award additional scholarships?

Districts choosing to increase funding for scholarships or fund additional scholarships will need to manage those funds through other resources, such as District accounts or contributing those funds to the appropriate Optimist International Foundation.

If I have a question about the contest, whom should I contact?

If you cannot reach your District Chair, contact the Programs Department at 800-500-8130, ext. 201, or email programs@optimist.org.



Offering a friendly basketball, baseball, soccer, football, in-line or ice hockey skills, lacrosse, curling, or golf competition may be just what your Club needs to serve your community's youth. The Tri-Star program enables your Club to run one or several successful sports skills contests efficiently and with as little manpower as possible. More than 1,000 Optimist Clubs across North America currently participate in or sponsor sports leagues or teams.

Similar to a punt-pass-kick skills competition, the Tri-Star Sports Skills Contests are the perfect way to bring together the youth of your community in a spirit of fun competition. Each skill offers exciting opportunities to promote self-confidence and physical fitness, even if your Club has limited resources. Because this program does not involve physical contact or advanced skills, it is an ideal activity for every child, even those who may be physically challenged.

Tri-Star Sports Skills Contests are designed for youth ages 8-13, and test three skills in the sport of your choice:

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| Baseball: | Base-running, Hitting, and Throwing |
| Basketball: | Dribbling, Passing, and Shooting |
| Football: | Passing, Place-kicking, and Punting |
| Soccer: | Dribbling, Shooting, and Throwing |
| Hockey: | Shooting, Skating, and Stick-handling |
| Lacrosse: | Throwing, Catching, and Scooping |
| Curling: | Drawing, Hitting, and Scoring |
| Golf: | Drive, Chip, and Putt |



What is this program?

Statistics show that 99% of all teens have access to the internet and 94% of students admitted to being cyber bullied and did not tell an adult. The importance of protecting the children in your community is a major undertaking and your Club can play a vital role.

Internet Safety became an Optimist International program in December 2008. The program is underwritten by the Optimist International Foundations and was developed through a partnership with the Internet Keep Safe Coalition.

Adult Internet Safety Education Program

What is this program?

This program is geared for adults to be presented in groups, large or small with an interactive discussion format being utilized and is designed so that Clubs can make the presentations with as few as two people or as many as they choose.

Life in the Online World – a program for teens

What is this program?

Optimist International is proud to have partnered with Junior Optimist Octagon International to develop an Internet safety program geared toward teens. The program is for teens by teens. The goal is to acknowledge that teenagers use the internet on a daily basis and to encourage diligence, awareness and safe practices. Topics discussed include posting inappropriate pictures or damaging information on social networking websites, internet predators, identity theft and cyber-bullying.

Faux Paw the Techno Cat

What is this program?

The Faux Paw the Techno Cat program teaches Internet Safety to children 1st – 4th grade.

Where do I find the Internet Safety Program materials?

Clubs will find all of Optimist International's materials on www.optimist.org. The supplemental documents that provide instructions on how to present the programs and information that can be utilized during the presentations are also available on the Optimist International website www.optimist.org.



Optimist Childhood Cancer Campaign (CCC)

“Providing the Care, Finding the Cure”

What is this program?

Cancer has resulted in more deaths among children than any other disease. Optimist International has developed a program suited to the strengths and resources of its members. Clubs and Districts have the opportunity to provide assistance and services directly to children receiving treatment for cancer, their care partners and service providers, as well as contribute to ongoing research efforts.

What is the focus of this program?

Optimist International is committed to being the leading force to rid the world of childhood cancer. In December 2009, Optimist International met a \$1 million commitment to establish the Endowed Research Fellowship at Johns Hopkins. The organization has pledged an additional \$500,000 to fund and create the Optimist International Innovative Research Fund at Johns Hopkins. To donate to this worthy cause, please send funds to the US Optimist International Foundation and designate they are for “childhood cancer research” on the check memo line or in an attached letter.

Optimist Clubs and Districts sponsoring CCC projects may apply for a matching grant from Optimist International to maximize the impact made on childhood cancer patients, their families and their healthcare providers. An application can be found on the Optimist website at www.optimist.org/ccc.

How can I get involved?

Optimist International annually hosts an organization-wide walk to promote childhood cancer awareness and raise much needed funds. All Clubs are asked to sponsor a CCC Walk during June, Optimist International Childhood Cancer Awareness Month. This show of unified support will demonstrate the organization’s mission to “be the leading force to rid the world of childhood cancer.”

Where do I order support materials?

Contact the appropriate Optimist International Foundation.

For more information, call the appropriate Optimist International Foundation.

YOUTH SAFETY



What is this program?

The Optimist International Youth Safety program encompasses all of the activities originally included in the Safety on Wheels Program.

What kind of projects can my Club plan?

The Youth Safety Community Activities Planning Guide has numerous project ideas from bike inspection and skating skill events to a comprehensive school bus safety program. The Planning Guide is available on the Optimist website, <http://www.Optimist.org>

For more details, call the Programs Department at 800-500-8130, ext 201, or email programs@optimist.org.

YOUTH APPRECIATION



Are there specific dates for this program?

No, Youth Appreciation activities can be scheduled anytime, according to your Club's preference.

What kind of projects can my Club plan?

The Youth Appreciation Community Activities Planning Guide contains all types of ideas ranging from Youth in Government Day, parades, parties, banquets, to recognizing a Youth of the Month. The Planning Guide is available on the Optimist website at www.optimist.org.

For more information, contact the Programs Department at 800-500-8130, extension 201, or email programs@optimist.org.

Respect for Law/Promotion of Non-Violence



Are there specific dates for this program?

No, Respect for Law/Promotion of Non-Violence activities can be scheduled anytime, according to your Club's preference.

What kind of projects can our Club plan for this program?

Projects can include law enforcement officer awards, citizen awards, a family rally, victims of violence vigil or child fingerprinting, for example. Ideas are detailed in International Programs Planning Guide available on the Optimist website.

Contact the Programs Department at 800-500-8130 extension 201 or email programs@optimist.org for more details.

Fundraising

Where should my Club go for help on raising funds?

The International Programs Planning Guide is filled with information and ideas to assist your Club in conducting a well organized and successful event. This packet is available on the publications page of the Optimist website, www.Optimist.org

The Online Resource Library features suggested ideas and successful fundraising projects completed and documented by Clubs. The Resource Library can be found on the Optimist website, www.Optimist.org



President's Pride Report



Where can I find and fill out the President's Pride?

The form can be accessed by Club officers at <http://www.OptimistLeaders.org>. It can be filled out and submitted via the website. If you would like to print a copy of the form, it is available on the Forms page of the Optimist website, <http://www.Optimist.org>. **Submission of a completed form is an Honor Club requirement as a club must sponsor at least three service projects a year.**

Copies will be mailed only upon request. Faxed or photocopied forms will be accepted, if legible.

When is the report due?

The completed form is due to Optimist International by **September 30**. Any questions on this form, contact the Programs Department at 800-500-8130, extension 201, or email programs@optimist.org.

TAKE PRIDE IN YOUR CLUB'S WORK

Your Club can help Optimist International improve the quality and effectiveness of the International Programs and Community Activities that our great organization provides to young people in the United States, Caribbean, and Canada. All it takes is for your Club Officer to complete the President's Pride Report and submit it to Optimist International. The report provides a wealth of information that shows which programs and activities Clubs are participating in and which ones may need to be reviewed to encourage participation.

Why Optimist International NEEDS Your Club's Input:

While submission of the President's Pride Report is a requirement for both Honor and Distinguished Club, this information is needed from ALL Clubs to ensure that our programs are meeting the needs of Optimists and the children they serve throughout the organization. Optimist International is trying VERY hard to obtain sponsorship and grant money from other companies and organizations to help support our efforts. Without the information obtained from your President's Pride Report we cannot explain who and what we are. So PLEASE make sure you submit this form each and every year!

How to Submit:

The 2015-16 report can be filled out online at www.optimistleaders.org or printed and completed by hand at www.optimist.org. There are a few demographic questions about the size and age of your Club. The report also asks officers to indicate which projects your Club has conducted, what organizations you have partnered with and the fundraisers you have held during the Optimist year. You will be asked how many children you have served, the cost of your activities and whether funds were distributed to other charitable organizations.

Your Club Officer can enter and change information on a periodic basis by clicking on the "Save" button. When the form have been entirely completed, an Officer should click on the signature button and then click "Submit." Once your Club Officer has clicked "Submit," no changes can be made to the form.

Programs Support Materials

Where do I order support items and awards?

US and Caribbean Clubs can order materials from Shumsky by calling toll free 877.678.2582 or programs@shumsky.com. Canadian Clubs can order materials from Ansell Awards & Specialties by calling 800-565-7062 or email at info@ansellsawards.com.

The International Programs Planning Guides

The International Programs Planning Guides are available for download from the Optimist International Website. The guides are dedicated to the following programs and community activities: CCDHH, Essay, Oratorical/Kids Speak Out, Tri-Star Sports, Respect for Law/Promotion of Non-Violence, Youth Appreciation and Youth Safety.

WHO DO I CONTACT AT OPTIMIST INTERNATIONAL WITH QUESTIONS ABOUT PROGRAMS?

St. Louis Office - International Headquarters Programs Department

☎ Phone 800-500-8130, Ext. 201 or 235

☎ Fax 314-371-6006

✉ Email programs@optimist.org

Canadian Service Centre

☎ Phone 800-363-7151 ☎ Fax 514-721-1104

✉ Email canadianservice@optimist.org

PROGRAMS DEPARTMENT DEADLINES AND DATES

Date	Program
February 28, 2016	Club winning Essay submitted to District Chair deadline
April 15, 2016	District winning Essay submitted to Optimist International deadline
May 15, 2016	District deadline to submit District Winners of District Oratorical Contest AND declare the two District winner information to Optimist International to compete in the Regional/World Championship contest.
June 15, 2016	District deadline to submit CCDHH winners to Optimist International.
September 30, 2016	Club deadline to submit 2014-2015 President's Pride Report to Optimist International