History behind the Africana Studies Essay Competition:

Stony Brook University's economic impact on the Long Island community is well-known. For example, Stony Brook University is the largest single-site employer in Long Island. Yet, even though the university’s economic impact cannot be divorced from its impact on Long Island in a general sense, its social impact and, in particular, its impact at the community level, is perhaps less well known. In fact, Stony Brook University has a long history of reaching far beyond its borders at Nicolls Road. For example, the Japan Center at Stony Brook has an essay competition for high school and college students, while the Department of Technology and Society runs the “STEP” program for middle and high school students in Suffolk County.

In keeping with this spirit of nurturing excellence and establishing community partnerships, and because of its concern with creating socially responsible citizens who can think critically and who can make a positive impact on their environments, the Department of Africana Studies sees itself as uniquely positioned to further extend the university's “ethos of community care”. In this regard, therefore, the department is pleased to inaugurate the Department of Africana Studies at Stony Brook University Essay Competition for students in grades 9–12 from participating high schools in Suffolk County.

Instructions for those interested in submitting an essay for the Department of Africana Studies at Stony Brook University Essay Competition:

The essay competition committee of the Department of Africana Studies at Stony Brook University invites high school students from participating schools in Long Island to submit essays for consideration. These essays should blend personal reflection and research as students critically assess the state of civil rights in the twenty-first century United States and what civil rights mean to them.

Topic:

Civil Rights in the United States of America: What do Civil Rights Mean to me in the 21st Century?

Eligibility and Essay Competition Rules:

- Limited to high school students from participating schools.
- Students must be registered in Grades 9–12.
- One (1) essay per entrant is allowed.
- All entrants retain the copyright for their submission, however, by submitting your work, you consent to allowing the Department of Africana Studies and Stony Brook University the right to use your name in advertisements or other publicity material without expectation of compensation.
- Please note: all winners and runners-up will have their names and schools published on Stony Brook University websites.
- The decisions of the judges are final.

Prizes:

- The winner will receive: $500, and the honor of reading their essay at Stony Brook University.
- The runner-up will receive $300.
Essay Requirements and Submission Guidelines:

- Essay Word Limit: 1000-1250 words, excluding essay title and references.
- Cover Page: a cover page should be submitted with your essay. This cover page should contain your name, grade, e-mail address, and school.
- Formatting: number all pages except for the title page (that contains the title of the essay).
- Use 12-point Times New Roman font.
- Margins are to be 1” (top, bottom, left, and right).
- Double-space.
- Submissions should be in Microsoft Word.
- All work must be original work, with proper citation where necessary.

The Essay Competition Committee will judge essays based on the following criteria:

- Clear thesis statement.
- Elaboration of the thesis with supporting evidence (personal reflection and examples from the scholarly literature).
- Evidence of critical thinking and reflection.
- Organization and fluency.
- To what extent has the student communicated their ideas effectively and cogently to their audience?

Deadline for Submissions:

Entries should be submitted by 11:59 p.m., on Friday, January 6, 2017, to the following address:

afsEssaySbu@stonybrook.edu

Essay Contest for High School Students

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