

2015-2016 Americanism Essay Contest Winners

What the United States Flag Stands For

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She was crafted in the hands of liberty and washed in the name of justice. She is saluted by the bravest heroes to walk this earth and a wretched curse to her foreign enemies. She is flown over battlefields as a symbol of victory and in remembrance of those she lost. Like a mourning mother, she weeps and drapes herself over her fallen soldiers' coffin, for they paid the ultimate price in her name. Their sacrifice gives her life. She watches over the future leaders of this nation as they gain knowledge in her classrooms. She resides along the bright stars as she gazes down at her loved one from her mount on the moon. She is the United States Flag and she is revered by her people.

Since the inception of organized civilizations, societies have adopted symbols to represent their virtues and distinguish them from others. In this sense, America is no different. Founding father, revolutionary general and first U. S. President George Washington defined the flag as such: "We take the stars from heaven, the red from our mother country, separating it by white stripes, thus showing that we have separated from her, and the white stripes shall go down to posterity representing liberty."

Along with Washington's definition are countless others; each differently embodies the nature of the star-spangled banner and what it stands for. It stands for freedom and a democratic government by the people. It stands for the blood, sweat and tears of the nation's bravest soldiers. It stands for the trials and tribulations that a unified country overcame, against all odds. And it stands for the wildest dream of the youngest, purest American child.

Those stars and stripes are a beacon of hope for men, women and children of all nations; may the flag forever fly over a free people and may the United States never forget the cloth from which she was cut.