



# NEWS RELEASE

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## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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### **CITY OF GLENDALE ANNOUNCES WINNERS OF 5<sup>TH</sup> GRADE AMERICA250 ESSAY CONTEST**

*Fifth-grade students recognized for reflections on America's past, present and future*

**Glendale, Arizona** – In celebration of America's upcoming 250th birthday in 2026, the City of Glendale Office of Arts & Culture proudly announces the winners of the district-wide America250 Essay Contest for local fifth-grade students.

The contest invited students from across Glendale school districts to reflect on the nation's history, values, and future as the United States approaches its semiquincentennial anniversary.

"Reading these essays has been a wonderful reminder that one of America's greatest strengths is the freedom to share our stories, perspectives, and visions for the future. As we celebrate 250 years of our nation, we are proud to uplift the voices of Glendale's students, the next generation of thinkers, leaders, and community builders," said Holly Garner, Glendale Arts & Culture Coordinator.

More than 50 essays were submitted by fifth-grade students across Glendale, showcasing creativity, civic pride and optimism for the future.

The City of Glendale congratulates the following district winners:

Cholla District Winner — Ava Donnelly, Dream City Christian School  
Barrel District Winner — Aliyana Johnson, Sahuaro Ranch Elementary  
Cactus District Winner — Atoosa Khairy, Horizon Elementary  
Ocotillo District Winner — Eli Lewis, William C. Jack Elementary  
Sahuaro District Winner — Shiloh Perrin, Marshall Ranch Elementary  
Yucca District Winner — Keziah Ateh, Desert Spirit School

**City-wide Winner** – Aliyana Johnson, Sahuaro Ranch Elementary

District winners will receive a commemorative certificate signed by their respective district councilmembers and a \$25 gift card. The city-wide grand prize winner will receive a commemorative certificate signed by the mayor, a \$50 gift card, a family four-pack to Andretti

Indoor Karting & Games, and the opportunity to read their essay during the Downtown Glendale America250 Celebration.

“After reading these essays, I can confidently say our country is in good hands with this next generation,” said Glendale Mayor Jerry P. Weiers. “As we prepare to celebrate this historic milestone in our nation’s history, it was inspiring to read what being an American means through the eyes of our young people.”

Mayor Weiers continued, “Their patriotism, gratitude, and love for this country filled my heart with pride and hope for America’s future. I was truly honored to read these remarkable essays and narrowing it down to just one winner was incredibly difficult, because every student should be proud of what they wrote.”

The America250 Essay Contest is part of Glendale’s ongoing efforts to engage residents of all ages in commemorating the nation’s 250th anniversary through arts, culture, education and community celebration.

For more information about the contest or Glendale’s America250 activities, please contact the City of Glendale Office of Arts & Culture at [publicart@glendaleaz.com](mailto:publicart@glendaleaz.com).

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### **About the city of Glendale**

As the sixth largest city in Arizona, with a population of nearly 255,000, Glendale is a premiere destination to live, work and play. Glendale features premium entertainment and shopping opportunities and a growing list of signature companies that call our city home. The city is also home to Luke Air Force Base and major defense contractors, including Lockheed-Martin, Magellan Aerospace and Honeywell. Other major employers include Red Bull, Global Credit Union, Ball, Bechtel and Nestlé. From major international manufacturers, Fortune 100 firms and luxury auto dealers to locally owned small shops and restaurants, Glendale provides the ideal location for businesses to arrive and thrive. Employers will also find access to robust and qualified talent pipelines, with six postsecondary educational institutions. State Farm Stadium and Desert Diamond Arena in Glendale’s Sports and Entertainment District host hometown team the Arizona Cardinals, as well as mega events such as the Super Bowl and NCAA Final Four. Camelback-Ranch Glendale is the spring training home of the Los Angeles Dodgers and Chicago White Sox. For more information about Glendale, please visit [growglendale.com](http://growglendale.com) or follow us on [Facebook](#) and [Instagram](#).