

2010 JACL Minoru Yasui Oratorical Competition

Guidelines

The Minoru Yasui Oratorical Competition is named in memory of Minoru Yasui, an attorney and civil rights activist. Prior to the internment, Min Yasui tested the constitutionality of the curfew orders that were imposed against Japanese Americans. Though the Supreme Court of the United States eventually upheld the constitutionality of the curfew, Min Yasui never wavered in his pursuit of social justice for all Americans. During the 1980s, Min Yasui was an articulate voice in leading JACL's successful campaign to obtain redress for the injustice of the internment.

Purpose:

To develop, encourage and reinforce verbal communication skills among the younger members of JACL.

Eligibility:

1. All competitors must be members of the JACL at the time of the District Council and National competitions. (Membership must be in the participants name either as a student or individual—a parental or family membership does not qualify.)
2. The competition is open to high school students, age 16 or older, or full-time undergraduate college students.
3. Competitors must compete in-person at the JACL District Council where they hold their JACL membership.
4. National contestants must be approved by their JACL District Council.

Rules:

1. Speeches are limited to 3-5 minutes in length. All speeches must be composed by the contestant. Speeches should be committed to memory. An outline on index cards is permitted. The same speech may be used for both District and National competitions. Visual aids are not allowed.
2. No more than 150 words may be a direct quotation from any speech or writing. Extensive paraphrasing of another source is prohibited.

Topic:

Our 44th President of the United States, Barack Obama, inspired and motivated a nation with a simple word, "change." As our nation still faces economic turmoil, wars abroad, as well as damaged health care and immigration systems, "change" has never been more welcome. What can the Asian Pacific American community and the JACL do to inspire and create change to meet the needs of America's current socio-political landscape?

Judging:

A panel of individuals will evaluate the participant. It would be advantageous for some of the judges to have a background in debate or public speaking. In addition, some of the judges should have familiarity with the topic content. The JACL District Council will select the judges for the District Council competition. National JACL will select the judges for the final competition held at the JACL Convention. The speaking order should be decided 30 minutes before the competition.

1. Delivery and Presentation: How well does the participant speak? Does the presentation flow evenly or are there unnatural pauses? Is the speech well memorized? Does the student make use of vocal qualities for presentation purposes such as changes in volume, tone and dramatic pauses?
2. Answering the Question: Does the participant's speech answer the question asked or does the student's analysis go off on a topic unrelated to the question? Are all the possible areas of discussion dealt with or does the participant omit some of the obvious areas related to the question?
3. Analysis and Logic: Does the participant use sound logic and analysis in presenting the reasoning behind the answer to the question? Is the speech organized in a coherent manner with the issues logically arranged?

Immediately following the competition, the judges will assemble and privately evaluate in order to rank all of the contestants. All decisions determined by the judges are final.

National Competition:

The winner of each JACL District Council competition will compete at the 2010 JACL Convention in Chicago on July 2, 2010. National JACL will cover roundtrip airfare to Chicago, two nights lodging at the convention and attendance at the Youth Luncheon where the winner will be announced.