

**NORTHEAST TEXAS CHAPTER 416 AIR & SPACE FORCES ASSOCIATION**  
**Instructions for Essay Contest 2025 (School Year 2024-2025)**

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**Prizes: 1st Place – \$2,000 // 2nd Place – \$1,500 // 3rd Place – \$1,000**

Define & defend your position on the following topic:

**Filling Our Military Forces: Volunteers, Compulsory, or Other?**

Write a well-organized and clearly argued response to the topic. We want your conclusion. It is important that you research, evaluate, and synthesize relevant information to reach your own position on this topic and explain, and support your viewpoint. Sources must be cited.

**Contest Eligibility**

- Participants must be **seniors** in a **Texas high school** (or at senior level if **home schooled**).
- Contest entry form and the essay must be submitted, by email, no later than **January 10, 2025**.
- **Three (3) separate files:** participants must **sign the Entry form**, Essay in Word and PDF format:
  - **PDF Entry Form, signed & scanned** – file name **Last name First name 2025 Entry**
  - **Word document essay** – file name **Last name First name 2025 Essay**
  - **PDF file of Essay** - file name **Last name First name 2025 Essay**
  - **Example: Clarke Vance 2025 Entry / Clarke Vance 2025 Essay / etc.**
- Files will be emailed to [TX416.Northeast.Treasurer@afa.org](mailto:TX416.Northeast.Treasurer@afa.org) & [vanceclarkel@gmail.com](mailto:vanceclarkel@gmail.com)

**Additional Topic Data**

The military has been an all-volunteer force since 1975. United States people have met the needs of our services, even in times like 9/11 and subsequent war on terrorism. Men aged 18-25 are required to register in our Selective Service System in case need of need for military conscription.

For the first time since 1999, in 2023, the Air Force, and some other services, missed their enlisted recruiting goals. In 2024 the Air Force appears to be on course to meet its goal, but other total force components do not project making their goals. Over 75-percent of our youth 17-24 are not eligible for military service and less than 10-percent are aware of or considering joining.

Discussions on selective service for women, resurrecting the draft, and other alternatives to fill military forces, have been occurring in the United States. Countries use volunteers, compulsory service, professionals, and reserve personnel. Volunteer versus compulsory service is the most discussed.

This is an issue that should be of interest to you as someone eligible for military conscription, or as someone who could consider serving our military. Take a stand and write on this topic.

In answering the question, remember there are no right or wrong answers. Your challenge is to describe your position, assess the pros and cons associated with it, establish, and defend it. It is critical that you relate your position to the impact it has on national security.

Find appropriate, supportive information to develop your position. The Air & Space Forces Association website ([www.AFA.org](http://www.AFA.org)), specifically, The Mitchell Institute ([www.mitchellaerospacepower.org](http://www.mitchellaerospacepower.org)) and the Air Forces ([www.af.mil](http://www.af.mil)) & Space Force ([www.spaceforce.mil](http://www.spaceforce.mil)) may have information and articles pertaining to the topic.

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**Formatting — essays are to be:**

- **Essay two (2) pages**
- **Third page with *works cited* in MLA-9 format.**
- **At least three (3) sources** are required but no limit for *your original work*.
- **Times New Roman, 12-point font.**
- **One-Inch margins** on all sides; top, left, right, and bottom.
- **One-half-inch header:** first and last name, space, page number flush w/right margin.
- **Double-spaced, with the title centered on the first page.**
- **Indent each paragraph one-half-inch.**
- **Use correct grammar and sentence structure.**
- **File name as specified for submission** – Last Name, First Name 2025 Essay/Entry/PDF

**Formatting and Citation:** Use *MLA-9 format*. Various websites have information. Use the formatting requirements above. Numerous sites help generate citations. You may find the [https://owl.purdue.edu/owl/research\\_and\\_citation/mla\\_style/mla\\_formatting\\_and\\_style\\_guide/mla\\_general\\_format.html](https://owl.purdue.edu/owl/research_and_citation/mla_style/mla_formatting_and_style_guide/mla_general_format.html) helpful. You can find all you need at this link; how to cite, how to reference your citation in the text, and more. Please use this as your guide.

**Sample Header Info**

Your first and last name, with a space and page number, one-half-inch down in header and placed on right hand margin. Vance Clarke 1

**First Page Information**

Northeast Texas Essay Contest – 2025

**Filling Our Military Forces: Volunteers, Compulsory, or Other?**

Start paper

**Sample Citation Page** – See link below for sample citation page. Shows some citations.

[https://owl.purdue.edu/owl/research\\_and\\_citation/mla\\_style/mla\\_formatting\\_and\\_style\\_guide/mla\\_sample\\_works\\_cited\\_page.html](https://owl.purdue.edu/owl/research_and_citation/mla_style/mla_formatting_and_style_guide/mla_sample_works_cited_page.html)

**We know you can do well in this essay. You will learn and provide your thoughts to us!**

**See next page for scoring matrix that will be used by the judges!**

**Rubric – Scoring table is shown below.**

<b>2025 Essay Contest Scoring Rubric</b>		
<b>10%</b>	1	Essay two (2) pages in length.
	2	Third page with works cited in MLA-9 format.
	3	At least three (3) sources are cited and annotated in the paper.
	4	Times New Roman, 12-point font.
	5	One-Inch margins on all sides; top, left, right, and bottom.
	6	One-half-inch header: First and Last name, space, page number flush w/right margin.
	7	Double-spaced, with the title centered on first page.
	8	Each paragraph should be indented one-half-inch.
	9	Correct grammar and sentence structure used throughout.
	10	File name as specified for submission – last name, first name 2025 Essay/Entry/PDF
<b>90%</b>	1	Paper takes a stand and position on the essay topic.
	2	Paper discusses pros and cons or takes one position and defends it.
	3	Position taken is well defended throughout paper.
	4	Position is related to national security based on topic.
	5	Paper is engaging and expressed ideas makes reader think about topic.

**Final Encouragement to Entrants**

We know you are talented, bright, and able! We look forward to your paper and appreciate your participation. We desire properly formatted papers with great content. Please, check the formatting, use the MLA-9 guide reference, and do your best.

If you have questions, please contact:

**Vance Clarke**

**903-274-9981**

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