



2026 PAUL SIMON STUDENT ESSAY CONTEST

*The Illinois Community College Trustees Association's **PAUL SIMON STUDENT ESSAY CONTEST** provides a \$1,000 scholarship to the student who best describes "How My Community College Has Changed My Life."*

CONTEST RULES

All currently enrolled students at ICCTA member colleges are eligible to participate in the Paul Simon Student Essay Contest at the local level. However, each ICCTA member college may enter only **ONE** student essay in the statewide competition each year.

Each essay must be brief (less than 500 words), typed, and address the theme "*How My Community College Has Changed My Life.*" **Entrants must use "*How My Community College Has Changed My Life*" as the essay's title.** Each submission must be accompanied by a completed Entry Form.

All entries will be judged on the basis of the following criteria:

- Writing style
- Clarity of expression
- Relevancy to the theme "How My Community College Has Changed My Life"
- Use of correct grammar and punctuation

★ Failure to follow these rules will result in the disqualification of an essay ★

CONTEST DEADLINES

All essays must be received **BY 5 PM, FRIDAY, MARCH 27, 2026**. The winner of the Paul Simon Student Essay Contest will receive a \$1,000 cash stipend for educational expenses during the fall 2026 semester. In addition, ICCTA will invite the winner to attend the association's June 5, 2026 awards banquet in Normal.

To submit an entry for the Paul Simon Student Essay Contest, please send your essay and a completed Entry Form (signed by the designated contact person at your college) to:

Illinois Community College Trustees Association
401 E. Capitol, Suite 200
Springfield, IL 62701-1711
E-MAIL: vbrown@communitycolleges.org

- For more information, please contact Veronica Brown at vbrown@communitycolleges.org or 1-800-454-2282 ▪



2025 ICCTA Paul Simon Student Essay Contest Nomination Form

Name of Student Entrant _____

Pronunciation of Student's Name _____

Home Address _____

City/State/Zip _____

Telephone _____ E-mail Address _____

Name of College _____

Contact Person _____

Title _____

Telephone _____ E-mail Address _____

To be eligible for the 2025 Paul Simon Student Essay Contest, your essay and this completed entry form must be received by **5 PM, March 27, 2026**, at the:

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401 E. Capitol, Suite 200
Springfield, IL 62701-1711
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