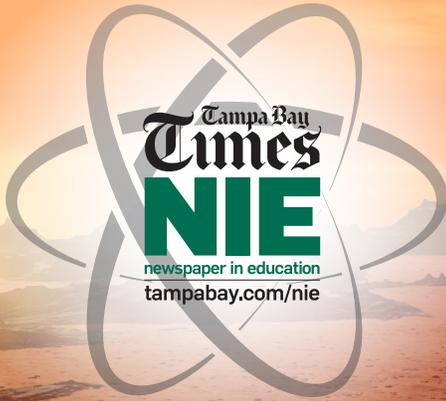


SCIENCE FICTION AND FANTASY WRITING AWARD 2020-2021

An annual writing contest for Tampa Bay high school students



"RED PLANET"

Entries accepted Oct. 1, 2020 – May 10, 2021
at tampabay.com/nie/storycontest

Tampa Bay high school students are invited to submit original, unpublished short stories on the theme of Mars.

Mars has fascinated humanity for millennia. Tuesday and the month of March are both named after Mars. Countless books and movies have explored the possibilities of Mars and its inhabitants.

Scientists believe that water – with its potential for supporting life – was once plentiful on Mars. It is the only other planet in our solar system that is potentially habitable for humans.

2021 marks the 45th anniversary of NASA's Viking Project, the first U.S. mission to land a spacecraft safely on Mars and return images of the surface. Three separate missions are currently on their way to Mars, and crewed missions are being planned by both governments and private corporations.

Stories may be set...

...in the past (What if the U.S. and the Soviet Union had continued the Space Race from the Moon to Mars? What if the Viking rovers had discovered evidence of life back in the 1970s?)

...in the present (What challenges must astronauts, scientists and engineers overcome in order to send humans to Mars? Should human space exploration be spearheaded by governments or corporations?)

...or in the future (How will future Mars settlers differ from Earth residents? What kind of society will they build?)

Entries will be judged by a panel of experts including:

- Hugo Award-winning author **Mary Robinette Kowal**
- Hugo and Nebula Award-winning author and NASA Mars mission scientist **Geoff Landis**
- Sidewise Award-winning author, editor and educator **Rick Wilber**

The Grand Prize winner will receive:

- \$200 grand prize
- Invitation to read as a presenting author at the 2021 *Tampa Bay Times* Festival of Reading
- Grand prize plaque
- Winning story published on the contest website

Runners-up will receive:

- \$25 prize
- Award certificate presented at the 2021 *Tampa Bay Times* Festival of Reading



Rules: Visit tampabay.com/nie/storycontest for more information, complete official rules and to enter. The contest is open to all students over the age of 13 in grades 9-12 in public, private and home schools in Citrus, Hernando, Hillsborough, Manatee, Pasco and Pinellas counties. Stories must be previously unpublished and unsold. There is no fee to enter, and no limit to the number of stories a student may submit.

More information and entry form at tampabay.com/nie/storycontest