



New York State Commission for Social Justice

Order Sons and Daughters of Italy in America

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CSJ Christopher Columbus Award “Discovering The Truth”

Over the past few decades many myths and falsehoods have been spoken about Christopher Columbus. Today these falsehoods are being repeated on social media and in our classrooms at the detriment of Columbus and Americans who celebrate Columbus Day.

ASSIGNMENT:

This award is open to students in grades 11-12 and who are children, grandchildren, nieces and nephews of lodge members in good standing. The student must select one of the many anti-Columbus myths being repeated today and prove it wrong using reputable sources.

Here are some common myths that can be proven false:

1. Columbus thought little of the natives and abused them.
2. Columbus committed genocide.
3. Columbus brought slavery and imperialism to the New World.
4. Columbus' goals were gold and slavery.
5. Columbus cut off the hands of natives who did not provide their share of gold.
6. Columbus was happy and willing to institute the practice of encomiendas.
7. Columbus engaged in sex trafficking.
8. Columbus raped native women and/or ordered his men to rape.
9. Columbus was short-tempered, heartless, narcissistic, ruthless and vindictive.
10. Columbus was a racist.
11. Columbus didn't discover anything.
12. Columbus was sent back to Spain in chains for abusing the Indians.

You can choose a topic from the above list or a new Columbus defamatory myth you wish to disprove.

You can disprove the myth in one of two ways:

- 1) **Essay:** Write a 500 (minimum) word essay stating what anti-Columbus falsehood is being repeated today on social media or in our classrooms and prove why it is wrong.
 - a) The completed assignment must be typed (handwritten submission will not be accepted) and submitted on time in order to be considered for the contest. A copy of the scoring rubric for the contest is available below.
 - b) A separate page should contain the bibliography of resources used and referenced in your essay.
 - c) The essay should be emailed to the CSJ: CSJD3Chair@gmail.com
 - d) A scanned copy of the application form must also be emailed to the CSJ: CSJD3Chair@gmail.com

2) **Video:** Compose a 3-minute (minimum) video stating what anti-Columbus falsehood is being repeated today on social media or in our classrooms and prove why it is wrong.

- a) The video can be as creative as you want it to be and contain visuals, animations, and graphics that help prove your point.
- b) In the video you should reference resources that help prove your point
- c) The final 5 seconds of the video should show a bibliography of resources used.
- d) Video files can be big so if you can't email it, you can upload the video to your google drive and make it shareable with: *CSJD3Chair@gmail.com*
- e) A link to the video should be emailed to the CSJ: *CSJD3Chair@gmail.com*
- f) A scanned copy of the application form must also be emailed to the CSJ: *CSJD3Chair@gmail.com*

The **deadline** for these submissions is **June 1, 2025**. The scoring rubric for this contest is available below.
Awards will be distributed as follows: **1st Place: \$1000, 2nd Place \$500, and 3rd place \$300**

RESOURCES:

You can use any reputable source to prove your argument. Here are some suggestions to help you get started:

- 1) New York State CSJ: <http://www.ColumbusTheTruth.org/>
- 2) Columbus Education Project: <http://www.ColumbusEdProject.org>
 - a) Contains articles, videos, books, and more
- 3) Official Christopher Columbus: <https://www.officialchristophercolumbus.com/>
 - a) Run by Christopher Columbus researcher and author Rafael Ortiz, this website has several articles written by the author himself. Make sure to check the "Blog Archive" links.

In the spirit of Columbus, EXPLORE these resources, DISCOVER the truth, and SHARE this knowledge with the rest of the world!

"Fourthly, I ordered and begged them not to cause offense or injury to any of the Indians, male or female, and not to take anything against their will. I especially told them to avoid committing any insult or violence against the women which might cause outrage, or give a bad example, or bring us into disrepute among the Indians, who are sure that we have all come from Heaven and are ambassadors of the heavenly virtues."

- January 2, 1493, Columbus' instructions to his men before his first return trip to Spain.

- p161, "The Voyage of Christopher Columbus" Columbus' Own Journal of Discovery
Newly Restored and Translated by John Cummins

(I bet your teacher never told you that)

Essay Rubric:

Points:	4	3	2	1
Number of reputable sources in bibliography	5 or more	3-4	2	1 or no sources
GRAMMAR AND USAGE	Virtually no spelling, punctuation or grammatical errors - well written	A few spelling and punctuation mistakes and minor grammatical errors	A number of spelling, punctuation and grammatical errors - poorly written	So many punctuation and grammatical errors that interfere with comprehension
Usage of quotes from bibliography to prove their point	5 or more	3-4	2	1 or no sources
Word count	700 words or more	600 words or more	500 words or more	Less than 500 words

Video Rubric:

Points:	4	3	2	1
Length of Video	5 + mins	4-5 mins	3-4 mins	Less than 3 mins
Visuals (was the video captivating or stale)	Very interesting, captivating, excellent usage of media and graphics. Creative and artistic.	Interesting, captivating, good usage of media. Can be clearly heard.	Somewhat captivating and interesting.	Too stale, not captivating. Not clear or easy to understand.
Was the goal/thesis achieved	Video proved beyond a shadow of a doubt the Columbus lie	Video proved its point in dismissing the Columbus lie	Video somewhat proved its point	Video did not effectively prove its point
Number of reputable sources in bibliography	5 or more	3-4	2	1 or no sources
Usage of quotes from bibliography to prove their point	5 or more	3-4	2	1 or no sources

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APPLICATION FORM

(Print neatly)

Student's Name: _____

Student's Address: _____

Student's phone #: _____

Student's email address: _____

Student's School: _____

Grade: _____

Do you have a family member that belongs to the Order Sons and Daughters of Italy in America (OSDIA)?
YES ___ NO ___

If so what is the family member's name: _____

Which lodge do they belong to: _____

Relation of family member to you: _____

What did you submit for this award? Essay OR Video

What Columbus falsehood did you set out to disprove? _____

The name of the video file or essay document file you submitted: _____

NOTE: We value the time and effort that you put into your research! As noted above, one of the objectives of this contest is to share the knowledge you discovered with the world. Therefore, by submitting your work, and if your video or essay is accepted as the winner, you are allowing the Commission for Social Justice and/or the Order Sons and Daughters of Italy in America (OSDIA) to share this information with its members or followers on social media platforms and organization's websites. Please sign below to agree with these terms. If for some reason you would like to remain anonymous, please check the box below.

Student's Signature: _____

Parent/Guardian's Name (print): _____

Parent/Guardian's Signature: _____

Date: _____

Please do not use my name when recognizing my work.