

## Process Paper

I chose my topic of racial discrimination during World War II because my great grandfather, Joichi Tahara, was taken from his family because of his Japanese ancestry, and relocated to the Honouliuli Internment Camp, where he died at the age of 55. At our 2015 Tahara family reunion, I learned about the bombing of Pearl Harbor and the internment camps. I was proud of my great uncles for taking a stand in history by joining the U.S. Army to fight for American democracy and rights for Japanese Americans. As we paid our respects at the site of the former Honouliuli Internment Camp in Kunia, Hawaii, I felt passionate about someday doing a project to show others we should not let this mistake happen again.

First I conducted WWII background research on the internet, then I read secondary source books about the 442nd Regimental Combat Team. I furthered my research at the 100th Battalion Education Center. An informative primary source was Daniel Inouye's autobiography that covered the bombing of Pearl Harbor and his wartime experiences as a soldier with the 442nd. This prepared me for 5 personal interviews: Mr. William Thompson, President of the 442nd Veterans Club; Mr. Kiyoshi Yamada, whose brother was in the 442nd; my mother's two cousins about their fathers fighting with the 100th and 442nd; and with my grandmother from Honshu, Japan who provided a perspective from the Japanese side. (While interviewing Mr. Thompson, we discovered that we are related.) I conducted further research at the Japanese Cultural Center and saw artifacts from the internment camp. Joichi Tahara's Will is stored in the archives and conveys the feelings of an internee. At the opening ceremony of the Honouliuli National Monument, I had the honor of being asked to stand to be acknowledged as a descendant of Joichi Tahara, Japanese American internee, and I had the opportunity to talk with government

leaders. This led to my expanded research on laws about Japanese immigration. I developed my argument and solidified my thesis.

I selected the website category because I had never created one before and thought it would be a great technical skill to learn. Using Weebly and my artistic side, I created an organized, visually attractive and diverse history project that tells an intriguing story. As my research expanded, I used a 3-ring binder and Google docs to organize my quotes, bibliography, student words, pictures with captions, pamphlets, and newspaper articles. This helped me assemble the puzzle pieces of evidence to support my argument in creating my final website.

The soldiers of the 100th Battalion and 442nd RCT are a perfect example of the NHD theme “Taking A Stand In History” by fighting in WWII to prove their loyalty to America to reduce racial discrimination against Japanese Americans. Though racial discrimination still exists today, the soldiers of the 100th/442nd left a lasting legacy for all Japanese Americans that are now accepted and respected, such as the late U.S. Senator Daniel Inouye.