

Camp Pendleton Historical Society

6th Annual

2026 Essay Contest

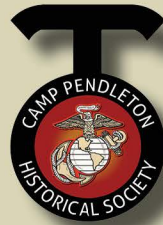


The Camp Pendleton Historical Society is pleased to announce the 6th Annual Historical Essay Contest for high school students living in those school districts adjacent to Marine Corps Base, Camp Pendleton.

SUBJECT SCOPE

The subject of the contest is limited to the land now known as Camp Pendleton. This scope includes the pre-history (archeology) of the land, its native American occupants, the Spanish exploration and mission era, the rancho era, the history of the Camp as a significant cultural and economic institution in San Diego County since 1942, and significant historical figures as their story relates to the Camp. Not included in the scope is military history of Marine Corps units stationed at the Camp as tenant organizations.

*For further details and submission guidelines, visit:
camppendletonhistoricalsociety.org/education*



ELIGIBLE

High school students living
in those school districts
adjacent to
Marine Corps Base,
Camp Pendleton

PRIZES *

1st Place	\$1,000
2nd Place	\$500

All entrants will be
recognized with a certificate
and a one year free
membership in the Camp
Pendleton Historical Society

* Additional prizes may be awarded based
on the quality of the essays submitted

DEADLINES

Application Letter December 31, 2025
Essay Submission February 28, 2026

QUESTIONS

essaycontest.cphs@gmail.com
Place "Essay Contest" in Subject Line

www.camppendletonhistoricalsociety.org
Camp Pendleton Historical Society, Inc. is a
non-profit 501(c)(3) corporation. It is not a
part of the Department of Defense or any of its
components and it has no governmental status.

ENTRANT REQUIREMENTS

Student entrants must live in those school districts adjacent to Marine Corps Base, Camp Pendleton.

ESSAY RULES

1. Essays shall be limited to 5,000 words (not including graphic captions, numbered end notes, and bibliography).
2. All graphics (photos, charts, graphs, etc.) shall be numbered, have a caption, and have a specific reference in the text that clearly shows the relevance of the graphic.
3. Essays shall be submitted electronically in English, in Microsoft Word or PDF format. Text is to be double spaced; and pages are to be numbered at the bottom. The font of submitted essays shall be Times New Roman, size 12. The title of the essay must appear in a header on each page. Essays shall be submitted with a cover letter that identifies the author's name, school, title of paper, and the author's address (including email address) and contact phone number. The student author's name or school must not appear anywhere in the essay. The use of AI in the writing of the text is prohibited.
4. One entry per participant.
5. The Camp Pendleton Historical Society reserves the right to disqualify any entry that does not meet the essay rules or contains any plagiarized content.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

A letter application for entry into the contest containing name, address, school, area of interest, and tentative title of essay is to be received by CPHS by December 31, 2025.

Essays are to be submitted by February 28, 2026. Winner announcements will be made in April 2026 to be followed by an awards ceremony. Details to follow.

Inquiries about the contest, applications for entry and essays must be submitted to essaycontest.cphs@gmail.com. Enter: "ESSAY CONTEST" on the email subject line.

All essays and award photos become the property of the Camp Pendleton Historical Society, and may be published in the CPHS newsletter, *Groundbreaker*, or other professional journals.

In administering this contest the Camp Pendleton Historical Society and its judges will not discriminate in any manner whatsoever, in particular with respect to any characteristic protected by law.

JUDGING CRITERIA

Four criteria, each of equal weight, will be used to judge essays entered in the contest.

1. **ACCURACY.** Does the essay present verifiable elements of the particular subject it treats, using resource material and critical analysis. Researchers are encouraged to look for source materials outside of the normal references such as the Local Historical Societies (to include CPHS website), the Camp Museum Director's Office, San Diego History Center, etc.
2. **INTEREST.** Does the essay keep a reader's interest in the subject matter, and does the essay establish the significance of the subject matter.
3. **ORGANIZATION.** Is the essay organized in such a way that a reader can readily follow the story line presented.
4. **PRESENTATION.** Does the essay make effective use of structural elements, such as numbered sections, numbered end notes, illustrations and charts, and bibliography; and style elements such as syntax, logical paragraph formation, spelling, and consistent capitalization and punctuation (while a style manual is not dictated, it is expected that one of the generally accepted manuals will be used; e.g., the Modern Language Association, the American Psychological Association, etc.)

JUDGES. Judges for the contest will be selected from Camp Pendleton Historical Society membership and persons with publishing and academic experience.