**Paul A. Volcker Careers in Government Essay Contest: Frequently Asked Questions**

**1. Who is Paul A. Volcker?**

Paul Volcker worked for the federal government for almost thirty years as undersecretary of the Treasury for monetary affairs, president of the Federal Reserve Bank of New York, chairman of the Federal Reserve, and chairman of the President's Economic Recovery Board. Throughout his career, he worked alongside presidents Nixon, Carter, Reagan, and Obama, and many of the world's other leading politicians, bankers, and financiers to provide wisdom, leadership, and a steady hand during many of the most severe financial and ethical crises experienced in this country over the past seventy years. While Mr. Volcker was widely recognized for profoundly shaping economic policy in the United States and around the world, his greatest life mission and his motivation for founding the Volcker Alliance in 2013 was to restore American trust in government and cultivate a vital, prepared public service. Mr. Volcker had an unwavering commitment to effective government and embodied dedication and excellence in public service.

**2. Why are we hosting this essay contest?**

We are hosting this contest to raise student awareness about the opportunities of a career in public service, including mission, impact, job security, and pathways for career advancement. At the same time, we aim to better understand what motivates students to opt for a career in government, offer modest financial support to ease students' transition into the public workforce, help support students in finding and applying to government internships, and link them to active practitioners for ongoing guidance and professional mentorship.

**3. Who's eligible to enter?**

**All full-time and part-time undergraduate students** currently enrolled at a school in the City University of New York (CUNY) system are eligible to enter.

**4. What is the prize for the essay contest winners?**

Two winners will each receive $5,000, along with one-on-one career coaching and support from CUNY and the Volcker Alliance including:

- Support identifying and applying to government internship or job opportunities
- Resume review
- Interview practice and preparation
- Networking assistance

Three finalists will each receive a $1,000 prize.

5. **How do I enter the contest?**

   Click HERE or type **volckeressay2020.awardsplatform.com** into your web browser and **register for an account**.

   - Make sure your name is displayed under "Entry Name" and click "Save + Next."
   - Fill out all the questions under the "Personal Information" tab and click "Save + Next."
   - Complete the **two essay questions**, making sure to limit each of your answers to **500 words per essay**. You will be able to save and return to your entry until the submission period ends on Sunday, October 25, 2020, at 11:59 p.m.
   - When all the information you entered is correct and you have finalized your written answers, click "Submit Entry."

   You will receive an email confirming that your submission was received. If you advance to the finalist round, we will contact you in early January to schedule an interview with the selection committee between January 11 and January 22.

6. **What is "public service?"**

   For the purpose of this essay contest, we define "public service" as work in the public sector as a government employee.

7. **What are the characteristics of a strong essay submission?**

   Strong essays will:

   - Demonstrate genuine interest in a public service career
   - Convey a compelling vision of what effective government looks like and why it matters
   - Respond directly to the questions posed
   - Be presented clearly, cleanly, and with attention to proper grammar and spelling

   To learn more about what an outstanding submission looks like, you can read excerpts from last year's winning essays, written by Arslan Mohamed and Jason Waitkus, here.

8. **When will the finalists and winners be announced?**

   Finalists will be interviewed by the selection committee between January 11 and January 22, 2021. Winners will be notified by January 25, 2021.