

2026 Martin Luther King Jr. Essay, Artwork and Poetry Contests | Award Winners

Visual Arts Contest

Grades 3-5

1st Aubree Brown	Hardin County Schools
2nd Ky'ron Freeman	Hardin County Schools
3rd Siyona Avalaskar	Boone County Schools

Grades 6-8

1st Marianna Atkins	Jefferson County Schools
2nd Naomi Honorat	Fayette County Schools
3rd Evelyn Townsend	Fayette County Schools

Grades 9-10

1st Kaleigh Barrett	Hazard Independent Schools
2nd Aubrey Taylor	Mercer County Schools

Grades 11-12

1st Baylee Terwilliger	Christian County High School
2nd Marley Welker	Christian County High School
3rd Marlee Henderson	Christian County High School
4th Heaven Dobson	Fayette County Schools
Honorable Mention Jacob Williams	Estill County Schools
Honorable Mention Leighlan McAllister	Estill County Schools

Essay Contests

Grades 3-5

1st Josiah Hooker	Taylor County Schools
2nd Siyona Avalaskar	Boone County Schools
3rd Kurt Raymond	Jefferson County Schools

Grades 7-8

1st Lillynn Lake	Taylor County Schools
2nd Lela Williams	Fayette County Schools

Grades 9-12

1st Place Tie Jelanie Walker Juan Garcia Chich	Bowling Green Independent School District
2nd Madeline Peavler	Jefferson County Schools
3rd Alaya Hunter	Burgin Independent School Department of Defense Education Activity
4th Seren Barnes	Knox County Schools
Honorable Mention Brenden Hughes	Estill County Schools
Honorable Mention Joshua Osborne	Estill County Schools

Poetry Contests

Grades 6-8

1st Place Tie Ella Gilliam Camron Freeman	Fayette County Schools
2nd Pippy Raymond	Hardin County Schools
3rd Sylvie Dryden	Jefferson County Public Schools
	Archdiocese of Louisville

Grades 9-12

4th | Caroline St. Clair

1st | Sylvia Mason

2nd | Zion Smith

3rd | Kyla Francis

Fayette County Schools

Jefferson County Public Schools
Owensboro Independent School
System

Jefferson County Public Schools

Melvin L. Turner Youth MLK, Jr. Leadership Awards

1st | Tiffani S. Gaddie | Campbellsville, KY

2nd | Azahria Watson | Fort Knox High School

Melvin L. Turner MLK, Jr. Adult Leadership Award

1st | Pastor Joe T. Leavell, Jr. | Hopkinsville, KY