

Project Overview

The Forum: The Presidential Forum on Renewable Energy is sponsoring a presidential candidate forum on the afternoon of Saturday, November 17 at the Wadsworth Theater in Los Angeles. The PFRE joined forces with leading environmental organizations to hold a single joint forum on global warming and renewable energy. Our partner organizations in hosting the event include the NRDC, the League of Conservation Voters, and the Center for American Progress.

The Contest: The Presidential Forum on Renewable Energy is sponsoring a student essay contest in which three college students will be named and awarded a \$10,000 educational prize. The contest will engage college students in the issues of renewable energy, sustainability, and conservation.

Eligibility: The contest is open to students who, as of January 1, 2008, are between the ages of 18 and 24; enrolled, full-time or part-time, in an undergraduate college program; and a citizen of the United States of America.

Prize: An educational prize of \$10,000 will be paid to each of the three students who submit a winning essay. The prizes will be paid to the students, in a lump sum, on or after May 1, 2008. Individual winners will be responsible for all tax liabilities.

Announcement of Winners

The three students whose essays have been selected as winners will be contacted directly by the Presidential Forum on Renewal Energy in April, 2008, to coincide with Earth Day. The official announcement of the winners will be made only after each student's eligibility has been confirmed.

Timeline:

November 17, 2007	Launch Essay Contest
February 1, 2008	Essay Submission Due Date
1 month later	10 finalists identified
1 week later	3 winners and two runners-up identified
1 week later	3 winners verified
April 2008	Announcement of 3 winners at Earth Day event

Essay Question

Although Americans make up only five percent of the world's population, we consume twenty-five percent of its energy production. Our dependence on non-renewable energy sources such as oil has a profound and long-term impact on our environment and our quality of life, and even on our economic stability and national security.

Developing renewable energy sources, then, is an urgent national priority. Renewable energy is any resource that naturally replenishes itself in a relatively short period of time such as hydropower, solar energy, and wind energy.

As the 2008 presidential election approaches, this contest gives you a voice in this critical problem. We invite you to submit a **4 to 6 point renewable energy plan for America**. Your plan should lay out **strategies for the next five to ten years and beyond that will minimize our current dependence on non-renewable energy sources**.

Assume your goal is to convince an audience of politicians, the United States public, and scientists that your plan is the optimal solution to a pressing problem. Your plan must be practical, so you should address the technical, economic, and political challenges your proposal will face. A persuasive argument will sketch the dimensions of the problem, weigh the costs and benefits of its proposal versus that of potential alternatives and offer clear reasoning and hard evidence.

The Selection Criteria

Submissions will be evaluated on their originality, on their political, economic, and technical feasibility, and on their long-term viability. We will evaluate plans on the soundness and originality of your thinking, but we will also consider the ability to present those ideas in a concise, persuasive, and compelling manner.

Rules

- All submissions should be 4 – 6 pages and may not exceed 2,500 words.
- All participants are permitted to submit only one essay.
- Group submissions are not allowed.
- Charts, graphs and images are not permitted.
- All references must be cited according to MLA style.
- All submissions must be pasted into the form hosted on www.2008energyforum.org, including title and abstract.
- Participants are required to verify that they are: enrolled in a full or part time college program; a United States citizen; and submitting an original and properly cited essay.
- Works found to be plagiarized will be disqualified and any prizes awarded withdrawn. The student who submitted the work may be liable for resulting legal and financial consequences.
- Essays will be evaluated on originality, political and technical feasibility, and long term implications. While the essay contest is about ideas, your ability to present those ideas in a concise and effective manner will also be considered.
- The decision of the judges is final.