

## Cabot Youth to Compete in National Contest this Weekend...



**(Little Rock, AR) - The American Legion Department of Arkansas is proud to announce the selection of Mattie Jimerson, a 10th grade student at Cabot High School, to represent the state of Arkansas at the 84th American Legion National Oratorical Contest this weekend. This year's event will be held on the campus of Hillsdale College in Hillsdale, Michigan on May 17-19, 2024. She is sponsored by Criswell-Robinson American Legion Post #71 in Cabot.**

Jimmerson understands the importance of showcasing her talent and has received \$2000 scholarship as the Department Finalist, representing Arkansas at the competition with an all-expense-paid trip with chaperone to the event where she will be guaranteed an additional **\$2,000.00** scholarship and have an opportunity to receive up to an additional **\$20,000.00**. **The 2008 winner, Ginger McFarland from Siloam Springs placed second nationally and received a total of \$22,500 in scholarship money for her efforts.**

"I am so happy to represent the state of Arkansas at the national competition because I feel like Arkansas is a state that is underappreciated when it comes to subjects that are considered in the academic section, and I hope to be a testament

that Arkansas has some talented children to offer,” says Jimmerson, hoping to someday become a lawyer. “This competition will help me later in my career, considering that I want to go into law. Public speaking is vital for becoming a lawyer, learning how to make your words impact those around you is indescribably important when going into a career like this. But in the short run,” she says, “this competition will help me in debate and allow me to have more freedom when picking a college. I am only a sophomore in high school, but I am well aware of the power of words. This competition will not only help me further my current understanding but will also bring me one step closer to becoming a lawyer.”

Quarterfinal and semifinal contests are scheduled for Saturday, May 18 with the finals scheduled for Sunday, May 19. Contestants and chaperones will arrive this Friday and will stay on campus at Hillsdale College where a mandatory pre-contest orientation session for all contestants will take place. A banquet honoring all contestants will be Sunday afternoon, following the national championship contest.

The American Legion Oratorical Contest exists to develop deeper knowledge and appreciation for the U.S. Constitution among high school students. Since 1938, the program has presented participants with an academic speaking challenge that teaches important leadership qualities, the history of our nation’s laws, the ability to think and speak clearly, and an understanding of the duties, responsibilities, rights and privileges of American citizenship. The program has featured numerous politicians and prominent contestants over the years, including former presidential candidate [Alan Keyes](#), national television commentator and talk radio host [Lou Dobbs](#), and former U.S. Vice President [Mike Pence](#).