



## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

# REQUEST FOR STUDENTS IN 2017 ORATORICAL COMPETITION

March 9, 2017

Dear Principal, Teacher, Counselor, Community and Fraternal groups,

Blacks In Government (BIG), is a national organization, incorporated in 1976, that seeks to respond to the needs of African-Americans in public service. The United States Department of Education (ED)'s BIG chapter is hosting an oratorical competition for local High School students on Thursday, May 25, 2017 from 9:00 am to 2:00 pm at the Potomac Center Plaza (PCP) Building 10<sup>th</sup> Floor Auditorium, 550 12<sup>th</sup> Street, SW, Washington, DC 20202. The competition is open to students in grades nine through twelve. The Oratorical Competition is intended to assist our students with developing and enhancing their public speaking skills and giving them a chance to showcase their written and oral communication skills.

The 2017 theme is: *Uniting the Blue Divide: What Can Young People Do to Improve the Relationship Between Law Enforcement and Their Communities*. Schools, community and fraternal groups are urged to provide contestants. Certificates and monetary awards will be presented to the first place, second place, and third place winners!

The first place winner of the competition will have the opportunity to compete at the Regional level (Region XI) against other students in the DC metropolitan area on June 24, 2017 at the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) located in downtown, Silver Spring Maryland. The **first place** winner at the Regional level will then be sponsored at the 2017 BIG Annual National Training Institute's Oratorical competition in Atlantic City, New Jersey on August 22-25, 2017. Students will receive awards (plaques and scholarships) for successfully preparing and presenting an original oration. The National Awards are: 1) First Place – Plaque and \$1000, 2) Second Place – Plaque and \$600, and 3) Third Place – Plaque and \$400!

We are accepting applications from any DC, MD, and VA High School student. The Education Chapter of Blacks In Government is particularly interested in African-American students whose parent or guardian works for or is affiliated with the U.S. Department of Education. However, this is **not** a requirement and is **not** a factor in the competition selection or scoring process. There are more than 57 BIG chapters in our region (See other BIG chapters in the region at <http://www.bigxi.org/chapters.html>).

The deadline for submitting an application along with parent's permission is Friday, **5/19/2017**.

**Application and Parent Permission Form Information:**

<http://www.edbig.org/events.html>

**For Questions, contact:**

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Cynthia Heath, Competition Coordinator at (202)245-8043 or [cynthia.heath@ed.gov](mailto:cynthia.heath@ed.gov)

Countess Clarke Cooper, Competition Co-Coordinator at (202) 377-4230 or [countess.cooper@ed.gov](mailto:countess.cooper@ed.gov)

Sincerely,

*Jesse Sharpe*

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