



## Iowa America 250 Student Contest

Georgia Clark

West Liberty Community School District, 9th grade

Essay/Poem

Prompt 3: Places and Events

**Inscribed on the western corner of the National WWII Monument in Washington, D.C.: OUR DEBT TO THE HEROIC MEN AND VALIANT WOMEN IN THE SERVICE OF OUR COUNTRY CAN NEVER BE REPAID. THEY HAVE EARNED OUR UNDYING GRATITUDE. AMERICA WILL NEVER FORGET THEIR SACRIFICES. PRESIDENT HARRY S TRUMAN**

Civic virtue is dedication to the common good of your nation and a commitment to the founding principles which make the United States unique among nations. Civic virtue comes in many forms but it always means that the citizen puts the welfare of others before their own, sometimes paying the ultimate price to protect our nation. Iowans can look to our broader connection to our country's history in the form of our memorials to sacrifice in Washington, D.C.

Fifty six granite columns stand proudly in the shadow of the Washington Monument. These columns make up part of the National WWII memorial, and stand as witnesses to the sacrifices of the 16 million men and women who served in WWII. Each granite column represents a state or territory, with one of these columns representing our home, Iowa. Even though our state is small in numbers, Iowa sent out 276,000 troops during WWII, and 8,398 Iowans in those troops died bravely serving our country, and the world.

While war raged on overseas, those who stayed on the Homefront labored to keep our country and our soldiers supplied. Iowa farmers were faced with the daunting task of producing enough agricultural goods to sustain whole armies, and they didn't falter for an instant. Between 1940 and 1945, Iowa farmers more than doubled Iowa's production value of crops and livestock. Iowa businesses like John Deere began to manufacture airplane parts, and Rath Packing became the largest supplier of meat to the whole entire country. While their husbands and sons were away at

war, women stepped up to fill industrial positions, and helped to make ammunition, tents, clothing, and components for tanks and airplanes. Iowans were hard at work, fighting for and sustaining our country.

This year, on America's 250th birthday, it's important to remember the true spirit, the heart and soul, of our country: the people. We are what made this country, and we are what is still building this country for the future. We, as Iowans, can look to the people of our state that helped to build and defend this nation, and we can learn to be courageous and strong like them. We can remember the sacrifices of Iowa families, like the Sullivan brothers from Waterloo. All five of the Sullivan family boys enlisted in the Navy during WWII, and all five of them died after their ship, the USS Juneau, was sunk at Guadalcanal. It's our duty to appreciate the brave soldiers like them, and the sacrifices they made, and it's our duty to carry on and work to make this country and this world a better place, because that is what our veterans fought for.