

## LOCUST GROVE STUDENT NEEDS YOUR HELP TO TELL THE STORY OF A WORLD WAR II SILENT HERO®

**LOCUST GROVE, GEORGIA**—Nicole Cortes is truly making the most of this Veterans Day. A student at Luella High School, Cortes and her teacher, Jennifer Coleman, are charged with researching and discovering the untold story of Seaman First Class Lawrence J. Waszkiewicz, an American service member memorialized at the National Memorial Cemetery of the Pacific in Honolulu, Hawai'i. Their research is part of *Sacrifice for Freedom®: World War II in the Pacific Student & Teacher Institute*, a cooperative learning program coordinated through National History Day®, and sponsored by Pearl Harbor Aviation Museum, Pacific Fleet Submarine Museum, the USS Missouri Memorial Association, and Pacific Historic Parks.

This institute brings together 16 student-teacher teams from Hawai'i, American Samoa, and the U.S. mainland for a once in a lifetime journey through history. Each team selected a Silent Hero® who died in the Pacific Theater of Operations. They then spend months trying to uncover this brave American's story by conducting research and analyzing primary sources, such as war records, draft cards, maps, letters, and, when possible, family interviews.

In June 2021, the teams will assemble in Honolulu to learn more about their Silent Heroes and the unique role Hawai'i played in World War II. While there, Cortes will deliver a eulogy at the Courts of the Missing for Seaman First Class Waszkiewicz at the National Memorial Cemetery of the Pacific. To complete this task, Cortes asks anyone who knew Seaman First Class Waszkiewicz, his family, or other sailors who served aboard the USS *Fanshaw Bay* to get in touch with Mrs. Coleman at [jennifer.coleman@henry.k12.ga.us](mailto:jennifer.coleman@henry.k12.ga.us).

The 16 teams participating in the 2020 *Sacrifice for Freedom®: World War II in the Pacific Student & Teacher Institute* represent American Samoa, California, Georgia, Hawai'i, Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Michigan, Minnesota, Mississippi, Montana, Nebraska, New York, North Dakota, Pennsylvania, and Virginia. Applications for the program were submitted by 129 teams from across the country, and the final 16 were selected by a committee of staff members representing National History Day and the sponsoring partner organizations.

It is with appreciation that we recognize the Department of Defense and John and Adrienne Mars for their support of this program.

### **About National History Day® (NHD)**

NHD is a non-profit organization based in College Park, Maryland, which seeks to improve the teaching and learning of history. The National History Day Contest was established in 1974 and currently engages more than half a million students every year in conducting original research on historical topics of interest. Students

present their research as a documentary, exhibit, paper, performance, or website. Projects compete first at the local and affiliate levels, where the top entries are invited to the National Contest at the University of Maryland at College Park. NHD is sponsored in part by, HISTORY®, the National Endowment for the Humanities, the National Park Service, Southwest Airlines, the Crown Family Foundation, The Better Angels Society, and the Diana Davis Spencer Foundation. For more information, visit [nhd.org](http://nhd.org).

### **About National History Day in Georgia**

National History Day in Georgia is a program of Georgia Humanities and LaGrange College, in partnership with Mercer University that annually engages over 11,000 middle and high school students from across the state in historical research, interpretation, and creative expression through project based learning. For more information, please visit [www.lagrange.edu/nhd](http://www.lagrange.edu/nhd).

### **About Pearl Harbor Aviation Museum**

Pearl Harbor Aviation Museum is a 501(c) (3) non-profit organization located on Historic Ford Island at the central site of the December 7, 1941, attack on Pearl Harbor. Its mission is to steward America's first aviation battlefield of World War II, sharing the artifacts, personal stories, impact, and response to the Pearl Harbor attack and the Pacific region battles that followed, honoring those who have defended our freedom to educate and inspire future generations. Visitors walk the Pearl Harbor flightline where the attack began, enter the bullet-scarred hangars, see the control tower and vintage aircraft, and learn the stories of WWII heroes and events that changed our nation and the world.

### **About Pacific Historic Parks**

Headquartered in Waipahu, HI, Pacific Historic Parks is the non-profit cooperative association of the National Park Service and has been raising funds and providing support to NPS operations at Pearl Harbor since 1979, when the organization was known as the Arizona Memorial Museum Association. PHP's mission is to "support the USS Arizona Memorial and other Pacific historic locations through education and interpretive programs, research, preservation, and restoration, to perpetuate the memory of events and honor the people involved in these sites." PHP also supports NPS operations at: Kalaupapa National Historical Park on Molokai; the War in the Pacific National Historical Park on Guam, and the American Memorial Park on Saipan in the Northern Mariana Islands. Since 2014, Pacific Historic Parks has also partnered with the state Department of Land and Natural Resources to support the Diamond Head State Monument. Visit [pacifichistoricparks.org](http://pacifichistoricparks.org).

### **About the USS Missouri Memorial Association**

The USS Missouri Memorial Association operates the Battleship Missouri Memorial as a historic attraction and oversees her care and preservation with the support of visitors, memberships, grants, and donations. The USS Missouri had an astounding

career over five decades and three wars – World War II, the Korean War, and Desert Storm – after which it was decommissioned and donated to the USS Missouri Memorial Association, Inc., a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization. Since opening in January 1999, the Battleship Missouri Memorial has attracted more than 8-million visitors from around the world with a fascinating tour experience showcasing the USS Missouri's unique place in history. Located a mere ship's length from the USS Arizona Memorial, the Mighty Mo completes a historical visitor experience that begins with the "day of infamy" and sinking of the USS Arizona in Pearl Harbor on December 7, 1941 and ends with Japan's formal surrender aboard the USS Missouri in Tokyo Bay on September 2, 1945.

#### **About the Pacific Fleet Submarine Memorial Association**

The Pacific Fleet Submarine Memorial Association is a 501(c)3 non-profit corporation that was founded in 1978 with the purpose of acquiring the WWII fleet submarine USS Bowfin and placing her on permanent display at Pearl Harbor, Hawaii. USS Bowfin opened to the public in 1981, and last year welcomed her nine millionth visitor. With an average of 400,000 visitors per year, the USS Bowfin Submarine Museum & Park is the most visited historic submarine in the world and one of the few places that the public can learn about the history of our "Silent Service." The submarine is open daily from 7 a.m. to 5 p.m. at 11 Arizona Memorial Drive at Pearl Harbor, except on Thanksgiving, Christmas and New Year's Day. The adjacent submarine museum is presently closed for expansion and restoration. For more information, call (808) 423-1341, or visit [bowfin.org](http://bowfin.org).

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