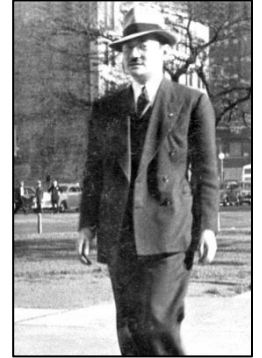


2019 Minoru Yasui Essay Contest

Minoru Yasui saw people treated unjustly in 1942 and he took action. He was an Oregon attorney who challenged the curfew placed on Japanese American citizens during World War II. He was convicted and took his test case to the U.S. Supreme Court. In November 2015, President Barack Obama bestowed upon him the Presidential Medal of Freedom, the highest civilian award given in the U.S. President Obama said, "He never stopped fighting for equality and justice for all." In February 2016, the Oregon Legislature unanimously voted to designate March 28 of each year as Minoru Yasui Day. At the bill's signing, Oregon's Governor Brown spoke about the Presidential Medal of Freedom, "This recognition serves as a powerful reminder, particularly for young Oregonians, of the importance of standing up for what you believe in and working continuously to end discrimination in Oregon."



Have you stood up against an injustice in your community? Is there a problem in your community that you would like to address? In what ways does this problem relate to civil rights or social justice? Having read about Minoru Yasui's many efforts to fight injustice and build a society founded on equity and social justice, what kind of help and wisdom would you seek from him in your work?

Prompt:

Imagine a conversation between Minoru Yasui and yourself. What would you tell him about the work you have done or your plan of action? What questions would you ask him about your plan? How do you think he would respond? How could your conversation with him help you in your efforts to seek social justice?

Award winners: \$250 (high school), \$150 (middle school)

Runners-up: \$150 (high school), \$50 (middle school)

Writing Guidelines:

- Writing must cite at least one reference related to Minoru Yasui's work and at least one reference related to student's area of interest.
- Length must be between 500 and 1,000 words, excluding citations.
- Writing may be in the form of an essay **or** in the form of a dialogue.
- Entries must be the original work of the student.
- Student's name may not appear on any copies of writing submissions.

Submissions accepted January 1, 2019 – March 1, 2019

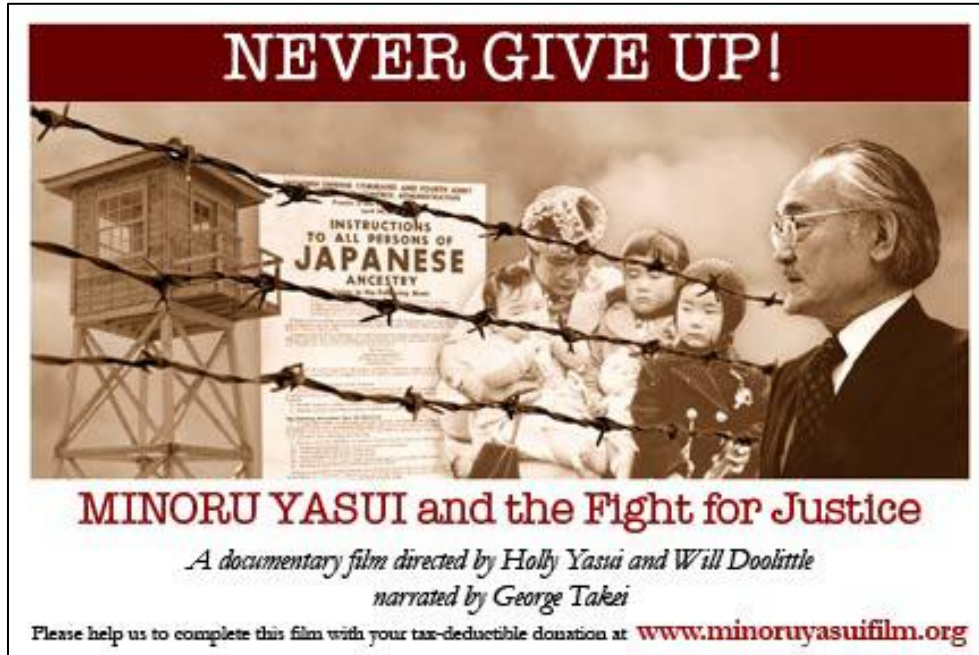
Finalists selected March 15

Award Ceremony March 28

Suggested Resources related to Minoru Yasui

FILMS

- *Never Give Up! Minoru Yasui and the Fight for Justice*, by Holly Yasui, work-in-progress (www.minoruyasuifilm.org), free on Vimeo with password, write to miniyasuilegacy@gmail.com.



BOOKS

- *Stubborn Twig: Three Generations in the Life of a Japanese American Family*, by Lauren Kessler, Oregon State University Press, copyright 2005.
- *And Justice for All: An Oral History of the Japanese American Detention Camps*, edited by John Tateishi, Random House, New York, copyright 1984.

WEBSITES

- denso.org - A grassroots organization dedicated to preserving, educating, and sharing the story of World War II-era incarceration of Japanese Americans in order to deepen understandings of American history and inspire action for equity. Search for "Minoru Yasui" in Encyclopedia and Digital Archives.
- www.oregonencyclopedia.org - A project of the Oregon Historical Society, "An Authoritative and Free Resource on All Things Oregon." Search for "Yasui" for information about Min Yasui and his family in Hood River.
- denso.org/minoru-yasui-100th-birthday

Additional resources can be found at Minoru Yasui Tribute Project, minoruyasuilegacy.org.

If you have any questions, please email info@oregonnikkei.org.