

IDEAS FOR SPONSORING A SUCCESSFUL ORATORICAL OR ESSAY CONTEST

- Present program with the local high school principals
- Get the middle school principal's or vice principal's support
- Have a meeting with the principal(s)
- Get permission to do class visits
- Get the principal and guidance counselor involved

- Talk with the head of the English department
- Find a Forensics or English teacher chair the contest
- Have teachers use it as a class project
- Have teachers offer extra credit
- Have teachers recommend students to meet at a separate meeting where information will be presented
- Have a separate person assigned to each school, and that person has to meet with a core group of teachers to promote the contest
- Contact teachers via email
- Utilize retired teachers who may still have some contacts

- Need club interest and a person (or persons) taking the lead
- Club members need to participate and offer support

- Start early to allow for appropriate preparation
- Make it a showcase for Optimism
- Serve pizza and refreshments; promote Optimism to parents
- Sponsor practice sessions, and furnish food and refreshments
- Contact the home-school association
- Contact civic groups (YMCA, Boys & Girls club, Scouts, etc.)
- Promote at all schools, private and parochial
- Work through the public libraries
- Post flyers throughout the area
- County-wide PR
- Place ads in the local paper
- Promote through use of the local cable channel
- Publicize using Facebook, school flyers, and newspapers
- Make sure the competition is run professionally
- Have previous winner (or winners) by the MC
- Have past participants visit schools and talk about their positive experiences
- Order the OI video of the previous year's winner
- Promote the scholarship money
- Offer prizes at the local level

- Present saving bonds as local level prizes
- Make it enjoyable
- Hire professional judges (Wisconsin Forensics Coaches Association, Toastmasters) and require them to make comments