

THE future IS OURS TO write

CREATIVE ESSAY CONTEST

Today's world is a new and confusing place, and we're being faced with all sorts of fresh challenges—you know the drill; you're living it. But what if we flipped the script?

INSTEAD, CONSIDER THIS: With newfound challenges comes new ways of looking at things, new potentials that seemed impossible even this time last year. Communities are taking to the streets demanding justice, scientists all over the world are working together to create solutions to contemporary problems in record time, and, in this moment, the systems we've created as a society have abruptly found themselves open to fruitful questioning and change.

To help imagine what might come next, the Marian University Department of English invites future leaders across Indiana—students in grades 9-12—to submit a creative essay that offers imaginations of a hopeful future. What challenges do you see? What concerns you, your community, or your family? How might we rise to these challenges and build a better world?

We seek submissions that think big—submissions that take on large and complex problems and offer radically hopeful visions of a pathway to solve these problems that leads to a better future. We seek submissions that focus on the personal: How has COVID-19, inequality, racism, or another similarly significant issue impacted you? How might this current moment inspire you to think and act differently? What changes do you want to see in the world and what will you do to make these changes?

The Future Is Ours to Write will recognize creatively written essays that build from personal experiences and insights to develop a pathway for socially just and progressive responses. How might you draw on your home, community, cultural, and social media experiences to encourage others to take action and imagine a more hopeful future?



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AWARDS AND RECOGNITION: An Opportunity to Publish Your Work, Win a \$1,000 Scholarship, and Score a Prepaid Visa Gift Card

The Future Is Ours to Write will recognize excellence in writing through Honorable Mention awards, as well as two second-place awards and one first-place award in each grade level. Award winners will be invited to publish their submission in an anthology, which will be released in Spring 2022.

In addition to publication, each first-place winner will receive a \$100 Visa gift card, and each second-place winner will receive a \$50 Visa gift card. And what's even better than a prepaid Visa card? Scholarship money! Each first- and second-place winner in the 12th grade category will receive a \$1,000 Marian University Future Writers Scholarship, eligible for tuition at Marian University.

ESSAY SUBMISSION DETAILS

- Submissions are due by 11:59 p.m. on Friday, November 5, 2021.
- Complete the submission form and upload your essay at marian.edu/futurewriters.
- Essays should be up to 1,500 words; submissions above the word limit will not be accepted.
- Only one submission per author will be accepted.
- Authors must reside in Indiana and be currently enrolled at the ninth-, tenth-, eleventh-, or twelfth-grade level.

EVALUATION CRITERIA

Winners will be determined by a panel of judges who will evaluate essays based on their ability to:

- Identify a social issue that impacts a community and propose an imaginative and equitable response.
- Ground a larger issue within the context of a personal narrative or insight.
- Develop appropriate, specific, and compelling content.
- Present content in a cohesive and sequenced manner.
- Texture experiences, settings, images, and descriptions with rich detail.
- Consider the impact of the proposed response.
- Edit sentences appropriately for the occasion and/or for stylistic effect.

**AWARD WINNERS WILL BE
ANNOUNCED DECEMBER 15, 2021.**

QUESTIONS?

For more information, contact Mark Latta, assistant professor of English and director of community engagement, at 317.955.6234 or mlatta@marian.edu.

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marian.edu/futurewriters



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Authors are invited to visit the Marian University Writing Center or Flanner Community Writing Center for assistance in shaping and developing their essay. Visit marian.edu/writingcenter to schedule a free online or face-to-face appointment.

