



SENATOR MARTINEZ CONGRATULATES STUDENTS FOR VOICE OF DEMOCRACY AND PATRIOT PEN AWARDS

(PATCHOGUE, NY) On Thursday, March 5, 2020, Senator Martinez attended VFW Post 2913 to celebrate and honor the winners of the Voice of Democracy and Patriots Pen essay contest; This year's essay theme was "What Makes America Great?"

These students participated in one of two different nationally run scholarship contests, organized by the Veterans of Foreign Wars. The **Voice of Democracy** audio-essay program provides high school students with the unique opportunity to express themselves in regards to a democratic and patriotic-themed recorded essay. Each year, more than 51,000, 9-12 grade students from across the country enter to win their share of more than \$1.9 million in educational scholarships and incentives awarded through the program. Each year more than 138,000 students in grades 6-8 enter the VFW's **Patriot's Pen** youth essay contest for a chance to win their share of more than \$900,000 in state and national awards. Each first place state winner receives a minimum of \$500 at the national level, and the national first place winner wins \$5,000 and an all-expense-paid trip to Washington, D.C.

"I am so proud of our talented students who examined America's history, along with their own experiences in modern American society for their final scholarship essay entry, stated Senator Martinez.

It was truly motivating for me to be in the audience as these five students rose to the podium and read their amazing essays. They had incredible poise, and captured America's history in a way that any history teacher would truly be proud of. It brings me great excitement to see the future leaders of the community when I see students such as Taylor, Claire, Jonluca, Travis and James," said Senator Monica R. Martinez

Congratulations to the winners, Taylor DiBiase, Claire Blakely, Jonluca Cortese, Travis Visco and James Connor for their outstanding efforts!



