

2025 National Civics Bee underway across Michigan

- The National Civics Bee expanded across Michigan for 2025
- The Michigan Chamber Foundation, along with local chambers, is hosting eight community Bees and one statewide competition to encourage informed, active citizens and spur community engagement
- Michigan was the highest recruiting state for essay submissions from middle schoolers in the country!

[Lansing, MICH]— The National Civics Bee is back with local competitions happening across the Great Lakes State throughout the month of April after Michigan led the country as the highest recruiting state for essay submissions. The initiative is aimed at encouraging more young Americans to engage in civics and contribute to their communities.

“Informed, active citizens are the heart of thriving communities and economies,” said **MI Chamber President & CEO Jim Holcomb**. “Michigan should be beaming with pride as our state’s students led the country in essay submissions this year, especially as this initiative is one essential way to spark civic knowledge, solve challenges and help combat the political division or apathy that’s too prevalent these days.”

Why It Matters – The Need and Case for Civics

Civic knowledge is far too low in Michigan and across the country.

- More than 70% of us fail a basic literacy quiz on topics like the three branches of government, the number of U.S. Supreme Court justices or landmark cases, or other basic functions of our democracy.
- 9 in 10 Americans do believe that a civics education is important to the success of our country.

That’s why the Michigan Chamber Foundation and U.S. Chamber Foundation partnered to bring the National Civics Bee to Michigan last year and again in 2025.

How It Works

Middle school students – those in grades 6 to 8 – from public, private, charter, and home schools were invited to take part in the first-round civics essay competition.

Distinguished, vetted judges then reviewed the 750-word essays, with the top 15-20 students from each competition selected to move on to the next round: live quiz events taking place this spring to test their civics knowledge.

Catch a Competition and the Action

Here are the local competitions taking place around the state this month.

- [Battle Creek Area Chamber Foundation](#) – April 16, 4:30 to 6:30 p.m. at Kellogg Community College’s Binda Performing Arts Center
- [Bay Area Chamber of Commerce](#) – April 21, 5:30 to 8:30 p.m. at the Bay-Arenac ISD

- [Canton Chamber of Commerce](#) – April 30, 6:30 to 8 p.m. at Eastern Michigan University's Student Center
- [Grand Rapids Chamber](#) – April 16, from 10 a.m. to Noon at the Gerald R. Ford Presidential Museum. [Register here](#)
- [Jackson County Chamber of Commerce](#) – April 23, 5 to 7 p.m. at Spring Arbor University's White Auditorium
- [Northern Michigan National Civics Bee](#) – April 26, 10 a.m. to Noon at Gaylord High School's Auditorium

The finalists and top winners from these local competitions receive various prizes, including \$500 cash for the first-place student. The top three finishers – or 30 total students – will move on to the 2nd annual [National Civics Bee statewide Michigan competition](#) slated for July 9, 2025.

From there, the first-place winner of the state competition receives a \$1,000 cash prize and advances to the National Championship Bee in Washington, D.C. in the fall of 2025.

2024 and 2025 Michigan Highlights

- Thousands of students from across the state submitted essays, showcasing their understanding of how civic engagement can transform communities.
- 15 student finalists from 13 middle schools – from our state's east side of Macomb County to the west side in Ottawa County – competed in the inaugural 2024 statewide bee. Check out this [video recap here](#).
- Plymouth-Canton Community Schools student Evan Zhen represented Michigan at the national competition this past November in Washington, D.C. Check out this [profile on Evan](#).
 - Evan was honored as Michigan's 2024 National Civics Bee winner with [a legislative tribute](#) by his hometown representative, House Democratic Leader Rep. Puri, on the floor of the House of Representatives.
- Students demonstrate impressive knowledge of civic responsibility, the U.S. Constitution and local government.
- Finalists presented innovative ideas on how to tackle key civic challenges in their communities.

Organized in partnership with The Civic Trust of the U.S. Chamber of Commerce Foundation, the National Civics Bee is designed to inspire middle schoolers to become better informed about our country's democracy, to engage respectfully and constructively in the community, and to build greater trust in others and institutions.

For More Information

Visit michamber.com/micivicsbee for more information or to get involved.

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MEDIA CONTACT: Sara Wurfel, Michigan Chamber, 517-599-3470 or swurfel@michamber.com