Communities work, live, and play in watersheds that are unique systems. To understand how to keep our water clean and to protect it for future generations, water resource scientists conduct research and experiments both in the lab and out in the field. Their research spans history, geography, sociology, engineering, chemistry and beyond. Despite all of the work they do, scientists often go unrecognized for their work and how they make an impact on society.

For the 2019 Spirit of the Water Essay contest, please do the following:

1. Contact Hanna Bates (hbates@iastate.edu) with a topic you are interested in below and she will match you to a scientist

Water Science Research Topics:

- Social Sciences
- Soil Science
- Agriculture and Biosystems Engineering
- History
- English
- Natural Resources Ecology and Management
- Economics
- Chemistry

2. Interview a scientist (via telephone, skype, email)

3. Write an essay about their research interests, the topics they explore, and what impacts their work has on improving natural resources and peoples’ lives.
   a) Examples include: What got them interested in their research topic, what is their research methodology, and what difference their work is making for natural resources

4. Submit your essay and student information form to hbates@iastate.edu by January 11, 2019.

Essay length: 500-1000 words (approximately 4 pages double-spaced). Please use in-text citations when using a reference. The reference list does not count towards the required essay length. The reference list must use MLA formatting.

Submission Deadline: January 11, 2018 by 11:59PM

Deadline now extended to February 11 by 11:59PM

Winners will be recognized during an awards ceremony at the Iowa Water Conference.

All prize-winning essays will be published as an online anthology produced by the Iowa Water Center.

Submission Guidelines

Students enrolled in grades 9-12 in public, private, and home schools in the State of Iowa are eligible to submit an essay. All essays must be typed in 12 pt. font, double-spaced. Other submission materials include an application form found on the Iowa Water Center webpage for the contest (http://www.water.iastate.edu/essaycontest). This form must be completed and sent with the essay to qualify for the contest.
The checklist for a qualifying submission for judging is the following:
- Essay
- Application form

Submissions must be submitted online via email to Hanna Bates at hbates@iastate.edu.

Recipients will receive confirmation upon submission. Submissions will be evaluated by a three-person panel representing members from the Iowa water community. Essays will be evaluated on the following criteria (evaluation rubric is available at water.iastate.edu/essaycontest):
1. Creativity/Originality
2. Focus/Main Point
3. Organization/Format
4. Language/Style
5. Grammar

Students and teachers are encouraged to reach out to Hanna Bates, hbates@iastate.edu or 515-294-5650, if they have any questions regarding the contest.

Prizes

1st Place
$500 cash prize
One full college course scholarship or 4 credit hours total at the Iowa Lakeside Laboratory ($1700 value)

2nd Place
$300 cash prize
2 credit hour course scholarship at the Iowa Lakeside Laboratory ($900 value)

3rd Place
$300 cash prize

About the prizes

The Iowa Lakeside Laboratory, located in West Okoboji Lake, is owned by the state of Iowa and operated through the Board of Regents. Its mission is: 1) to provide science classes and research opportunities for university students, and 2) to offer Outreach Programs and provide services through the state universities.

Scholarship winners may choose any summer academic course at the Lakeside Laboratory. For an example course offering list, please visit http://www.continuetolearn.uiowa.edu/lakesidelab/university/courses/index.html. In general, one semester hour is equivalent to one week of a residential course. Credits earned at the Lakeside Laboratory transfer to the Regent Universities within Iowa as well as other colleges. To transfer to other universities and colleges, students are encouraged to contact those respective institutions regarding credit transfer. The scholarship amount for credit hours is only available to the Iowa Lakeside Lab and the cash value will not transfer to other college and universities to take courses.
Students with prize-winning essays will receive cash prizes via personal check within 30 days of the awards ceremony. Students receiving scholarships to the Iowa Lakeside Lab will receive a certificate to submit to the Iowa Lakeside Laboratory when registering for courses. The certificate for coursework will expire four years after high school graduation, and students are encouraged to enroll in a course when they are academically prepared and can fit it in their schedule.

For more information, please contact Mary Skopec, Director of the Iowa Lakeside Laboratory, mary-skopec@uiowa.edu or 712-337-3669 ext 5.