Virginia History Day Virtual Judging Guidelines

Keeping with recent guidance provided by the Governor of Virginia and the National History Day (NHD) leadership team, the 2020 Virginia History Day state contest, scheduled to take place at the Virginia Museum of History & Culture (VMHC) on April 25th and 26th, will now move to a virtual format. Please refer to the following guidelines while judging virtual projects. Please do not hesitate to reach out to the Virginia History Day Coordinator if you have any questions or concerns about this process.

Virginia History Day Coordinator, Sam Florer: sflorer@virginiahistory.org, (804) 342-9672

Training:

Judges must view the Judge Training – Virtual Contests video/PowerPoint located on the Virginia History Day shared Google Drive. They will also receive specific instructions for the category they have been assigned to judge. Please read all shared material thoroughly before viewing and evaluating student projects.

Material by Category:

Once judge teams have been determined and confirmed, they will be sent links to view student projects as follows:

- **Papers**: PDFs
- **Websites**: URLs
- **Documentaries**: YouTube or Google Drive URLs for videos, PDFs containing process papers and bibliographies
- **Performances**: PDFs containing scripts, process papers, and bibliographies
- **Exhibits**: PDFs containing photos, exhibit text, process papers, and bibliographies

Evaluation Forms:

- Judges will provide typed feedback for each project via the provided Word Doc evaluation sheets. Each Word Doc contains ten copies of the evaluation sheets for their category.
  - If more evaluation sheets are needed, simply copy and paste a blank evaluation sheet onto a blank page, within the same document. **DO NOT** create separate documents for additional evaluation sheets.
- The judge must make sure to type the project’s title, entry number, and the student’s name in the top right corner of each sheet.
• A minimum of five comments should be given on each project’s evaluation sheet, but more are encouraged. Make sure to begin with a positive comment and layer critical comments with positive ones. Always end with a positive comment.
• Comments, both positive and critical, should point to specific aspects of the project and not be overly general. Critical comments must be constructive, so the students can learn and improve their projects before the next level of competition.
• Most importantly, remember to be kind and understanding! These students have worked incredibly hard on these projects and, no matter the quality, that should be respected.

Ranking Sheets:
• Only judge captains will receive a Ranking Sheet.
• After viewing their assigned projects, judge teams will be given a scheduled time to meet with each other via Zoom to discuss rankings. This time should not be used to fill out evaluation sheets, only to determine rankings.
• The top two ranked projects in each category will advance to the national contest in June. The third-place project serves as an alternate and will advance if either of the top two cannot attend the national contest. Elementary Division projects are not eligible to compete at nationals, but should still be ranked.
• Judge captains should be sure to fill out all aspects of the ranking sheet, including: Division (Elementary, Junior, Senior), Category (Paper, Exhibit, Documentary, Performance, Website), Entry #, and the entry title. The judge should also include their name on the bottom of the sheet.

Paperwork Submission:
• Judges must complete all their evaluation sheets, and judge captains their ranking sheets, by the given deadline.
• Evaluation sheets (one Word Doc per judge) and Ranking sheets (one Word Doc per judge captain) should be emailed to Virginia History Day Coordinator Sam Florer by the given deadline (sflorer@virginiahistory.org).
• The title of the Word Docs should be the judge’s name and Division/Category that the documents pertain to (ex. John Smith Junior Group Documentaries).