



JAPANESE AMERICAN CITIZENS LEAGUE

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PRESS RELEASE

JACL Supports the Nisei WWII Soldiers Stamp Campaign

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The Japanese American Citizens League (JACL), in conjunction with other organizations, is working to ensure the creation of a United States postage stamp commemorating the Nisei (second-generation Japanese Americans) who served in the Armed Forces during WWII. On September 21, 2007, the United States Postal Service (USPS) announced that a stamp proposal honoring this historic group of veterans will be reviewed by their Citizens' Stamp Advisory Committee (CSAC) as early as October.

The exemplary record of the Japanese American soldiers of WWII has been well-documented. Their actions represented the highest level of American patriotism as they fought while many of their families were unjustly incarcerated in internment camps.

During WWII, the JACL, the nation's oldest Asian American civil rights and human rights organization, argued for and won the right of Japanese Americans to serve in the U.S. military, resulting in the creation of the 100th/442nd Regimental Combat Team. Composed of approximately 14,000 Japanese American soldiers, the 100th/442nd fought many battles. One of the most historic was the "Rescue of the Lost Battalion" in October 1944, when the unit led a heroic drive through German lines in the Vosges Mountains to rescue 211 surviving soldiers of the 36th Texas Division. In 1945, the courageous actions of the 100th/442nd were critical in breaking the German "Gothic Line." They liberated towns such as Bruyeres, Biffontaine, and Belvedere. In addition, they helped free Holocaust victims from a Dachau concentration camp. The 100th/442nd became the most decorated unit for its size and length of service in American history. Its awards include eight Presidential Citations and twenty-one Medals of Honor.

Approximately 6,000 Japanese Americans served in the Pacific Theater in the Military Intelligence Service (MIS) of the US Army. These soldiers utilized their knowledge of the Japanese language and culture to defeat the Japanese military in the Pacific. Major General Charles A. Willoughby, General Douglas MacArthur's intelligence chief, estimated that their contributions shortened the war by at least two years and saved countless lives in the process. For this, the MIS was awarded a Presidential Unit Citation.

To urge adoption, the JACL's goal is to obtain 20,000 signatures in support of the stamp to be submitted to the CSAC by October 31, 2007. It is also encouraging individuals to mail personal letters of support.

Signed petitions and letters should be sent to the JACL, 1765 Sutter Street, San Francisco, CA 94115. All signatures will be forwarded to the CSAC. Signatures are also being collected online at http://www.ipetitions.com/petition/Nisei_Stamp/index.html

For more information, please visit www.Niseistamp.org.