

2026 Minnesota History Day Topical Prizes and Teacher Awards

RESULTS

The Minnesota State History Day Contest took place on Sunday, April 19, 2026. The Pre-Awards Ceremony announced the results of Teacher Awards and Topical Prizes, which were judged virtually in the weeks preceding State History Day. At the Pre-Awards Ceremony, award winners received additional information on how to redeem their award. Please note that Topical Prize sponsors reserve the right to not award their prize if no entries fit the criteria.

Teacher Award Winners

Award	Name	School
Minnesota Teacher of the Year and NHD Teacher Award Nominee: Jr. Division	Zoe Kourajian	Edgewood Middle School
Minnesota Teacher of the Year and NHD Teacher Award Nominee: Sr. Division	Courtney Major	Edina High School
National Contest Travel Teacher	Sam Lueck	Sullivan STEAM School

Africa Studies Prize

Sponsor: African Studies Initiative, University of Minnesota. **Award:** Two \$150 awards

This prize recognizes outstanding State History Day entries that examine how this year's annual History Day Theme relates to the history of an area in Africa.

Award	Student(s)	School	Title	Category
Junior Division	Adelle	Sanford Middle School	"I write what I like": Steve Biko and the Revolutionary Ideology of Black Consciousness	Individual Website
Senior Division	Addison, Maya	Moose Lake High School	The Spark That Ignited A Nation: How the Soweto Uprising Inspired A Rousing Reaction That Reformed the Apartheid Government	Group Documentary

Agricultural History of the Upper Midwest

Sponsor: Artisan Grain Collaborative. **Award:** Two \$100 prizes

Agricultural History of the Upper Midwest

This prize recognizes outstanding State History Day entries that focus on the history of agriculture in the Upper Midwest, with a preference for projects featuring the farming, shipping, marketing, or use of grains.

Award	Student(s)	School	Title	Category
Junior Division	Anika	Delano Public Schools	From Lab to Land: The Revolution of Genetically Modified Seeds	Individual Documentary
Senior Division	Caledon	Jackson County Central Schools	The Mechanized Revolution of Agriculture	Individual Website

America 250 Prize in Revolutionary History

Sponsor: Minnesota Historical Society. **Award:** Two \$150 prizes

In recognition of the semiquincentennial (250th anniversary) of the signing of the Declaration of Independence, the Minnesota Historical Society is recognizing one outstanding entry in each age division relating to the American Revolution. Entries may cover a variety of subjects, but must be directly focused on the events leading to, during, or following the founding of the United States.

Award	Student(s)	School	Title	Category
Junior Division	Arnav	Murray Middle School	A Dear Bought Victory	Individual Exhibit
Senior Division	Alexis, Eamon, Mason	Minnewaska Area Schools	Spilling the Tea!	Group Exhibit

American Indian History

Sponsor: Minnesota Historical Society. **Award:** Two \$150 prizes

The American Indian History prize will be awarded to outstanding State History Day entries that demonstrate the importance of American Indian individuals, organizations, or nations in history, within this year's theme.

Award	Student(s)	School	Title	Category
Junior Division	Petra	Nativity of Our Lord	Call for Reform: Reaction to the Revolutionary Meriam Report	Individual Website
Senior Division	Divya	Edina High School	Elizabeth Peratrovich: Fighter for America's First Anti-Discrimination Act	Individual Documentary

Baseball, History of

Sponsor: Society for American Baseball Research, Halsey Hall Charter. **Award:** One \$150 prize

This prize will be awarded to an outstanding entry on baseball history.

Award	Student(s)	School	Title	Category
Prize	Davis	Our Lady of Peace	Ray Chapman: The Legacy of a Fallen Star	Individual Documentary

BIPOC Women in History

Sponsor: Anonymous. **Award:** Two \$150 prizes

This prize will be awarded to an outstanding entry on a woman of color in history. Topics may range from advocacy to political action for women's rights and representation, health care, education, athletics, the arts, voting reform and more. The sponsor encourages students to examine the role of women as changemakers and how their actions have positively impacted members of their community and/or at large. The sponsor is especially interested in lifting up absent narratives - women's stories and experiences that have previously been (or are) marginalized and excluded from mainstream history.

Award	Student(s)	School	Title	Category
Junior Division	Seraphine	Murray Middle School	A Pledge to All: Reforming the Girl Scouts	Individual Documentary
Senior Division	Fiona	Mahtomedi Senior High School	Patsy Takemoto Mink: The Fight for Title IX	Individual Documentary

Civil War History

Sponsor: First Regiment of Minnesota Volunteer Infantry, Inc. and the Twin Cities Civil War Roundtable. **Award:** One \$100 prize

This prize recognizes entries related to Civil War history. Entries that highlight Minnesota's role in the war and Civil War military history relating to the current year's theme will receive special consideration.

Award	Student(s)	School	Title	Category
Prize	Madelyn	PA Homeschoolers	The 8th Minnesota: A Bridge Between Narratives	Individual Research Paper

Community Changemakers in Minnesota History

Sponsor: Inclusion & Community Engagement Department, Minnesota Historical Society. **Award:** Two \$150 prizes

This prize will be awarded to an outstanding entry on a community group, individual, or event which contributed to Minnesota history by making a positive impact in their community. Entries that center the stories of underrepresented or marginalized communities will receive special consideration.

Award	Student(s)	School	Title	Category
Junior Division	Elsie	Nativity of Our Lord	The Willmar 8: A Reform in Women's Working Rights	Individual Website
Senior Division	Cheirdi, Ewan	DeLaSalle High School	Occupation of Wounded Knee, 1973	Group Exhibit

Educational History, Susie Elewell Memorial Prize for

Sponsor: Ralph and Virginia Kurtzman. **Award:** Two \$150 prizes

Entries must be an outstanding study and discussion of the history of education. The historical subjects may relate to formal or informal education, changes in a curriculum, legal decisions, economic pressures, political decisions, community pressures, dress codes, benefits or losses resulting from outstanding teachers, various testing methods, establishment of new institutions, new subjects, required reading, required courses, required tests, banned books, or banned subjects, among others.

Award	Student(s)	School	Title	Category
Junior Division	Esme, Kylie, Mylo	Twin Oaks Middle School	The Inspiration: Thomas Hopkins Gallaudet's First School for the Deaf	Group Performance
Senior Division	Elizabeth	Fridley High School	Rosenwald Schools: Reforming Education for Black Children	Individual Exhibit

Environmental History, Tallmadge and Geo. H. Elwell Memorial Prize for

Sponsor: Ralph and Virginia Kurtzman. **Award:** Two \$150 prizes

Entries must be an outstanding study and discussion of the history of destruction or conservation of the natural environment. The historic events may be biological, geological, archeological or others that may be shown to be important. Events may be long-term or catastrophic.

Award	Student(s)	School	Title	Category
Junior Division	Elsie, Etta	Edgewood Middle School	John Muir: Creation of National Parks	Group Exhibit
Senior Division	Evelyn	DeLaSalle High School	Awakening Environmental Awareness: Rachel Carson's Silent Spring	Individual Research Paper

Europe Before 1939, History of

Sponsor: Steven Potach and Judith Horn. **Award:** Two \$150 prizes

Entries must relate to a historical event or development taking place in Europe between the fall of the Western Roman Empire and the outbreak of World War II, during the period from 476 CE to 1939 CE.

Award	Student(s)	School	Title	Category
Junior Division	Asmaa	Al-Amal School	Liberté, Égalité, Fraternité	Individual Website
Senior Division	Aidric	DeLaSalle High School	The Great Schism	Individual Website

Global Studies

Sponsor: Institute for Global Studies, University of Minnesota. **Award:** Two \$150 prizes

Student entries should examine how the year's theme relates to the history of an area outside the United States.

Award	Student(s)	School	Title	Category
Junior Division	Sally	Open World Learning Secondary	The Khmer Rouge: Revolution, Reaction, and Reform in Political and Economic History	Individual Research Paper
Senior Division	Grace	Osseo Senior High School	The Women's Day Off of Iceland: Revolution of Women's Rights, Reaction of Women to Sexism, and Reform for Equality	Individual Research Paper

History Day Scholarship

Sponsor: University of Minnesota College of Liberal Arts. **Award:** One \$1,500 prize

In recognition of the academic achievement of an outstanding student participant in the National History Day program, the College of Liberal Arts (CLA) at the University of Minnesota presents one \$1,500 freshman-year prize at Minnesota State History Day.

Award	Student(s)	School	Title	Category
Prize	Claire	DeLaSalle High School	"Kill the Indian in Him and Save the Man"	Individual Website

Holocaust History

Sponsor: Jewish Community Relations Council of Minnesota and the Dakotas. **Award:** Two \$100 prizes

Entries must relate to a significant event or development taking place in Europe between 1933-1949 that led to or contributed to the events of the Holocaust.

Award	Student(s)	School	Title	Category
Junior Division	Anika, Michelle	Salk STEM Middle School	The White Rose: German Anti-Nazi Resistance Group	Group Website
Senior Division	Charlotte	Christ's Household of Faith	Burning the "Un-German Spirit": A Revolution Against Jewish Intellectualism, Censorship, and Reforms for Cultural Control	Individual Documentary

Humanitarian History, Raoul Wallenberg Prize in

Sponsor: American Swedish Institute. **Award:** Two \$100 prizes

This prize is to recognize two outstanding Minnesota History Day entries, one Junior Division and one Senior Division, on a topic of humanitarian action in history. Entries will be considered that study a person or group of people who made a significant historical contribution with their work to improve the welfare of others. The prizes, sponsored by the American Swedish Institute, will grant \$100 to each winning entry. The prize is dedicated to the life and example of Raoul Wallenberg, a Swedish diplomat who heroically led the rescue of approximately 100,000 Hungarian Jews from July 1944 to January 1945.

Award	Student(s)	School	Title	Category
Junior Division	Norah	Andersen United Middle School	ACT UP: The Movement that Altered the Course of the AIDS Epidemic	Individual Website
Senior Division	Adelaide, Luca, Lucia	DeLaSalle High School	Next Stop: Freedom	Group Documentary

Ideals from America's Founding Through Time

Sponsor: National Society of the Colonial Dames of America in the State of Minnesota. **Award:** Three \$250 prizes

Prize recognizes outstanding entries that investigate how the ideals of justice and equality have been extended since America's founding through time to different populations, specifically from the principles referenced in the US Declaration of Independence, the Constitution, or the Bill of Rights.

Award	Student(s)	School	Title	Category
Junior Division	Lexandrea, Maite	Highview Middle School	Selma March of 1965	Group Website
Senior Division	Eloise, Lillian	DeLaSalle High School	The Spark That Ignited the Civil War: John Brown and Harpers Ferry	Group Website
Podcast Prize	Alexandra	Andersen United Middle School	The Boundary Waters: A Paddle Through Time	Individual Podcast

Labor History

Sponsor: Duluth Labor World, Minneapolis Labor Review, St. Paul Union Advocate, University of Minnesota Labor Education Service. **Award:** Eight \$100 prizes
Prizes recognize projects that focus on the history of organized labor, including advocacy for change in working conditions or the rights of workers. The sponsors of this prize encourage students to examine labor history through a local lens and to research and explore topics in Minneapolis, St. Paul, and Minnesota labor history.

Award	Student(s)	School	Title	Category
Prize	Adrian, Duncan, Henry	Murray Middle School	The Battle of Blair Mountain	Group Documentary
Prize	Harper	Highview Middle School	Matchgirls Strike	Individual Exhibit
Prize	Cecelia, Lanaya	Sanford Middle School	Radium Girls	Group Performance
Prize	Hanna, Harper, Mae	Twin Cities German Immersion School	Child Labor and the Keating Owen Act of 1916	Group Website
Prize	Enrique, Fabian	DeLaSalle High School	"¡Si Se Puede!": How Dolores Huerta Became the Revolutionary Voice for Women and Laborers	Group Documentary
Prize	Rayhanah, Safa	Al-Amal School	Railroad Shopmen's Strike of 1922	Group Exhibit
Prize	Laila	Duluth East High School	Revolutionizing Labor: Frances Perkins and the New Deal	Individual Performance
Prize	Elee, Gabrielle	Edina High School	Bread, Roses, and Revolution	Group Website

LGBTQ History

Sponsor: Minnesota Historical Society. **Award:** Two \$150 prizes

Prizes will be awarded to entries studying issues that connect LGBTQ people, politics, and events to this year's theme.

Award	Student(s)	School	Title	Category
Junior Division	Margot	New City Charter School	Art, Activism, and AIDS	Individual Documentary
Senior Division	Nissa	Denfeld High School	Lavender Menace: The Lesbian-Feminist Revolution	Individual Documentary

Minneapolis History

Sponsor: Linden Hills Study Group and the Hennepin History Museum. **Award:** Two \$100 prizes

Prizes will be awarded to entries that address the year's theme by examining events and issues that demonstrate the rich history of Minneapolis and its people. Students are encouraged to consider topics involving persons, businesses, organizations, institutions, events, buildings, land use or environmental issues in Minneapolis.

Award	Student(s)	School	Title	Category
Junior Division	Clara, Piper, Willow	Open World Learning Secondary	1970 Minneapolis Teachers Strike	Group Website
Senior Division	Grace, Sonora	Roosevelt High School	Covenants and Redlining: How Racist Housing Practices Revolutionized Minneapolis	Group Website

Minnesota Experience Documentary Prize

Sponsor: Twin Cities Public Television's *Minnesota Experience*. **Award:** Two \$200 prizes

Prize recognizes excellence in documentary filmmaking related to Minnesota history. Documentaries that illustrate Minnesota's rich history through a variety of source materials, interviews, and film footage will receive special consideration. Documentaries submitted for this prize may be considered for inclusion on TPT multimedia platforms.

Award	Student(s)	School	Title	Category
Junior Division	Sylvia	Sanford Middle School	Institutions to Inclusion: The Parent Revolution that Reformed Kids' Disability Services in Minnesota	Individual Documentary
Senior Division	Bella	North Lakes Academy	A Humanitarian Breakthrough: The Revolutionary Minnesota Starvation Experiment	Individual Documentary

Minnesota Historical Society Collections, Best Use of

Sponsor: Gale Family Library at the Minnesota Historical Society. **Award:** Two \$200 prizes

There are no limitations on topic, and collections materials may be viewed in-person or online. Projects should use materials from the Minnesota Historical Society (MNHS) Collections to provide information, detail, or perspective, not just for illustrative purposes.

Award	Student(s)	School	Title	Category
Junior Division	Cullen	Sanford Middle School	"Bread, Not Guns": Revolutionizing Diplomacy with Food	Individual Website
Senior Division	Keagan	Cretin-Derham Hall	Picketing for Public Reform: The Revolutionary Strike for Better Schools	Individual Website

Minnesota History

Sponsor: Northern Lights Curriculum, Minnesota Historical Society. **Award:** Two \$150 prizes

Prizes will be awarded to entries that address the year's theme by examining events and issues that demonstrate the rich history of Minnesota and its people.

Award	Student(s)	School	Title	Category
Junior Division	Sara	Many Rivers Montessori	The Lift Bridge: A History	Individual Website
Senior Division	Lyla	Duluth East High School	The 1920 Duluth Lynchings: How a Violent Reaction Triggered a Revolutionary Challenge to Northern Innocence and Anti-Lynching Reform	Individual Research Paper

Minnesota History Paper Award

Sponsor: Minnesota History Journal. **Award:** One \$50 prize

The paper must be directly and primarily concerned with a Minnesota history topic.

Award	Student(s)	School	Title	Category
Prize	Anita	Shattuck-St. Mary's School	From Territory to State: Reaction, Revolution, and Reform at the Minnesota Constitutional Convention	Individual Research Paper

Minnesota's Laws and Courts

Sponsor: Minnesota Supreme Court Historical Society. **Award:** Two \$500 prizes

To be eligible for these awards, students' entries must demonstrate and/or celebrate the contribution that the judiciary has made to the state of Minnesota.

The entries may consider any way in which the Minnesota courts have impacted local, state or national history. Entries that focus on Minnesota cases are preferred. Entries that concern specific laws or parts of the constitution without discussing a case(s) or the judiciary are ineligible.

Award	Student(s)	School	Title	Category
Prize	Benjamin	Friends School of Minnesota	Same Sex, Same Love: How Jack Baker and Michael McConnell Changed What Marriage Could Be	Individual Documentary
Prize	Walden	Salk STEM Middle School	1999 Mille Lacs Treaty Case	Individual Documentary

Quantitative History

Sponsor: Minnesota Population Center, University of Minnesota. **Award:** One \$100 prize

Prizes will be awarded to projects that demonstrate outstanding use or creation of quantitative methods in developing historical arguments. Use of quantitative methods may include statistics, graphs and charts, among others. Good sources of quantitative information are government documents, newspapers, polls (e.g. Gallup Polls), surveys and census data.

Award	Student(s)	School	Title	Category
Prize	Morgan	Nativity of Our Lord	Panic to Protection: The Economic Reaction and Reform Following the Stock Market Crash of 1929	Individual Website

Sports History

Sponsor: Minnesota Wild. **Award:** One autographed hockey stick from Minnesota Wild defenseman, Brock Faber (valued at \$250), open to either Division

This prize recognizes an outstanding entry related to the history of sports. Preference will be given to topics specifically related to hockey.

Award	Student(s)	School	Title	Category
Prize	Lucy	Sanford Middle School	A Revolution in Women's Sports: The Women's Sports Foundation	Individual Exhibit

Travel and Cultural Exchange Before 1825 CE, History of

Sponsor: Associates of the James Ford Bell Library, University of Minnesota. **Award:** One \$100 prize

Prize will be awarded to the Minnesota State History Day entrant(s) whose outstanding work best links the year's theme to travel and cultural exchange and its impact prior to ca 1825 CE.

Award	Student(s)	School	Title	Category
Prize	Madeline	Stella Maris Academy	The Haitian Revolution: How the Ideals of the French Revolution Spurred Changes in Haitian Society	Individual Website

United States Military History

Sponsor: Minnesota Military & Veterans Museum. **Award:** Two \$150 prizes

This prize recognizes exceptional entries that analyze any aspect of United States military history and connects to the History Day annual theme. Preference will be given to topics outside of the scope of other State History Day Topical Prizes, and additional weight will be given to those projects specifically focused on MN veteran experiences.

Award	Student(s)	School	Title	Category
Junior Division	Hazel	Justice Page Middle School	Making WAVES: The Path to Women's Integration into the U.S. Military	Individual Research Paper
Senior Division	Braylen, Tomas	DeLaSalle High School	From Voices to Violence: The Kent State Massacre	Group Documentary

Women's History

Sponsor: Women's Organization of the Minnesota Historical Society. **Award:** Two \$250 prizes

Prizes will be awarded to entries that address this year's theme in relation to women's history. Students are encouraged to consider women from all places and areas throughout history.

Award	Student(s)	School	Title	Category
Junior Division	Aurora, Carina	Capitol Hill Gifted & Talented Magnet School	Equal Credit Opportunity Act	Group Exhibit
Senior Division	Grace	DeLaSalle High School	Fully Heumann: Judy Heumann & the ADA	Individual Website

Frequently Asked Questions about Topical Prize Results

Who sponsors Topical Prizes?

A variety of organizations and individuals sponsor Topical Prizes based on their interests and the annual History Day theme.

How are Topical Prizes judged?

Topical Prize results are separate from the category results and judging that took place at State History Day. Students nominated their own entry for up to three prizes and a separate panel of judges review materials submitted in advance to select winners. Prizes are evaluated on the fit within the prize criteria and the historical quality of the entry.

Who are the Topical Prize judges?

Sponsoring organizations generally provide the judges for Topical Prizes. If a sponsoring organization is unable to provide judges, Minnesota History Day recruits judges from the general judge pool who are interested in judging Topical Prizes. All Topical Prize judges receive training on their role.

Will I get comments from the Topical Prize judges?

No. Topical Prize judges do not provide written feedback on the entries that they view.

How do I redeem my prize?

Cash prizes will require that the students provide a Social Security number by completing a W9 form and returning it to the State History Day office. This information is kept confidential at the Minnesota Historical Society. Students will not receive awards until their forms are returned. You will be contacted in the week following the contest via the email address you used to register for State History Day.

How are prizes split among group entries?

Only one group member needs to return a W9 and the check will be issued to that individual. It is their responsibility to split the award among any group members.

When will I get my prize?

From the date we receive your W9 form, it takes 30 days to process the check and be mailed out to you.

Who do I contact with questions?

For the 2026 State Contest, contact Samantha.Papas@mnhs.org with any questions.