

2023-24 DISTRICT SPEECH CONTEST TOPIC

8-230-23

The Rotary District 6710 Speech Contest is now in its 30th year. Since its inception, the topic for the Speech Contest has been the annual Rotary International President's chosen 'Theme'. This year's RI President R. Gordon McInally, has selected the theme for 2023-24 as, ***Create Hope in the World***. He imagines a Rotary where members ask themselves how to make their dreams become reality and make the most of their club experiences. He asks all Rotarians to help those in need and then teach them to help others. So, in that spirit, this year's Topic for the speech contest is, "How could you (the student) serve your community to Create Hope in the World?"

President McInally asks all Rotary members to become champions in our effort to illuminate mental needs near and far. This includes helping one another feel more supported, advocating for mental health services, and building bridges with experts in the field to expand access to treatment.

President McInally says, we've grown into an amazing global network of 1.4 million interconnected community leaders – leaders who share a deep commitment to doing good in the world. But what makes Rotary powerful isn't just what we do for the communities we serve. We also support and empower each other, by creating a safe space for our members to bring their whole, authentic selves. We show each other comfort and care.

Our worldwide community and foundational value prioritizing Service Above Self makes Rotary a powerful global advocate for mental health. A recent Ohio State University found performing acts of kindness was the only one of three mental health interventions tested that helped people feel more connected to others.

This research suggests what we've known all along – that doing good helps transform not just the communities we serve, but it also transforms us. As we put a greater focus on mental health, let's not think of this effort as something new to Rotary, but rather as something we can do better and as a result have a greater impact on ourselves and the people we serve.

So let's work together to erase the stigma associated with emotional well-being, raise awareness of mental health needs, and improve access to preventative and intervention mental health services. Together, we will ***Create Hope in the World***.

The District 6710 Speech Contest is open to all Kentucky High School Students who reside within the District's service area, which is basically the western half of the state. Students should prepare their speech by addressing this year's Topic/Theme. This can be applied to the student's personal observations and experiences or to Rotary or other organizations who have similarly engaged and had a significant impact on a personal, local, national, or international level.



Speeches may, but do not have to, reference Rotary and/or its purpose and past accomplishments. The real objective for each speech is for the student to address this year's topic on a personal level. What feelings, memories or insights does the student have from past experiences? What has the student or someone the student knows done that has really made a difference in their life or community? How has that contributed to the betterment and or unity of the world within and without?

Speeches may not be read, although cue cards or notes will be permitted only at the local club level contests. Speeches must be memorized for all advanced contests. There will be speeches at the Club level in February/March and three advanced levels – Sectionals in March, Regionals in April, and Finals in May 2024. Prize values increase with each advanced contest. The District Winner will have finished first at all four contest levels with total winnings of \$2,200.

Detailed questions may be directed to your local Rotary Club or to the District Speech Contest Coordinators listed on the Rotary District 6710 web site www.rotarydistrict6710.org. There you can find downloadable Speech Contest packets under the Youth Service Speech Contest listing. Any changes in the contest schedule as well as clarifications and corrections will be posted. You will be able to track the contest as it progresses, review any contest clarifications, updated contest schedules, times, locations, prizes and reference links and materials that may be helpful to you as student contestants.

