



## African American Trailblazers Student Essay Contest

### Prompt:

- Civil Rights Leader Oliver Hill spoke these words:  
*“Our Declaration of Independence says we are all created with rights to life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness. I agree with the life and the liberty. The pursuit of happiness ought to include the right to be taught and trained, to be able to do something constructive, to move toward a civilized society.”*

**What does the “pursuit of happiness” mean to you? How do you work to realize that right?**

### Rules:

- This contest is for students in grades 3-8. There will be 3 divisions: grades 3-4, 5-6, and 7-8. Three winners will be chosen for each division. Please clearly mark your envelope for which division you are entering.
- Essays can be any length, but must not be more than 500 words.
- Essays can be submitted by an individual student, parent or teacher. A teacher may enter one essay for each student in their class.
- Judges will include readers from Comcast, The Times-Dispatch, James River Writers, and the Library of Virginia.
- Plagiarized writing will be disqualified. Entries must be the sole work of the student.
- No purchase necessary. Contest open to students in grades 3-8 in the state of Virginia.

### Prizes:

- The first place winners for each division will receive:
  - A \$500 savings bond.
  - The opportunity to read their essay on a 30 –second commercial spot on Comcast. Taping date to be announced.
  - The winning essay published in the Richmond Times-Dispatch and on [www.inrich.com](http://www.inrich.com), [www.jamesriverwriters.com](http://www.jamesriverwriters.com), <http://www.lva.lib.va.us>.
  - An invitation to attend the 2009 African American Trailblazers event at the Library of Virginia on February 26 and be recognized at the event.
- Second place winners for each division will each receive:
  - A \$100 savings bond.
  - An award winning book.
  - A Times-Dispatch and Comcast prize pack.
  - The essay published on [www.inrich.com](http://www.inrich.com), [www.jamesriverwriters.com](http://www.jamesriverwriters.com), <http://www.lva.lib.va.us>.
- Third place winners for each division will receive:
  - A \$50 savings bond.
  - An award winning book.
  - A Times-Dispatch and Comcast prize pack.
  - The essay published on [www.inrich.com](http://www.inrich.com), [www.jamesriverwriters.com](http://www.jamesriverwriters.com), and <http://www.lva.lib.va.us>.

### How to Submit Your Entry:

- All entries must be received by 4:00 on February 11, 2009. You will be contacted by February 19 if you are a winner.
- Please complete and attach the enclosed “Student Essay Contest Entry Form” to your submission.
- Please fax entries to (804)775-8101 or mail them to:  
NIE, Richmond Times-Dispatch  
Student Essay Contest: 3-4/5-6/7-8 (Choose one)  
P.O. Box 85333  
Richmond, VA 23293

# Student Essay Contest Entry Form

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

School: \_\_\_\_\_

Grade: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone Number: \_\_\_\_\_

Email Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Teacher's Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Teacher's Phone Number: \_\_\_\_\_

Teacher's Email Address: \_\_\_\_\_

