The “NOW” Packet

After the Regional Contest – What You Need to Do
2016 NHD STATE FINALISTS – CONGRATULATIONS!

You have qualified to compete in the Wisconsin State NHD Event at the University of Wisconsin – Madison!

"Anybody can make history; only a great man can write it." – Oscar Wilde

IF YOU CAN’T COME TO THE STATE EVENT ON APRIL 23, 2016

Contact the State Coordinator at Sarah.Fallon@wisconsinhistory.org so that we can offer your spot to another student. Please tell us as soon as possible so that the student who replaces you has time to improve their project.

HOW TO REGISTER FOR STATE – DUE APRIL 6, 2016

STEP 1: Go to http://wihist.org/1SOOcg3 and fill out the Registration Form.

STEP 2: Print the Confirmation Form and have your parent or guardian sign where indicated.

STEP 3: Collect your $15 per student Entry Fee. Checks should be addressed to the Wisconsin Historical Society.

If you are registering by yourself, mail your signed Confirmation Form + Entry Fee to this address:

Sarah Fallon
National History Day in Wisconsin
816 State Street
Madison, WI 53706

If you are registering as part of a school group, turn in your signed Confirmation Form + Entry Fee to your teacher. Teachers will then mail the forms + fees for all of their students.

Late fees will accrue if you mail your signed Confirmation Form and Entry Fee later than April 11, 2016.

We will post a list of registered students online at http://wihist.org/1NATwN9. We will update the list regularly, but not instantaneously. Do not expect to see your name appear immediately after you register.

STEP 4: Students in the Paper and Website categories must submit their projects by April 6, 2016.

Papers: Email your papers to nhdinwi@gmail.com. Include the following 4 items in the body of your email: the words "State Event," your name, your paper’s title, and your division (Junior/Senior). Attach your paper as a Word document (.doc) or a PDF file (.pdf). Papers submitted via GoogleDocs will not be accepted.

Websites: Publish your websites through the NHD Website Editor and include your URL in your online Registration Form. You will be locked out of editing your website after April 6, 2016 until the State Event is over.

APPLY FOR SPECIAL AWARDS – DUE APRIL 6, 2016

STEP 1: Review the list of Special Awards enclosed in this envelope.

STEP 2: Email a copy of your process paper and bibliography to nhdinwi@gmail.com by April 6, 2016. Include the following 5 items in the body of your email: your name, your project’s title, your category, your division (Junior/Senior), and the name(s) of the Special Award(s) for which you would like to be considered. If you don’t include all 5 items in your email, then your project will not be considered. Do not include the names of your teacher or school.
As a State Finalist, you have the option of attending a workshop to receive feedback on your project from a Wisconsin NHD staff member as you prepare for the State Event.

We hold these workshops as an opportunity for serious discussion with students who aspire to become National Finalists. *If you attend a workshop, then you should plan to work hard on revising your project afterwards.*

**OPTION 1: In-Person Workshops**

The Wisconsin NHD staff will be touring the state during the month of March to meet in person with State Finalists.

For the workshops in *Madison, Milwaukee,* and *Waukesha,* please email Sarah.Fallon@wisconsinhistory.org to reserve a 30-minute timeslot during the workshop. *We will book reservations in the order that we receive them.*

- **MADISON** (Wednesday, March 2, 2016): Wisconsin Historical Society Auditorium, 2:30pm – 8:30pm
- **MILWAUKEE** (Tuesday, March 8, 2016): Ronald Reagan IB High School, 3:00pm – 8:30pm
- **WAUKESHA** (Wednesday, March 23, 2016): Carroll University, 3:00pm – 8:00pm

For the workshops in *Sheboygan/Green Bay, Minocqua, Ashland, Eau Claire,* and *La Crosse,* the dates of workshops follow so closely on the heels of the regional contests that we will not book reservations. Interested students should come to the workshops when their schedules permit and expect a short wait before meeting with a staff member.

- **SHEBOYGAN/GREEN BAY** (Wednesday, March 9, 2016): History Museum at the Castle, 2:00pm – 8:00pm
- **MINOCQUA** (Sunday, March 13, 2016): Dr. Kate Museum in Woodruff, 11:00am – 3:00pm
- **ASHLAND** (Monday, March 14, 2016): Staff will contact the teachers of the State Finalists to schedule visits.
- **EAU CLAIRE** (Thursday, March 17, 2016): Chippewa Valley Museum, 3:00pm – 8:00pm
- **LA CROSSE** (Thursday, March 31, 2016): La Crosse Public Library, 3:00pm – 8:00pm

**OPTION 2: Long-Distance Workshops**

Before April 15, 2016, you can email a copy of your project to Laura.Ball@wisconsinhistory.org. The Wisconsin NHD staff members will spend 30 minutes reviewing your project and return a Word document with constructive feedback.

- For *Papers,* please attach your project to your email as a .doc or .pdf file.
- For *Websites,* please include a link to your project in the body of your email.
- For *Documentaries,* please attach your project as a file type supported by Windows Media Player or publish your project to YouTube and include a link in the body of your email. Attach your process paper, your annotated bibliography, and a typed copy of your narration script.
- For *Performances,* please record a video of your project and follow the instructions for Documentaries above.
- For *Exhibits,* please attach several high-resolution photographs of your project from various angles. Double-check that all of the text on your exhibit is clearly legible before you click “Send.” Attach your process paper and your annotated bibliography.
Even if you don’t use our On-Site or Long-Distance Workshop options on page 2 of this packet, you should still give some thought to improving your project before the State Event, especially if your goal is to qualify for the National Contest.

It can feel hard to face the prospect of revising your finished work. Most school assignments are over and done quickly; NHD is a rare opportunity for middle and high school students to learn what it feels like to redo the same piece of work again and again over the course of a year. Don’t lose heart! Relentless revision is the only way to produce your best results, and it’s a skill which will serve you well in life whenever you tackle a big project.

That said, your time is limited. As you prepare for the State Event, you should try to prioritize substantive changes to the content of your project over minor tweaks to your presentation.

5 Pieces of Advice of State Finalists

(1) Re-evaluate your thesis statement – What does it argue?

To attain a high score for analysis and interpretation at the State Event, your claim should be stronger than “My topic is an example of the theme.” Instead, your thesis should claim, “My topic’s example of the theme was significant in history for these reasons.” Everything else in your project should function as proof of your thesis.

(2) Focus on specific examples of your topic’s relationship to the theme.

Don’t throw lots of examples of explorations, encounters, and exchanges at the judges and pray that some of them stick. Commit to a single, clear statement about how your topic connects to the theme, and use all of your allotted words/space/time to make that one statement as clear as possible. You should use the theme words (“exploration,” “encounter,” “exchange”) explicitly in your project.

(Remember – you don’t have to use all three parts of the theme, but they do work well together. You may discover connections if you try using them in tandem.)

(3) Keep hunting for primary sources.

Your NHD project began with a “research phase.” To prepare for your regional competition, you’ve since moved into a “presentation phrase.” But don’t let your research phase fizzle out during the contest season! Use the bibliographies of your secondary sources to continue tracking down new primary sources, and see where they lead you. Additional research is one of the best ways to improve the quality of your project before the State Event.

(4) Remember to place your topic in historical context.

Before you dive into explaining the details of your topic, you should inform your audience about the setting in which your story took place. Primary sources are very important at NHD contests, but your bibliography should also include several good, broad secondary source books to show that you read widely about the period in question in an effort to put your topic into historical perspective.

(5) Finish with a conclusion.

Don’t just stop writing when you reach the end of your word/space/time limit. Tie your thoughts back to your main claim. Your concluding statement should be very similar to your thesis. Don’t end on a brand-new idea.