



OREGON NIKKEI ENDOWMENT

NEWS RELEASE

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: March 27, 2019

**Oregon Nikkei Endowment and Minoru Yasui Legacy Project announce
the 2019 Minoru Yasui Day Essay Contest Winners**

Thursday, March 28, 2019, 4pm-6:30pm University of Oregon School of Law
Free and open to the public

PORTLAND, OR – The Oregon Nikkei Endowment and the Minoru Yasui Legacy Project are proud to announce the four student winners of the 2019 Minoru Yasui Day Essay Contest. Reflecting upon the civil rights activism of Minoru Yasui, an Oregon attorney who challenged the curfew placed on Japanese Americans during World War II, the students were asked to imagine a conversation between Mr. Yasui and themselves. Together the students and Mr. Yasui tackled topics including gun control, school funding, faith, hate crimes, immigration, and LGBTQ rights. The essay winners will be recognized on March 28th, at the University of Oregon Portland Campus during our annual Minoru Yasui Day program.



Emmett Rashleigh (High School – First Prize)

I'm a student being home-schooled as well as taking a class at Wilson High School in Portland, Oregon. I'm hoping to get into a college with a strong comparative religion program, and plan on applying to schools like Rice University and the University of Chicago. After learning about the contest I was hesitant to have to write a whole extra essay- until I learned about Minoru Yasui and his inspiring life.



Ben Kono (High School – Runner Up)

I am a sophomore at Wilson High School. My connection to the Nikkei experience is that my Grandfather is Japanese-American and was in the internment camps as a child. I have heard many stories of his camp experiences. This led me to start volunteering at the Oregon Nikkei Legacy Center. I now volunteer there regularly. I was inspired to write an essay for this contest because of what Min Yasui did to stand up for his rights. He and a handful of others did their best to fight against injustice.



Katelyn Rashleigh (Middle School – First Prize)

I'm home schooled and in the 7th grade. When I go to college I want to study something that can help me motivate people to activism, but I'm not sure where I'm going yet. I was inspired to enter the contest because I want to help and make a difference like Minoru Yasui did.



Sophia Dunckel (Middle School – Runner Up)

I go to Patton Middle School in McMinnville, Oregon. I was inspired by Minoru Yasui for his optimism and integrity to defend those people tormented in World War II. His movement inspired a lot of people, including me. After this essay, I have found a great passion for writing and I hope to study journalism for my career.

For more information, please email kurt@oregonnikkei.org or call us at (503) 224-1458. Please check out our website at www.oregonnikkei.org or find us on Facebook or Twitter.

ABOUT OREGON NIKKEI ENDOWMENT

The mission of the Oregon Nikkei Endowment is to preserve and honor the history and culture of Japanese Americans in the Pacific Northwest, to educate the public about the Japanese American experience during World War II, and to advocate for the protection of civil rights for all Americans.