



NEWS RELEASE

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Submitted by:

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Human Resources & Community Relations

ILLINOIS World War II Veterans' Memorial Board Classroom Project

Franklin Middle School, Central High School, and Centennial High School were chosen to participate in a statewide WWII project designed to digitally capture the stories of Illinois WWII veterans. The project is funded by the Illinois World War II Veteran's Memorial Board and administered by the Illinois Learning Technology Centers and its partners.

During the 2008-2009, the team of students and teachers will interview at least ten WWII veterans and create digital documentaries based on their interviews. The documentaries will be posted on-line as part of the Illinois WWII Veteran's Memorial Project. They will also be submitted to The Library of Congress Veterans History Project (<http://www.loc.gov/vets>). Further, Franklin, Central, and Centennial will be looking for WWII experiences to capture. Therefore, if you are a WWII Veteran or if you have memories of what was happening on the home front during WWII and would like to be interviewed, please contact Michael Marassa at 217 351-3801 or marassmi@champaignschools.org.

Participating teachers include Josh Wiechert and Trina Wetzel (Franklin), Suzanne Aldridge (Centennial), and Dave Johnson (Central).

Franklin teachers and students joined schools from around the state in Springfield for a week-long training held from July 21-25 at the Illinois State Library. Teams received a laptop, video/audio equipment and training in digital story telling techniques. They then interviewed and recorded WWII veterans' stories and experiences and produced documentaries on their veterans. Students also digitally recorded their own reactions to the experiences and connections made with the WWII veterans they interviewed. Final products were presented to the veterans on the last day of the training. Central and Centennial teachers and students will receive training in November and December.

The combination of the authentic interview and digital storytelling of Illinois WWII era experiences motivated the students and introduced them and their instructors to new avenues of study. In addition, they acquired an appreciation for the contributions and dedication of the "Greatest Generation" to the common cause of maintaining democracy and freedom worldwide.

Illinois WWII Veterans' Memorial Board Classroom Project's Objectives and Project Outcomes:

1. Students will digitally capture WWII experiences from WWII survivors, families and/or community members and digitally document available primary sources such as--pictures, letters, etc.
2. Students will create digital stories that add insight and make connections between the WWII era and the present.
3. Teachers will develop, implement, revise and re-implement inquiry units which facilitate student learning and production of WWII digital stories.
4. Lead teachers will commit to re-implementing WWII inquiry units of study and submitting additional digital projects for three consecutive years.
5. Project teams will train additional teachers and students in their districts to expand the scope of the project. (A minimum of 5 to 10 digital products and/or one project for every four students will be produced in participating classrooms.)
6. LTC, ISBE and partnering universities/state agencies will provide quality training and support to project teams.
7. All WWII digital stories captured will posted and made available on-line as part of the Illinois WWII Veteran's Memorial Project. (Illinois State Central Management Services will house the streaming video server in the Champaign POP site.)
8. All Illinois WWII digital stories will be submitted for posting to The Library of Congress Veterans History Project found at <http://www.loc.gov/vets> . (Understanding is not all Illinois WWII Projects may not be accepted by Library of Congress.)
9. Area Learning Technology Centers (with Area 5 LTC in Edwardsville acting as lead coordinator), will provide quarterly progress reports and one final evaluation report for year each starting with the 2008-2009 project. Contact information of the Area 5 Learning Technology Center can be found at <http://www.lth5.k12.il.us> .

Illinois World War II Veteran's Memorial Board

Originally the Illinois World War II Veteran's Memorial Board was incorporated as a Not-For-Profit Corporation on February 22, 2000, with the intention to construct a permanent state memorial honoring Illinois' 987,000 veterans who served in WWII. The WWII memorial is located at Oakridge Cemetery in Springfield, Illinois near the Vietnam and Korean Veteran's memorial. The WWII memorial was dedicated on December 4, 2004.

Since 2004 the WWII Board has continued its fundraising efforts through memorial brick sales and other donation in order to promote additional projects to support the effort of preserving the memories and sacrifices made by the *Greatest Generation* to keep the US and the world free and secure.

The Illinois WWII Veterans' Memorial Board Classroom Project is one of these projects.

If you would like to purchase a memorial brick or donate to the ILLINOIS WWII Veterans Board in order to further support the Illinois WWII CLASSROOM Project or any of their initiatives please contact any board member at 1-866-992-4145 or go to Illinois WWII Veterans' website at <http://ww2il.com/> for further information.

