



Lowell Milken Center for Unsung Heroes

ARTEFECT

A MESSAGE FROM THE FOUNDER



Unsung Heroes from prior generations demonstrate the power of one person to profoundly better the lives of others and positively impact the course of history. The qualities that define such exceptional individuals—virtues such as courage, compassion, sacrifice and conviction—have served as the guiding forces of the Lowell Milken Center for Unsung Heroes (LMC) since I established LMC in 2007. Now, more than 15 years later, millions of students from 50 states and over 100 countries have harnessed LMC’s unique approach to project-based learning to unearth stories of these heroes, create moving and well-researched projects to honor them, and to perpetuate and embolden these strengths in others. Their voices and collective impact are proof positive that celebrating the qualities of character embodied in Unsung Heroes can generate these qualities in younger generations, as told in the pages that follow.

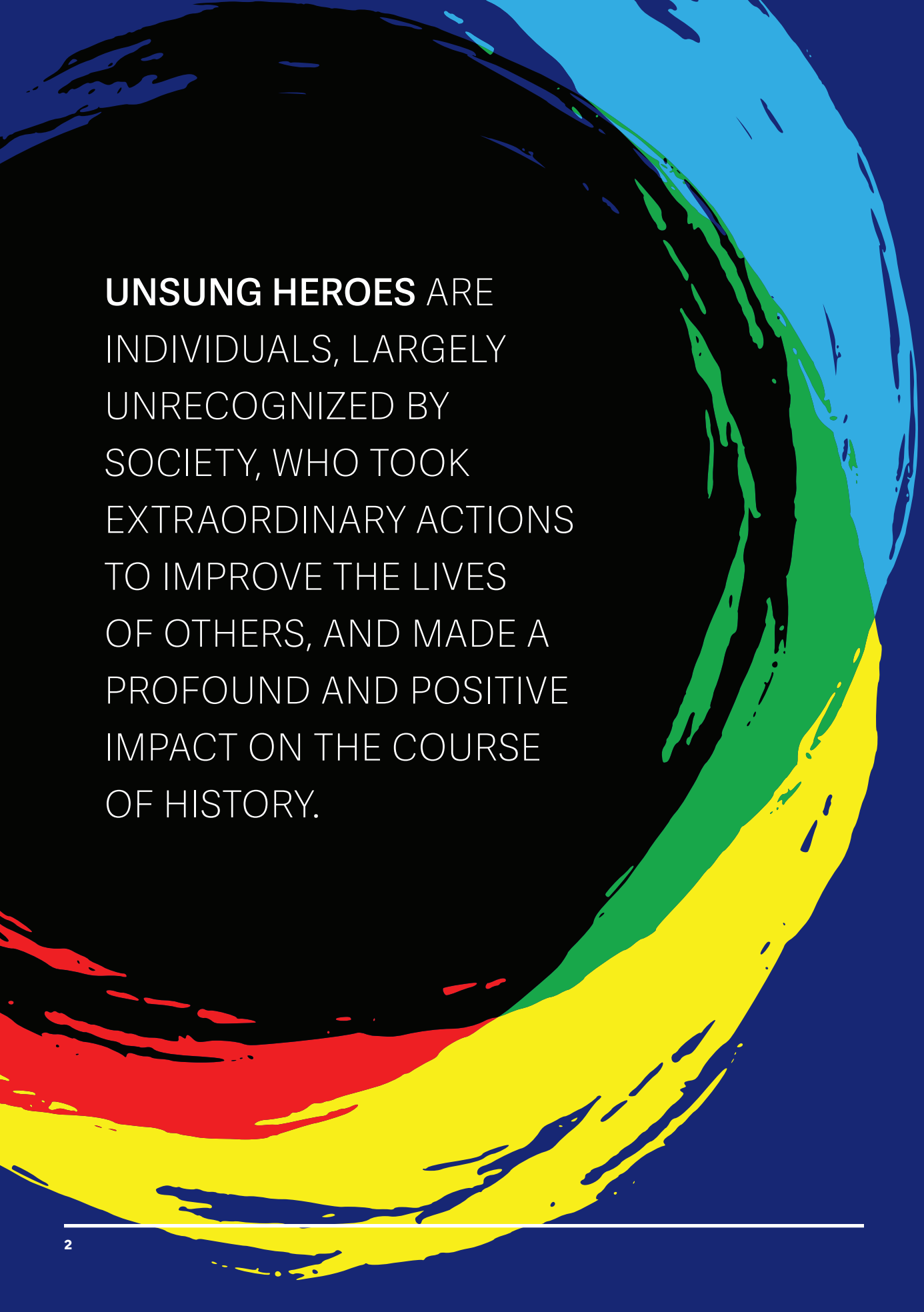
One of LMC’s signature initiatives, ARTEFFECT is a competition unlike any other. The competition invites educators and their students to consider, interpret, and create an original work of art about Unsung Heroes and their invaluable lessons. The ARTEFFECT lesson plan, a free and ready-to-use resource developed by award-winning art educators, ensures that the competition is aligned with common core standards and is rooted in both academic and artistic excellence.

By giving visual form to these acts of heroism, students engage with their subject in a deep way, asking questions not only of themselves as artists but as people: *Why is it important for Unsung Heroes to be recovered from the past? How can I share honor with those who have come before? What most inspires me from this subject? What change can I create today?*

Through ARTEFFECT, students’ creative responses to these critical questions form the extraordinary collection of museum-grade artwork on view in the LMC Hall of Unsung Heroes and through the LMC website—available for sharing the world over. This is of critical importance today as generations young and old, local and global, need positive role models from the past to serve as beacons to light the path to a secure future.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Lowell Milken". The signature is fluid and cursive.

Lowell Milken
Founder, Lowell Milken Center for Unsung Heroes



UNSUNG HEROES ARE
INDIVIDUALS, LARGELY
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ABOUT ARTEFFECT

The inspiring stories of the Unsung Heroes are at the core of the ARTEFFECT initiative. These stories span the centuries and cut across multiple disciplines including STEAM, social justice, the environment, wartime history, and education. This diversity is underscored by the varying and challenging circumstances each Unsung Hero confronted—and overcame—through their unique insights and heroic actions.

The stories of Unsung Heroes and their contributions to society develop through the LMC Discovery Award. The collaborative efforts of teachers and students have brought more than 90 Unsung Heroes stories to light through a project-based curriculum. ARTEFFECT extends the learning around Unsung Heroes as role models by inviting participation from middle and high school classrooms to creatively interpret these stories through a focus on the visual arts.

The ARTEFFECT competition, which first awarded prizes in 2016, is a robust opportunity for art educators and young artists from around the globe. Hundreds of students have participated in the annual competition, winning multiple awards and certificates. The competition actualizes the Founder's vision that one individual can make a profound and positive difference in the lives of others by encouraging young artists to recognize the power they have through their own art. As students investigate the Unsung Heroes as role models who changed the course of history, they also experience how they themselves make a difference by creatively interpreting, celebrating, and sharing these stories with their communities through their artworks and accompanying Impact Statements.

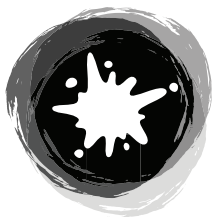
ARTEFFECT is a growing initiative focused on fostering art education through multifaceted opportunities for teachers and students that include advocacy, recognition, exhibitions, educational resources, and professional development opportunities. ARTEFFECT aims to encourage all those who believe in the profound impact one individual makes and the power of art-making in education to inspire and advance the collective whole.

THE FOLLOWING
PAGES PRESENT
SELECTED PROFILES
OF UNSUNG
HEROES WHOSE
STORIES HAVE
CAPTURED THE
HEARTS AND MINDS
OF STUDENTS
PARTICIPATING IN
THE ARTEFFECT
COMPETITION,
ACCOMPANIED BY
AWARD-WINNING
ARTWORKS.

DOROTHY BUELL

ENVIRONMENTALIST

Dorothy Buell spent her early life fighting to save the Indiana Dunes from industrial development. In 1926, she and the Prairie Club succeeded in having the dunes turned into a state park with the slogan, "Save the Dunes." But in the 1930s and 40s the steel industry aimed to claim the dunes as a dump site and a space on which to build more industrial mills. Throughout the late 1940s, Buell dedicated herself to the Indiana Dunes Preservation Council and learned of plans to further develop on the dunes. In response, she formed the Save the Dunes Council in 1952 and built its membership. They gathered support and signatures through grassroots community organizing, catching the eye of Illinois Senator Paul Douglas, who then joined the movement. In 1966, President Lyndon Johnson signed a law declaring the dunes a national park. Dorothy and the Council helped push through four more bills in 1976, 1980, 1986, and 1992 that increased the park's size to over 15,000 acres.



Maggie Wincek won the 2017 High School Best in Show award for her painting, *Protector of the Dunes*. "I wanted to create a piece that symbolized Buell's influence and persistence in protecting the Indiana Dunes," Wincek wrote in her Impact Statement. "I wanted to incorporate the element of time due to the fact that time was running out for the beloved Indiana Dunes as industrialization threatened to take over the land."

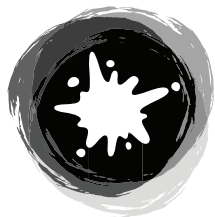


MAGGIE WINCEK
PROTECTOR OF THE DUNES, 2017
ACRYLIC PAINTING, 15½" X 19 ½"

WILL COUNTS

PHOTOJOURNALIST

Most Americans have likely seen the iconic photos taken by Will Counts, though they may not know it. Counts worked as a freelance journalist after graduating from the all-White Little Rock Central High School in the 1940s. Following the 1954 Supreme Court ruling in *Brown v. Board of Education*, the Little Rock school board pledged to desegregate, but wasn't held to account. In 1957, a group of African American high school students, later known as the "Little Rock Nine," enrolled as the first Black students at Little Rock Central High School. On their first day, a furious mob harassed them with shouts and threats. The Governor of Arkansas then called in the state's National Guard to block the students from entering. It was on this day that Will Counts arrived, stealthily photographing the scene, and later photographing a fellow journalist, Alex Wilson, being kicked in the stomach while holding onto his hat, his last remaining shred of dignity, by the very same mob. This photo is widely believed to have influenced President Eisenhower's decision to send military troops to Little Rock to assist with desegregation.



2022 Middle School Second Place winner, Abbie Ahn, investigated Will Counts' process of selecting his photographs. In her artwork, she depicted Counts reflecting on the impact of his photography. "While he took so many photos that later influenced history, he chose to stay in the shadows," wrote Ahn. "He put others before himself throughout his whole life, not caring about personal glory."

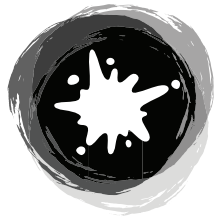


ABBIE AHN
THROUGH THE EYES OF A SILENT HERO, 2022
DIGITAL ART, 25" X 19"

OLAUDAH EQUIANO

WRITER-ACTIVIST

Olaudah Equiano was kidnapped into slavery at the age of 11. He labored throughout islands in the Pacific and eventually landed in the harsh conditions of the American South, continuously being sold and traded until he was able to buy his freedom in 1766. Equiano spent the remainder of his life campaigning for abolitionism, which included writing a memoir that pointed out the hypocrisy of Christian slave owners. This memoir, *The Interesting Narrative of the Life of Olaudah Equiano*, played a crucial part in Britain's 1807 Act for the Abolition of the Slave Trade.



Yerim Lee, the 2022 High School Best in Show recipient, found Equiano's story both personally and artistically inspiring. "I thought Olaudah Equiano would be the perfect person for me, because I personally struggle expressing myself and my opinions," she said in an interview about her work. "But he was really independent and had the courage to share his story, to bring awareness, and finally influence people toward abolitionism."



YERIM LEE

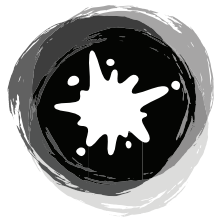
EXPLORE THE UNKNOWN, 2022

DIGITAL ART, 25" X 19"

HIAWATHA

PEACEMAKER

The tale of Hiawatha's peacemaking is legendary, both literally and figuratively. Born sometime between 1150 and 1525, Hiawatha was witness to large-scale territorial strife between the five warring tribes of what would become the Haudenosaunee (Iroquois) Confederacy. Although he was born to the Onondaga tribe, he was adopted for a time by the Mohawk. After his return to the Onondaga, Hiawatha met The Great Peacemaker, also known as Deganawida, who dreamed of a union between the five tribes. Given Hiawatha's gift for vivid storytelling, The Great Peacemaker enlisted his help. Through their pursuits for peace, Hiawatha and The Great Peacemaker helped conceive the "Great Law of Peace," which would unite the tribes and whose principles would influence and inspire the authors of the United States Constitution.



America Garcia, the 2019 Grand Prize winner, depicts Hiawatha in vivid colors, with a constellation of stars behind him in the shape of the Haudenosaunee's flag. Using Hiawatha's story as hope for the future, Garcia said, "Hiawatha united all these scattered and warring tribes. Maybe, if we all compromised a little, we could work together, too."

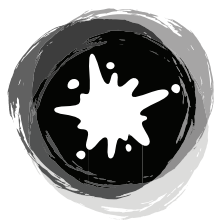


AMERICA GARCIA
HIAWATHA, THE LEADER WE NEED, 2019
OIL PAINTING, 9" X 23"

LEWIS HINE

PHOTOGRAPHER

Lewis Hine struggled as his family's sole financial provider at the age of 18. He worked 13-hour days for measly wages—an apt introduction to the harsh conditions child workers faced in America. Later, while working as a teacher and in an effort to break down stereotypes, Hine would take his students to Ellis Island, where they would photograph the thousands of immigrants arriving each day. He then returned to the issue of child labor, as a full-time photographer for the National Child Labor Committee and continuously published photographs of children working long hours in harsh conditions. The reality he captured in his photos eventually led to the 1916 Keating-Owen Child Labor Act, securing restrictions on employers who hired children.



Raelynn Cui's painting won the 2022 High School Second Place prize. "I took everything that I noticed in what Lewis Hine did in his photography and put it on a canvas," said Cui. "The piece brings color to the man behind the camera."

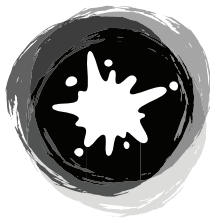


RAELYNN CUI
MAN BEHIND THE CAMERA, 2022
DIGITAL ART, 17" X 21"

MUHAMMAD IBN MUSA AL-KHWARIZMI

MATHEMATICIAN

In 9th century Baghdad, Muhammad ibn Musa al-Khwarizmi worked in the House of Wisdom, an intellectual center during the Islamic Golden Age, translating major mathematical and astronomical texts from Greek and Indian to Arabic. As he translated all the problems, theories and rules in these texts, he realized that there might be a simpler way to problem solve. He advocated for a widescale switch to the Hindu numeric system (1-9 and 0), which would simplify the language used to dissect problems. In 830 A.D., al-Khwarizmi wrote his seminal work "At-Kitab al-mukhtasar fi hisab al-jabr wa'l-muqabala," translated as, "The Compendious Book on Calculation by Completion and Balancing," within which he developed a more general way of analyzing problems in abstract mathematical language. This language now called algebra is derived from a portion of the book's Arabic title. Hindu-Arabic numerals were soon adopted by the entire Islamic world and, later, by all of Europe as well. al-Khwarizmi has come to be known as the "father of algebra," and his foundational work has made our algorithmically based technology—from Google searches to Netflix recommendations—possible.



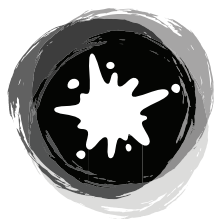
Eve Wilson won the 2022 Middle School Best in Show award for her unique sculpture, *Muhammad Makes His Mark on Math*, tracing al-Khwarizmi's influence on math and society. "I made the book sculpture so that the audience would be able to observe Muhammad in a three-dimensional way," Wilson wrote. "The project gave me experience with how to interpret history and make something that will give recognition to someone."

EVE WILSON
MUHAMMAD MAKES HIS MARK ON MATH, 2022
MIXED MEDIA ASSEMBLAGE, 24" X 16" X 17"

IRENA SENDLER

SOCIAL WORKER

Irena Sendler was working as a social worker in Warsaw, Poland, when the Nazi occupation began in 1939. The following year, the Warsaw Ghetto, the largest in Nazi-occupied Europe, had been constructed. Between 1939 and 1942, Sendler, along with friends and colleagues, made over 3,000 false documents to help Jewish families escape the ghetto. She joined the Żegota resistance and smuggled children out of the ghetto, hiding them in ambulances, trolleys, and suitcases and through underground tunnels. The children were then adopted into the homes of Polish families or hidden in convents and orphanages under false names. During this time, Sendler wrote the children's real names on paper and hid them in jars, which she buried under an apple tree. After an arrest in 1943 by the Gestapo and a death sentence from the Nazi government, she managed to escape and evade detection until the war's end. In 1999, when Sendler was 89 years old, a group of high school students from Kansas uncovered her story and shared it by producing their play, *Life in a Jar*. An international sensation, the play has been performed hundreds of times across the world. Sendler's story set in motion the origins of LMC.



Chloe Kim won the 2022 Grand Prize for her digital painting *Will You Swim?*. The image of Sendler holding a child above water, along with the title, were inspired by a powerful statement Sendler's father once told Irena: "If you see someone drowning, you must jump in and save them, whether you can swim or not." Kim noted, "She constantly regretted not saving one more child...I wanted to show she was appreciated and that she did, in fact, do enough."

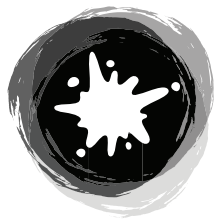


CHLOE KIM
WILL YOU SWIM?, 2022
DIGITAL ART, 21" X 25"

ANNA SMITH STRONG

AMERICAN REVOLUTIONARY

Born in 1740, Anna Smith Strong was the wife of an oft-imprisoned American militia captain and politician during the American Revolution. Although the British thought that her husband might be a spy, they never suspected Strong of such a thing. However, she would become the only female member of George Washington's "Culper Spy Ring" while living on Long Island. Her job was to deliver encoded messages to two other American spies through the clothes that she hung up to dry. Her system was clever. There were six coves off the coast near where she lived and, based on the number of white handkerchiefs she hung up, the spies knew which cove to go to. The information passed between these spies helped capture the traitor Benedict Arnold.



"Anna Smith Strong has influenced my life. She reminds me that, as a woman, you can do anything," said 2020 Middle School Second Place winner Makena Bryan. "In the quilt, I created an abstract American flag because the Revolutionary War was not a straightforward time...The future of America was unclear."

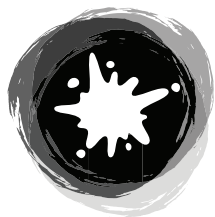


MAKENA BRYAN
THE FIRST, 2020
TEXTILE QUILT, 56" X 33"

SHEYANN WEBB

CIVIL RIGHTS ACTIVIST

When Sheyann Webb was an adolescent, Martin Luther King Jr. dubbed her “the smallest freedom fighter.” She grew up in Selma, Alabama, where her public school system was segregated, and the state was steeped in a history of Jim Crow laws. Selma was a big concern for civil rights activists, as only 1% of the Black population was registered to vote; this also concerned Webb at the young age of 8, when she asked her parents why they were not voting. She had been skipping school to attend and sing at church meetings, where Martin Luther King Jr. occasionally preached. She became so thoroughly committed to the Civil Rights Movement that, for her ninth birthday, all she asked for was that her parents vote—although they were turned away at the courthouse. The next day, a young protestor was shot in the stomach while defending his grandfather from a police officer’s club, sparking the iconic 54-mile march from Selma to Montgomery. Forbidden to attend this march by her parents, Webb snuck out of her house and witnessed the violence of what came to be called “Bloody Sunday.” Five months later, President Johnson signed the Voting Rights Act of 1965, signaling to Webb that her efforts were worthwhile.



***And I Was Still Determined* by Seraphina Gillman won a Certificate of Excellence in the 2020 competition. Gillman's painting shows the chaos of Sheyann's journey and her persistence in pursuing justice. "Webb looks towards the viewer, with her heart in her hand, literally," Gillman wrote. "She was a child, she was vulnerable, she was scared, and even so, she moved forward, determined still."**

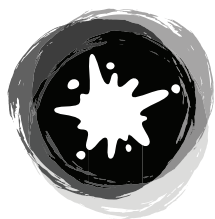


SERAPHINA GILLMAN
AND I WAS STILL DETERMINED, 2020
 ACRYLIC PAINTING, 17 1/2" X 23 1/2"

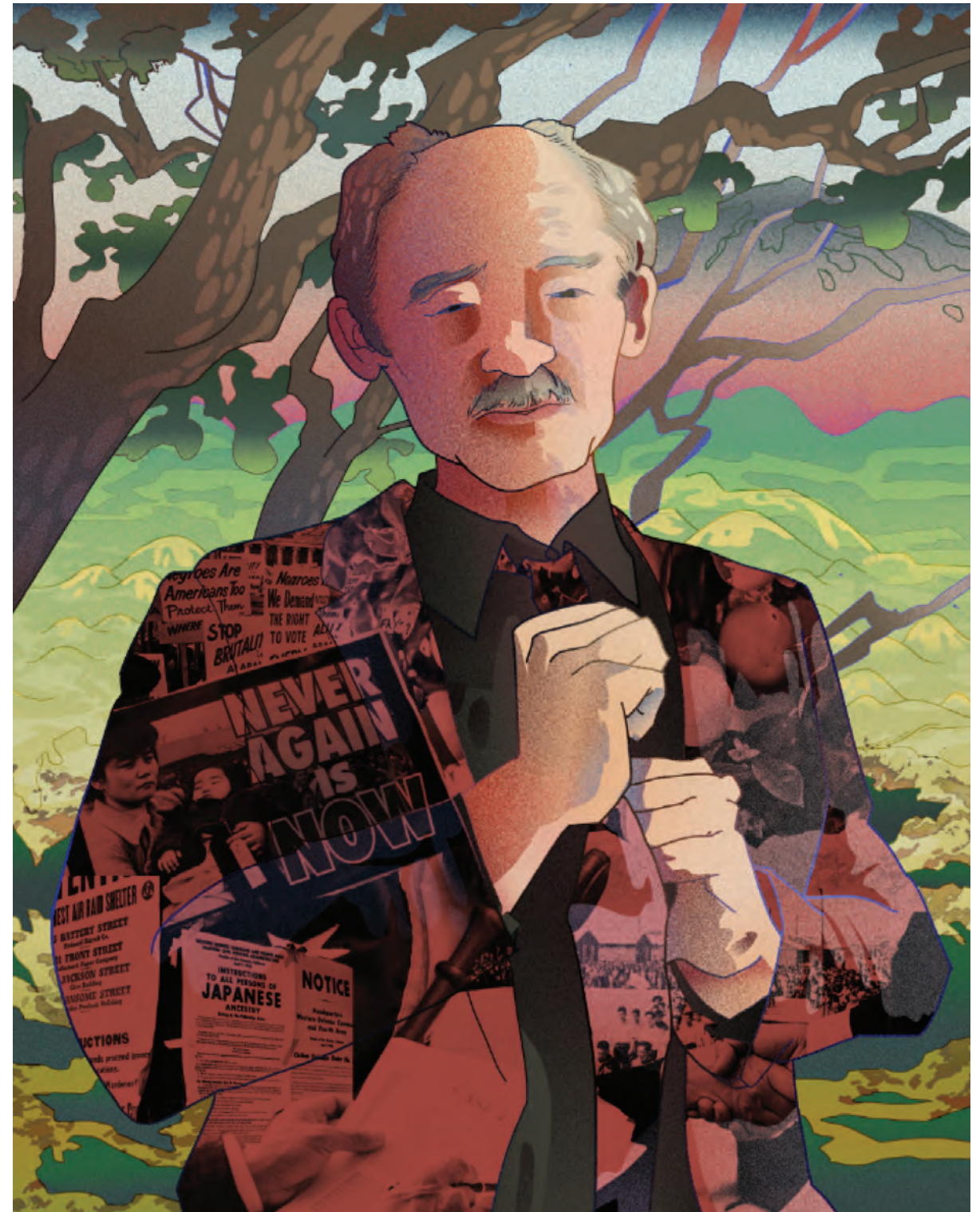
MINORU YASUI

ATTORNEY

Minoru Yasui was the first Japanese American attorney admitted to the Oregon State Bar and was working at the Japanese Consulate in Chicago when the bombing of Pearl Harbor took place. He resigned his position and returned home to report for military duty, for which he was denied on nine different occasions. Shortly after, President Franklin Roosevelt signed Executive Order 9066, allowing the military to set up exclusion zones, curfews and internment camps for Japanese Americans. In response, Yasui intentionally broke curfew and refused evacuation orders, being arrested twice in the process; this would allow him to test the orders' constitutionality. Despite being born in Oregon, the judge concluded that Yasui was not a U.S. citizen due to his work at the Japanese Consulate; the case eventually reached the Supreme Court, who ruled unanimously against him as well. For the next 40 years, Yasui practiced law in Colorado and was the chairman of the Japanese American Citizens League, working on redress for the internment during WWII. In 1986, after two years' effort and over forty years since the date of Yasui's arrest, the Oregon Federal Court overturned his previous convictions.



Taylor Yingshi won the 2021 Grand Prize for her artwork *Illuminating the Unseen*, which focuses on Minoru Yasui's story. "As an Asian American residing in the Pacific Northwest, I felt an immediate connection with Oregon-born Yasui," Yingshi explained. "More than any lecture, book or class thus far, creating art has led me to intimately explore the depths of my identity and experiences."



TAYLOR YINGSHI
ILLUMINATING THE UNSEEN, 2021
DIGITAL ART, 16" X 20"



The ARTEFFECT Competition

- * Free and open to middle and high school students globally.
- * Multiple 2D and 3D visual art mediums accepted.
- * Judging panel of experts from the visual arts, education, and museum sectors.
- * Unrestricted cash awards totaling over \$20,000.
- * \$6,000 Grand Prize.
- * Multiple award categories.
- * Recognition for students, teachers and schools.
- * Online promotions.
- * Museum exhibition opportunities.
- * 90+ multidisciplinary Unsung Heroes stories.
- * Online resources.
- * Arts-integrated lesson plan.



How to Participate:

The annual **call for submissions** is from Fall to Spring.

1. Students choose an Unsung Hero from the pre-approved LMC list.
2. Students and teachers review the online rules, lesson plan, scoring rubric and Impact Statement guidelines.
3. Students create an original and compelling artwork and write an Impact Statement inspired by the story of the Unsung Hero.
4. Students complete the online application and submit with all required materials via the online portal by the deadline.



Established in 2007, the **Lowell Milken Center for Unsung Heroes (LMC)** is a state-of-the-art museum and research hub with headquarters in Fort Scott, Kansas. Through project-based learning, LMC works with students and educators across diverse academic disciplines to develop Unsung Hero projects that highlight role models from history. These projects have reached more than 2.5 million students across all 50 states and around the world. LMC's international student competitions include ARTEFFECT and the Discovery Award. To learn more, visit LowellMilkenCenter.org.



The **Lowell Milken Family Foundation (LMFF)** creates and supports initiatives that cultivate human capital—that is, the knowledge, skills and experiences essential to leading productive and satisfying lives. LMFF pursues this mission through education programs that are both groundbreaking and comprehensive. By fostering and inspiring excellence, creativity and responsibility within the formal education environment and beyond, LMFF equips people to pursue and attain lives that have value to themselves as well as to others. To learn more, visit LowellMilken.org.



LowellMilkenCenter.org