



US AFFE

LET TO FIGHT THE ENEMY OF THE...
GROUND COMBAT IN W...

BY: PATRICK BERRY WOODS



DUTY TO COUNTRY

“We want the American public to know that there was another side to WWII.”

Major General (Ret) Tony Taguba

Chairman of the Filipino Veterans Recognition and Education Project

The *Duty To Country* Education Project tells the story of Filipino World War II veterans and their advocates who, together, fought for decades for their rightful recognition and benefits from the U.S. government. The project features the *Under One Flag* online exhibition, hours of oral histories, and classroom teaching resources. Dive deeper into *Duty to Country* with this deck of profile cards, featuring illustrated portraits and biographies of influential figures from history and today. To learn how to use this deck in the classroom, visit **DutyToCountry.org**



JOSÉ RIZAL
"THE NATIONAL HERO"

JOSÉ RIZAL

June 19, 1861 – December 30, 1896

| Revolutionary leader, writer, and national martyr

Recognized as the national hero of the Philippines, Rizal's movement to reform Spanish colonialism and subsequent execution sparked the revolution against Spain in 1896. From a young age Rizal excelled at school and in 1882 he traveled to Europe to study medicine. There he met other Filipino students and became committed to achieving greater rights for Filipinos. Though he did not advocate for independence, Rizal's two novels, *Noli me Tangere* (1886) and *El Filibusterismo* (1891), are often considered inspirations for the revolution. Upon returning to the Philippines in 1892, Rizal came under the scrutiny of Spanish authorities when he formed the Filipino League (La Liga Filipina) to advocate for reform. Though Rizal did not support using violence as the revolution ramped up, he was nonetheless arrested while in exile in Mindanao, put on trial, and executed by Spanish colonial authorities in 1896.





ANDRES BONIFACIO
"FATHER OF THE PHILIPPINE REVOLUTION"

ANDRES BONIFACIO

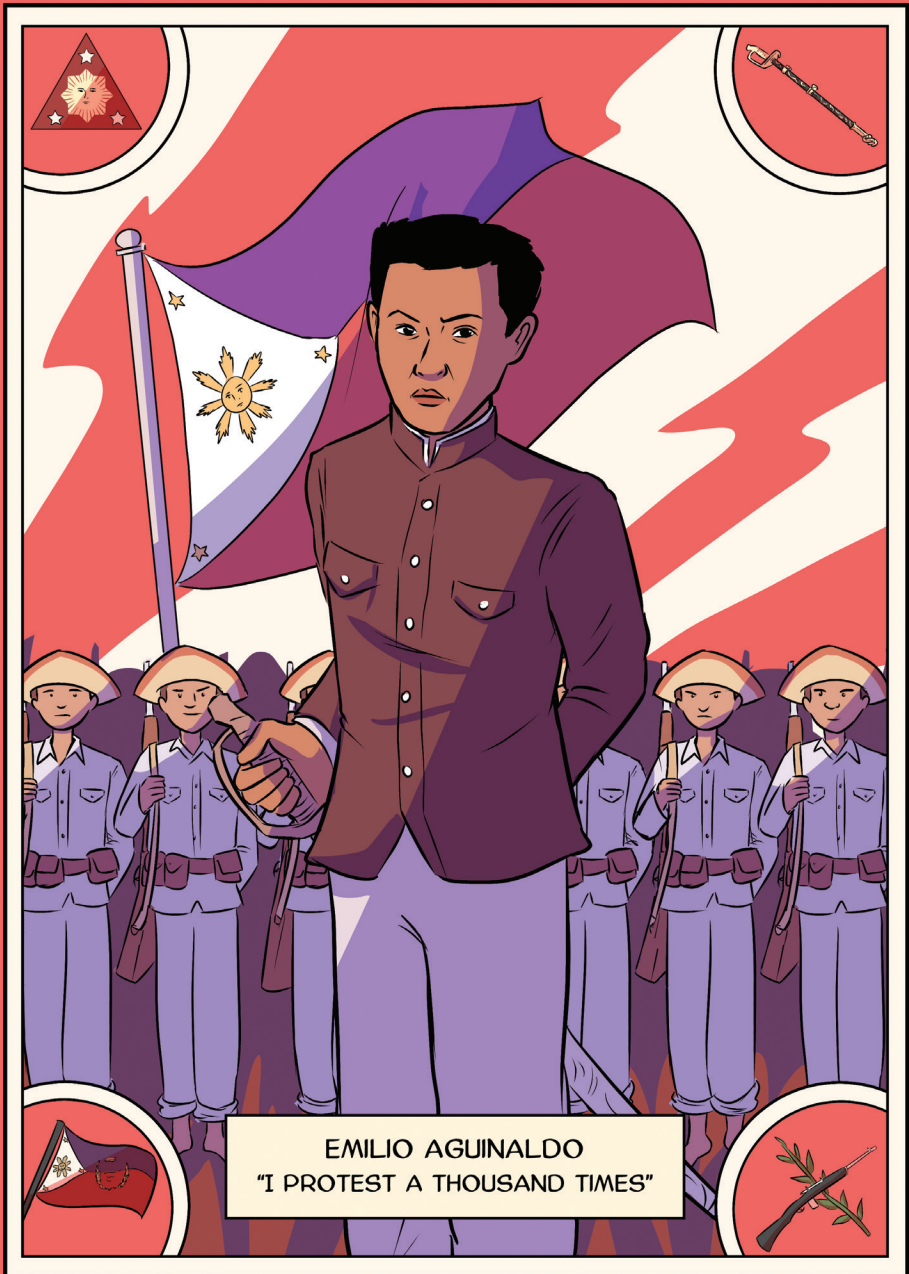
November 30, 1863 – May 10, 1897

Philippine nationalist and a leader of the revolution against Spain.

Regarded as one of the Philippines' national heroes, Andres Bonifacio was born in Manila in 1863 and joined Jose Rizal's La Liga Filipinas in 1892. That same year, Bonifacio helped establish the Katipunan, a secret society that sought to overthrow Spanish colonial rule and establish an independent Philippine Republic.

The revolution began in earnest in August 1896 when Bonifacio and the Katipunan called for an armed revolt against Spanish forces. A schism in the revolutionary movement led to Bonifacio's early demise; he was put on trial and eventually executed by fellow revolutionaries in 1897. Though he did not survive the war, Bonifacio Day, a national holiday in the Philippines, commemorates his contribution to the Philippine Revolution.





EMILIO AGUINALDO
"I PROTEST A THOUSAND TIMES"

EMILIO AGUINALDO

March 22, 1869 – February 6, 1964

Military commander during the revolution against Spain and the United States

Aguinaldo ranks as one of the Philippines foremost national heroes. Born in 1869 in Cavite to a prosperous family, Aguinaldo led the revolution against Spain in 1895. Standing at a slender 5-and-a-half feet tall, Aguinaldo nonetheless rose quickly in the ranks to become one of the Katipunan's most adept military commanders. During the colonial period, Aguinaldo organized the Association of the Veterans of the Revolution, a group that sought pensions and land for veterans. Under Japanese occupation, imperial forces convinced the aging Aguinaldo— who had worn a black bowtie for over 40 years to mourn his country's defeat against the U.S.—to broadcast a radio address urging MacArthur and Filipino forces to surrender. After the war, he was charged with treason. Because Manuel Roxas would declare amnesty for Filipinos collaborators, Aguinaldo's case never went to trial. Emilio Aguinaldo died in 1964, just shy of his 95th birthday.





VICENTE LIM
BRIGADIER GENERAL

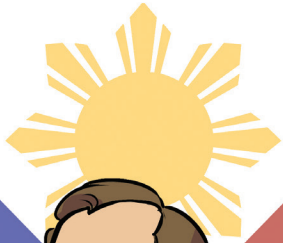
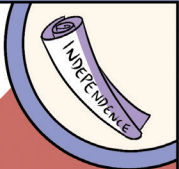
VICENTE LIM

February 24, 1888 – December 31, 1944

First Filipino West Point Graduate and Celebrated WWII Officer

Vicente Lim was one of the most renowned officers of the battle of Bataan and led Guerrilla resistance bands after defenses fell. As a child he was a messenger for the revolutionaries fighting against an expanding American empire. In 1914, Lim became the first Filipino to graduate from the U.S. Military academy at West Point, where he battled discrimination. Lim served in the Philippine Scouts, and, in 1936, accepted the rank of Brigadier General in the newly formed Philippine Army. When war broke, he led a division that would become one of the most effective forces at Bataan. In 1942, after nearly four months of fighting, Lim and the 41st division surrendered. Though weakened by his time in a Japanese prison camps, Lim continued the fight, coordinating bands of Guerrillas. He was captured in June 1944 and died in the Japanese prison at Fort Santiago.





MANUEL QUEZON
PRESIDENT OF PHILIPPINE
COMMONWEALTH



MANUEL QUEZON

August 19, 1878 – August 1, 1944

**Second president of the Philippine republic
and a dominant colonial era politician**

Born in 1878, Manuel Quezon was an aid de-camp to Emilio Aguinaldo during the Philippine American War. During the colonial era, he often traveled to Washington D.C., where he lobbied Congress for Philippine independence. Quezon was an imposing authority in Philippine politics and was even likened to a dictator by some. He maintained a fierce rivalry with Sergio Osmeña, co-founder of the Nacionalista party. In 1933, after Osmeña secured a bill from Congress for Philippine independence, Quezon, not content with Osmeña getting the credit, traveled to the U.S. to negotiate his own version. He became president of the Philippines in 1935 and would serve during the war and in exile, but died in August 1944. Quezon was interred at Arlington National Cemetery until his body could be returned to the Philippines, a testament to the regard American politicians held for him.





FRANKLIN ROOSEVELT
U.S. PRESIDENT



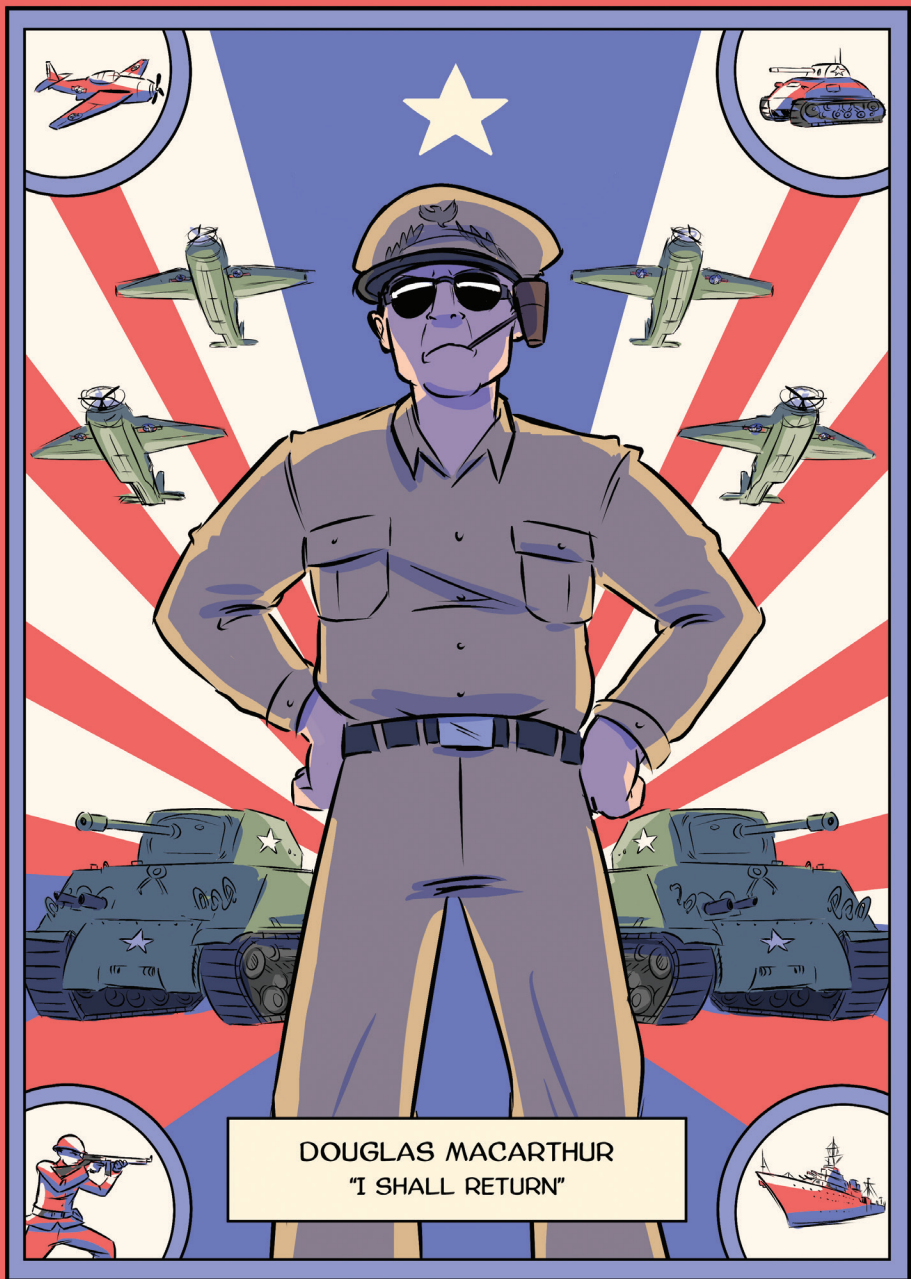
FRANKLIN ROOSEVELT

January 30, 1882 – April 12, 1945

U.S. President who incorporated Filipino soldiers into the U.S. military

As President, Roosevelt signed the Tydings-McDuffie Act and incorporated the Army of the Philippine Commonwealth into the U.S. armed services, two historic events that would shape the course of WWII and the lives of Filipino Veterans. In 1935, the Tydings-McDuffie Act set a timetable for Philippine independence while retaining key features of U.S. colonial rule in the Philippines. Most importantly, it gave the U.S. President the ability to order all armed forces in the Philippines into U.S. military service. The Tydings-McDuffie act also recategorized Filipinos living in the U.S. as aliens, barred from enlisting in the U.S. military. In 1942, in response to petitions from Filipinos living in the U.S. who were eager to join the war effort, Roosevelt signed a law allowing Filipinos to join the armed forces. Roosevelt died during the closing days of WWII on April 12th, 1945.





DOUGLAS MACARTHUR
"I SHALL RETURN"

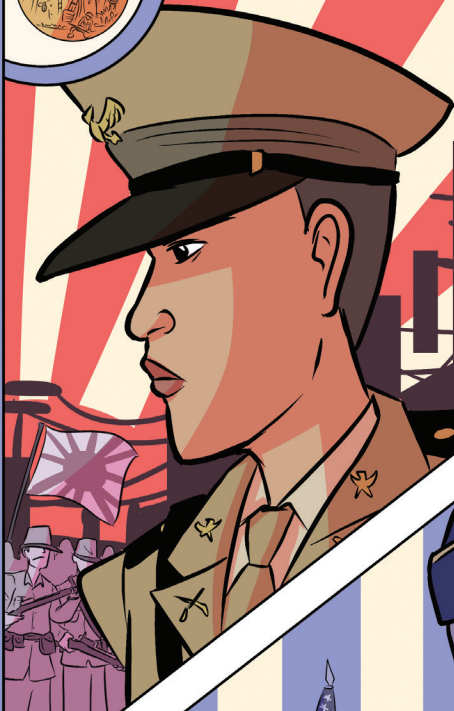
DOUGLAS MACARTHUR

January 26, 1880 – April 5, 1969

Renowned U.S. Army General MacArthur and commander of USAFFE Forces during WWII

The youngest Major General in U.S. history, MacArthur was tasked with building an independent Philippine army. While there, his habit of self-aggrandizing often brought him into conflict with Dwight Eisenhower and other leaders. When the war threatened to break out, the pipe-smoking, aviator sunglasses -wearing General was promoted to 5-star rank and placed in charge of USAFFE. His passion for the Philippines was, at times, contradictory; he fought for equal pay for Filipino soldiers, socialized with Filipinos, and played poker with Manuel Quezon. Yet in private he sometimes wrote disparagingly about the character of the Filipino people. He supported upper class landowners at the expense of the majority, and frequently behaved as if the region was his personal domain to rule. After his retreat to Australia, the General held fast to his promise to return and liberate the islands. MacArthur represented the U.S. at Japan's formal surrender ceremonies.





CELESTINO ALMEDA
WWII VETERAN



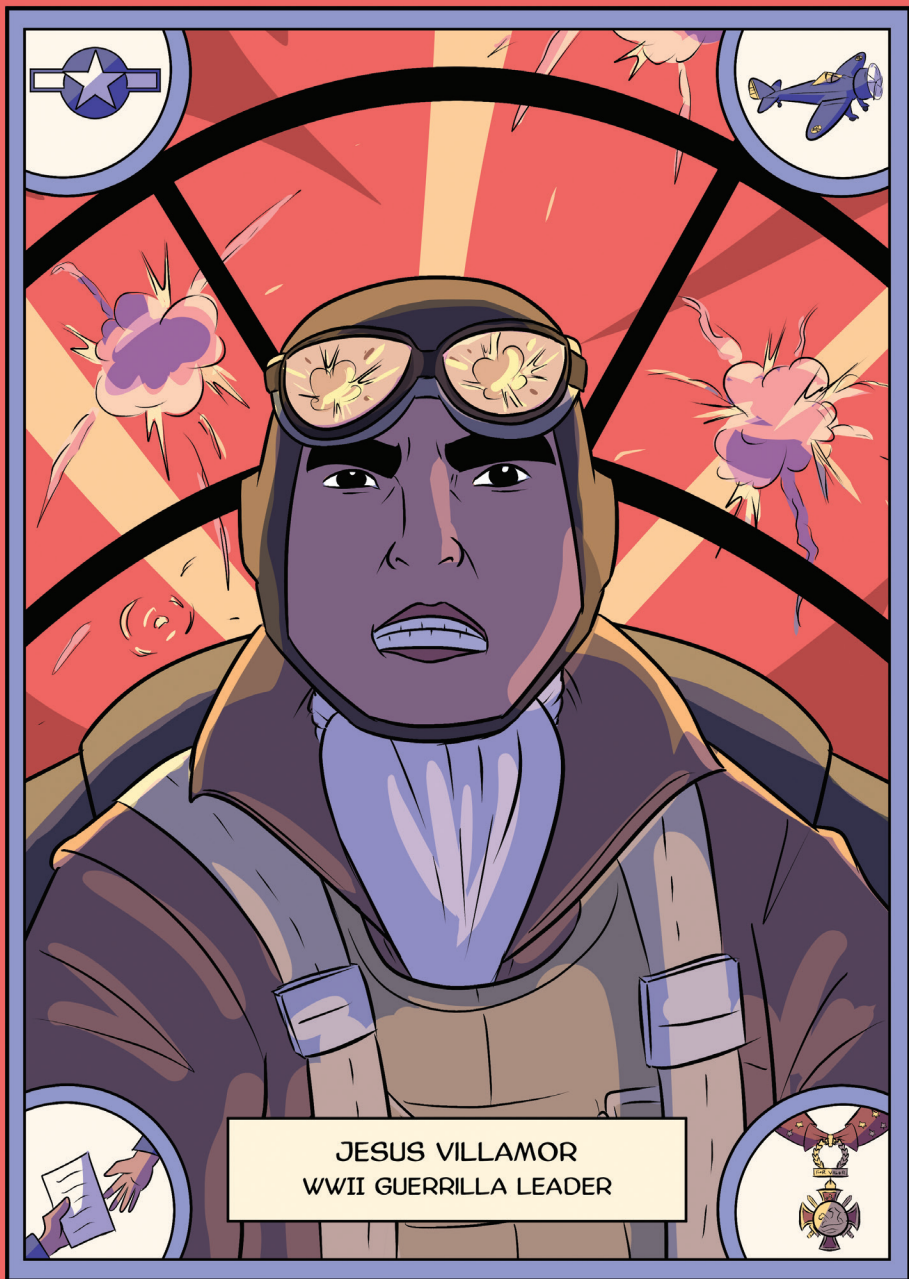
CELESTINO ALMEDA

June 8, 1917 – March 27, 2022

Filipino Veteran and leading advocate for Filipino veterans benefits

Almeda served in the Philippine Commonwealth Army and USAFFE guerrillas. After the war, he fought to win recognition and equity for Filipino veterans of WWII. Born in Laguna in 1917, Almeda was in the Reserve Officers Training Corps and a high-school teacher when war broke out. He joined the anti-sabotage regiment of the Philippine Commonwealth Army and later served as a 2nd lieutenant with the USAFFE guerrillas. Despite his service, Almeda was denied recognition by the U.S. government and blocked from immigrating to the U.S. for almost 50 years. He continued to fight for recognition, writing letters to the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs and joining the American Coalition for Filipino Veterans lobbying efforts. In 2017, at the age of 100, Almeda spoke before Congress at Filipino Veterans of World War II Congressional Gold Medal ceremony.





JESUS VILLAMOR
WWII GUERRILLA LEADER

JESUS VILLAMOR

November 7, 1914 – October 28, 1971

**WWII Lieutenant Colonel, Army Air Corps
decorated pilot and guerrilla leader**

An ace Philippine pilot, Jesus Villamor was awarded the Distinguished Service Cross twice. During the invasion in December 1941, Villamor, flying a smaller, older Allied “Peashooter,” shot down multiple better-equipped Japanese zeros in frantic dog fights. Villamor escaped as defenses fell and joined the Allied Intelligence Bureau (AIB), a special agency instructed to operate behind enemy lines to collect intelligence. In 1943, Jesus Villamor snuck into the Philippines and helped establish communication between Allied forces and Filipino guerrillas. While commander in the AIB, Villamor slipped back into the Philippines aboard a submarine. Once in the islands, he made contact with guerrilla leaders on Luzon, the Visayan Islands, and Mindanao, connecting a network of guerrilla armies to MacArthur’s Headquarters in Australia.





EDWIN RAMSEY
WWII GUERRILLA LEADER

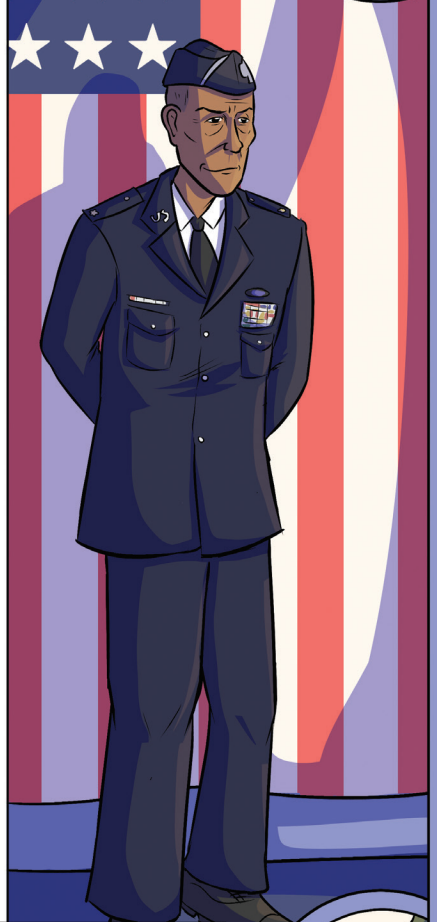
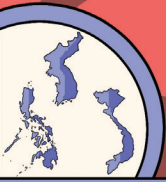
EDWIN PRICE RAMSEY

May 9, 1917 – March 7, 2013

| WWII decorated U.S. soldier and guerrilla leader

Lieutenant Edwin Ramsey was serving with the 26th Cavalry Regiment in the Philippines when the war broke out. During the opening stages of War Plan Orange, Edwin led the last successful horse-mounted Cavalry charge in U.S. Army history. They routed a large Japanese force and cleared the path to Bataan, earning him the Silver Star. After Bataan, Ramsey evaded capture and joined Claude Thorpe, who had been tasked by General MacArthur with organizing the guerrilla resistance. Though Japanese forces offered a reward for his capture, Ramsey and his guerrillas continued to fight, at times using homemade weapons. Ravaged by disease, inadequate supplies, and the hardships of life as a guerrilla, Ramsey weighed only 93 pounds when the Sixth Army reached Luzon in January 1945. For his contribution to the Allied victory, Ramsey was awarded the Distinguished Service Cross.





JESSE BALTAZAR
WWII VETERAN

JESSE BALTAZAR

October 8, 1920 – April 12, 2016

| WWII veteran and advocate for Filipino veterans benefits

After surviving the Bataan Death March, Jesse Baltazar escaped and joined the guerrilla resistance in the Philippines. Born in Manila, Baltazar joined USAFFE in 1941 following the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor. Despite being wounded during the Battle of Bataan in 1942, Baltazar, with the help of a Filipino fisherman, was able to escape on the third day of the Bataan Death March. Baltazar then joined the Philippine resistance, providing intelligence on Japanese military locations. After the war he immigrated to the U.S., intent on continuing his military career. In 1948, Baltazar became the first native-born Filipino to be commissioned in the U.S. Air Force. Baltazar would go on to serve for 20 years in the U.S. Air Force, retiring as a Major before joining the State Department in 1966. Despite his years of service, Baltazar continued to fight for recognition for Filipino Veterans into his 90s.





AARON KLIATCHKO
"RABBI OF CABANATUAN"



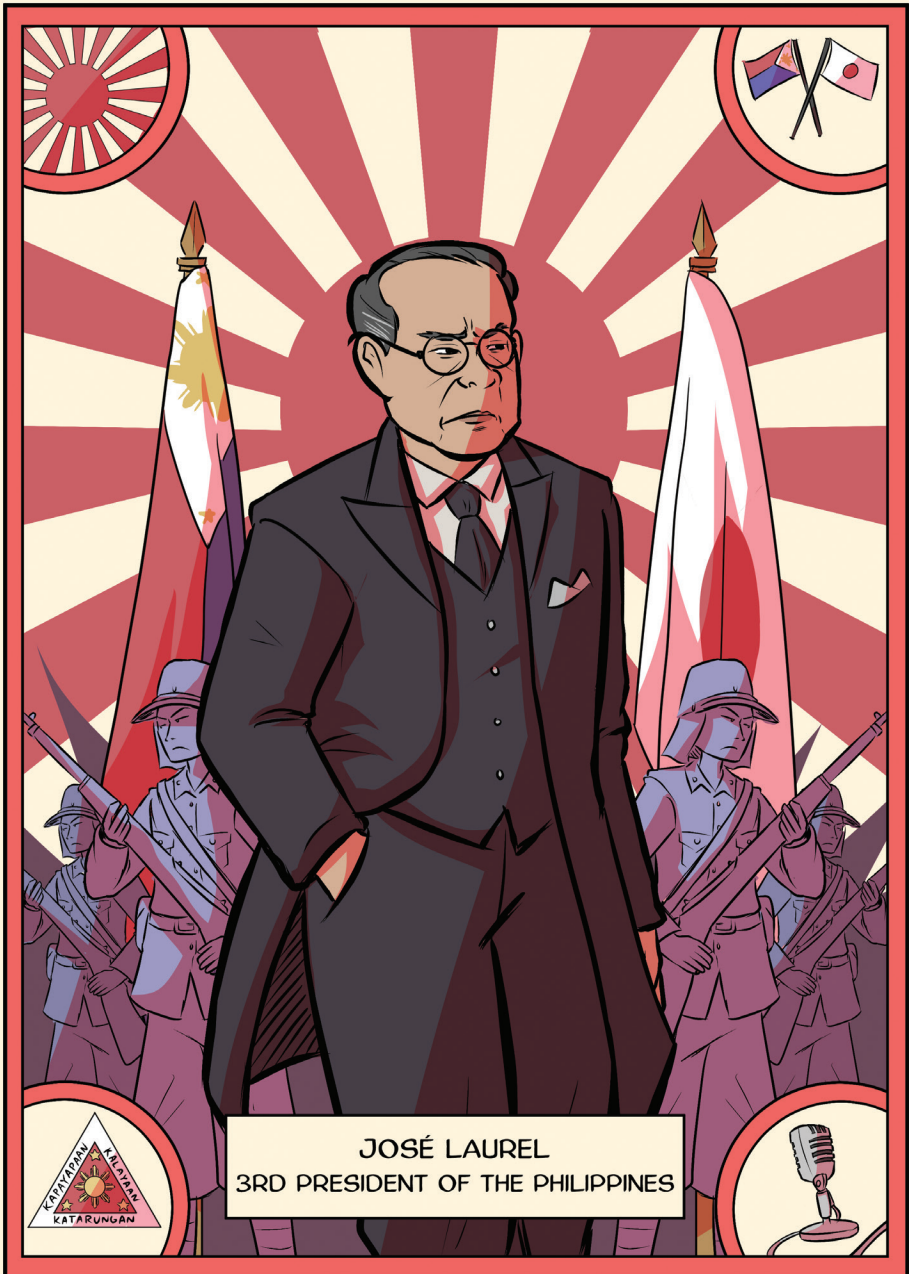
MASTER SGT. AARON KLIATCHKO

1887 – December 31, 1944

| WWII American POW and resistance fighter

Kliatchko smuggled supplies and provided religious services for the 121 Jewish prisoners housed at the Cabanatuan prison camp. Born in 1887 in Eastern Europe, in 1907 Kliatchko immigrated and joined the U.S. Army. He was sent to the Philippines and chose to stay in the islands after his discharge. 55 years old when the Japanese invaded in 1941, Kliatchko nonetheless volunteered to join the fight. After surviving the Bataan Death March, his job at the Cabanatuan prison camp allowed him to leave the prison grounds. Daringly, Kliatchko used the opportunity to gather supplies, including medicines, to smuggle back into the camp. In December 1944, Kliatchko was among 1600 prisoners aboard a Japanese “hell ship” struck by American bombers. Though he survived the incident, Kliatchko was moved to another ship where he died two weeks later from his wounds.





JOSÉ LAUREL
3RD PRESIDENT OF THE PHILIPPINES

JOSÉ LAUREL

March 9, 1891 – November 6, 1959

| **President of the Philippines during Japanese occupation**

Lawyer, politician, and Supreme Court justice during the colonial and commonwealth periods, José Laurel notoriously served as president of the Second Philippine Republic during the Japanese occupation of the Philippines. After the invasion of 1942, José Laurel was among the highest-ranking Philippine officials left in the islands. Though controversy remains over the instructions Manuel Quezon gave Laurel prior to fleeing, Laurel maintained that his wartime collaborations with Imperial Japan were aimed at easing the impact of the war on the Philippine population. Nonetheless, Laurel did not enjoy the support of the Philippine population and, in 1943, he survived an assassination attempt. Evacuated to Japan during the Allied liberation of the islands, Laurel was eventually arrested and charged with 132 counts of treason. Like others who collaborated, however, Manuel Roxas' 1948 amnesty proclamation meant that Laurel's case would never go to trial.





YAY PANLILIO
FILIPINA AMERICAN GUERRILLA



YAY PANLILIO

May 22, 1913 - January, 1978

| Filipina-American guerrilla leader during WWII

Yay Panlilio was a guerrilla leader on Luzon who excelled at military strategy and helped to publicize the contribution Filipina women made to the war effort. Born in Denver in 1913 to Filipina mother and an Irish father, Panlilio moved to Manila to pursue a career in journalism. During the occupation, Panlilio broadcasted intelligence to U.S. forces hidden in Japanese propaganda radio programs. After arousing suspicion, Panlilio fled Manila, eventually meeting Major Marcos “Marking” Agustin. Alongside him she would go on to lead “Marking’s Guerrillas,” a large and powerful guerrilla army. The two would end the war as husband and wife. As a guerrilla, Panlilio filled many roles, from writing propaganda to providing care for wounded soldiers. Her postwar memoir, *The Crucible*, released in 1950, was one of the first books written by a Filipina author to be published by a major U.S. press.





MAGDALENA LEONES
"THE LIONESSE OF FILIPINA AGENTS"

MAGDALENA LEONES

August 19, 1920 – June 16, 2016

| **Guerrilla agent and first Filipina to receive the Silver Star**

Recipient of the U.S. Silver Star “for gallantry in action,” Corporal Magdalena Leones risked her life to carry important intelligence data through enemy territory. Leones was born in 1920 to Christian missionaries in the Cordillera mountains. Once the war began, Leones aided Philippine and American troops that had retreated into the mountains. Captured by Japanese forces, she was released after five months in prison. In 1943, Leones led a small band in Manila, smuggling supplies to guerrilla armies. In early 1944, a Japanese agent infiltrated the band and her comrades were captured and executed. Leones joined guerrilla forces in Northern Luzon, where she helped establish an intelligence network of Guerrilla spies. Often working alone, Leones gathered vital radio parts and intelligence on enemy positions, and ferried supplies to other guerrilla armies.





WENDELL FERTIG
WWII GUERRILLA LEADER

WENDELL FERTIG

December 16, 1900 – March 24, 1975

| WWII U.S. Soldier and guerrilla leader

When the war broke out, Wendell Fertig was called into duty with the Army Corps of Engineers. When U.S. forces in the Philippines surrendered in 1942, he fought on, organizing a resistance force on the island of Mindanao. Refusing to surrender, Fertig built a guerrilla army that would eventually grow to over 30,000 soldiers. They often employed homemade supplies, including curtain rods cut to use as bullets. Fertig's army harassed Japanese forces on Mindanao for two and a half years and was one of the few guerrilla bands to engage in successful large-scale attacks. His army even founded a homemade navy to attack Japanese shipping routes. Fertig oversaw the construction of a homemade radio, made from scrap parts. With it they received transmissions from guerrillas on the island of Negros and, most importantly, made contact with MacArthur's headquarters in Australia.





REMEDIOS GOMEZ-PARAISO
FILIPINA GUERRILLA COMMANDER

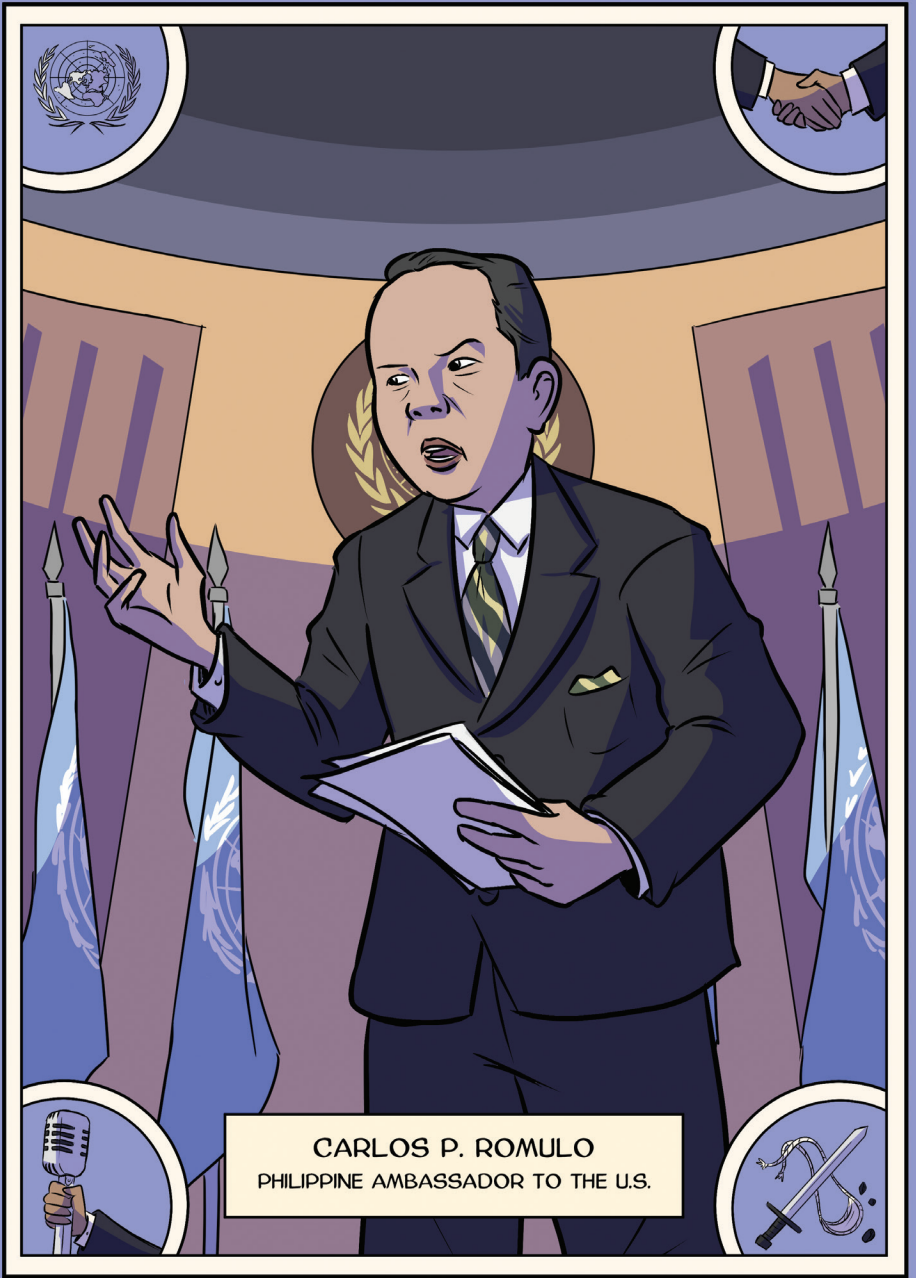
REMEDIOS GOMEZ-PARAISO

1919 – May 15, 2014

| Filipina commander in the Hukbalahap guerrilla army

Also known as Kumander Liwayway, Gomez-Paraiso was an officer in the Hukbalahap, a communist guerrilla army known for their daring attacks on Japanese forces. Born in Pampanga, Gomez-Paraiso joined the guerrillas after her father was killed by Japanese forces. Known for going into battle wearing her signature red lipstick, Gomez-Paraiso quickly rose in the ranks to become a commander of a squadron. At one point, she had two hundred men under her command. Perhaps best known for the “Battle of Kamansi” in which, despite being outnumbered, Gomez-Paraiso’s squadron forced Japanese forces to retreat. After the war, her Hukbalahap Guerrillas continued their revolution against the democratic Philippine government until 1948, when her husband was killed, and she was captured. She was released and went on to become a vocal advocate for the recognition of Filipina Guerrillas.





CARLOS P. ROMULO
PHILIPPINE AMBASSADOR TO THE U.S.

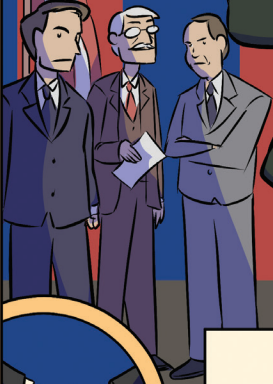
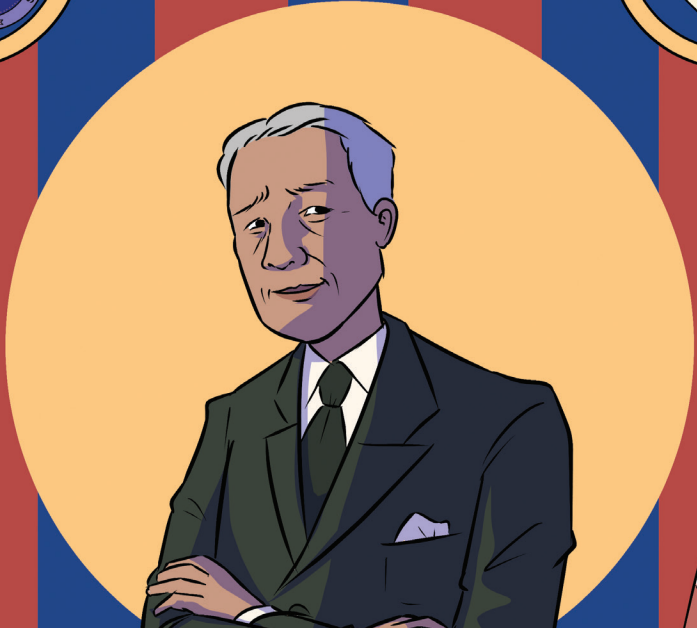
CARLOS P. ROMULO

January 14, 1899 – December 15, 1985

| Journalist, soldier, diplomat, and statesmen

Carlos Romulo represented the Philippines on a global stage both during and after the war. In 1941, Romulo was awarded a Pulitzer Prize for his reporting on the impending war in Southeast Asia. His articles also caught the eye of Douglas MacArthur who, once the war broke out, inducted Romulo into the Army. Romulo's "the Voice of Freedom" radio broadcast delivered news and attempted to boost public morale. After Bataan fell, Romulo traveled the U.S. to deliver his first-hand account of the war to American audiences. After the war, Romulo was an outspoken critic of the Rescission Act and lobbied U.S. Congress to secure rehabilitation funds for the Philippines. He also led the Philippine delegation to the newly formed United Nations. In 1949, Romulo became the first, and only, Filipino to serve as president of the United Nations General Assembly.





SERGIO OSMEÑA
"THE GRAND OLD MAN OF CEBU"



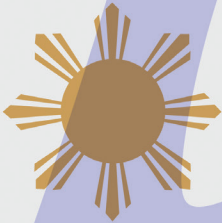
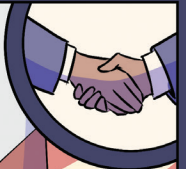
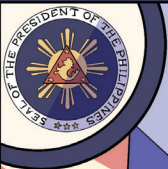
SERGIO OSMEÑA

September 9, 1878 – October 19, 1961

President of the Philippine Commonwealth during transition to Philippine independence

One of the most dominant politicians of the colonial era, Sergio Osmeña became president of the Commonwealth in 1944. Born in 1878 in Cebu, an important trading port, Osmeña rose to prominence in 1907 when he was elected as to the highest-ranking position for a Filipino official—Speaker of the Philippine Assembly. Osmeña spent the war years in exile in the United States and assumed the presidency after the death of his main political rival, Manuel Quezon. In 1944, he returned to the Philippines, wading alongshore with General Douglas MacArthur at Leyte. In addition to re-establishing civil rule after liberation, under Osmeña the Philippines became 1 of 51 nations to sign the foundational Charter of the United Nations. In 1946, however, Osmeña lost the election to become the first president of an independent Philippine Republic to Manuel Roxas.





MANUEL ROXAS
1ST PRESIDENT OF THE 3RD
PHILIPPINE REPUBLIC



MANUEL ROXAS

January 1, 1892 – April 15, 1948

First president of an independent Philippine Republic recognized by the United States

Born in Capiz in 1892, Manuel Roxas was one of the most influential Philippine politicians during the colonial and commonwealth eras. With Sergio Osmeña, he traveled to the United States in 1931 to lobby for Philippine independence. The resulting legislation, the Hare-Hawes-Cutting Act, would ultimately be rejected by the Philippine legislature, spearheaded by an envious Manuel Quezon. But their efforts laid the groundwork for Quezon's negotiation of the 1935 Tydings-McDuffie Act, setting a ten-year timetable for Philippine independence. Roxas served in the occupation government during WWII. Though he claimed to have passed intelligence to Philippine guerrillas, many remained suspect of his service during the occupation. Backed by the support of Douglas MacArthur, Roxas won the presidential election and was inaugurated during the independence ceremony on July 4th, 1946.





PUBLIC LAWS—CHS. 22, 28, 30—FEB. 14, 18, 1946 [60 Stat.]

60 Stat. 307, 351, 355,
38 U.S.C., Supp. V,
§ 701 (f), note foll.
§ 705, §§ 604-606, 608-
609
Stat., p. 624.

\$500,000,000 for the fiscal year 1946 for the payment of benefits at or on behalf of veterans as authorized by title III, IIII, and V, of the Servicemen's Readjustment Act of 1944, to remain available until expended.

Approved February 14, 1946.

[CHAPTER 28]

JOINT RESOLUTION

To provide for proceeding with certain rivers and harbors authorized to be prosecuted after the termination of the War.

February 18, 1946
[Public Law 500]

Rivers and harbors projects.

60 Stat. 11.

Resolved by the Senate and House of Representatives of America in Congress assembled, That section 945 (Public Law No. 405), approved October 3, 1945, (Public Law No. 405) being out of the following appropriated for the construction of the present authorized defense agencies or desirable in the and the President has been further."

[CHAPTER 30]

Reducing organizations available.

Representation that the elements are reported forth, Treasury

MEMORANDUM

60 Stat. 415.

Foreign head ment - burs - ses under his within coti- "0", (2) rem- ordinary expens- es of a confiden-



CARL HAYDEN
U.S. SENATOR



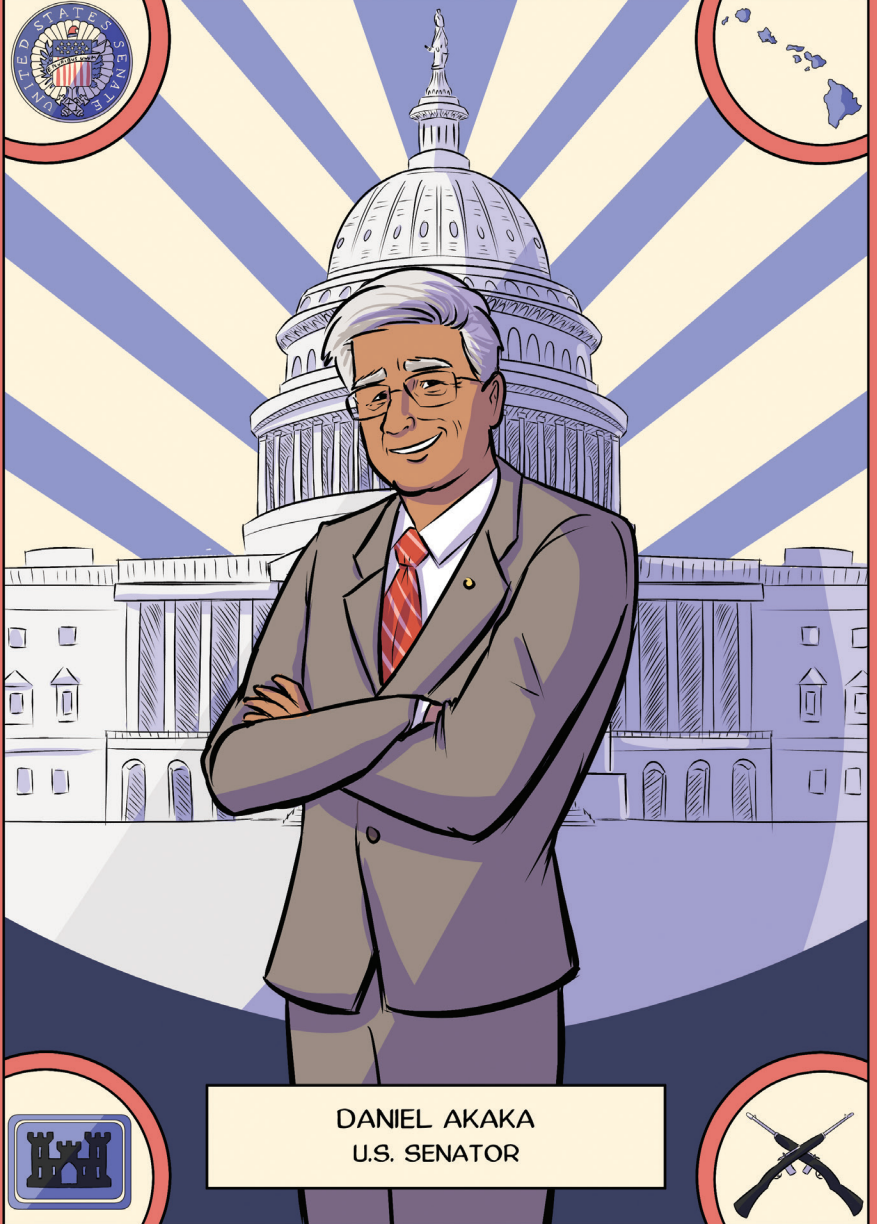
CARL HAYDEN

October 2, 1877 – January 25, 1972

| U.S. Senator and advocate for the Rescission Act

Hayden advocated for the 1946 Rescission Act that stripped Filipino veterans of their promised benefits. Taking office shortly after statehood was granted in 1912, Hayden was the first U.S. representative from Arizona. In 1962, he would become the first person ever to serve 50 years in Congress. Known as the “silent senator,” Hayden rarely spoke in the Senate chamber, but his ability to work behind-the-scenes to secure votes was widely recognized. Though he championed the 1944 G.I Bill, Hayden reportedly balked at the expense the U.S. would entail if the government followed through on its promise to grant veterans benefits to Filipinos. Instead, he insisted that funding “Philippine rehabilitation” was enough. Later evidence showed some of these promised funds were never received, and most were not received by the veterans themselves. Hayden ultimately secured the passage of the Rescission Act, despite Truman’s objections to the bill.





DANIEL AKAKA
U.S. SENATOR



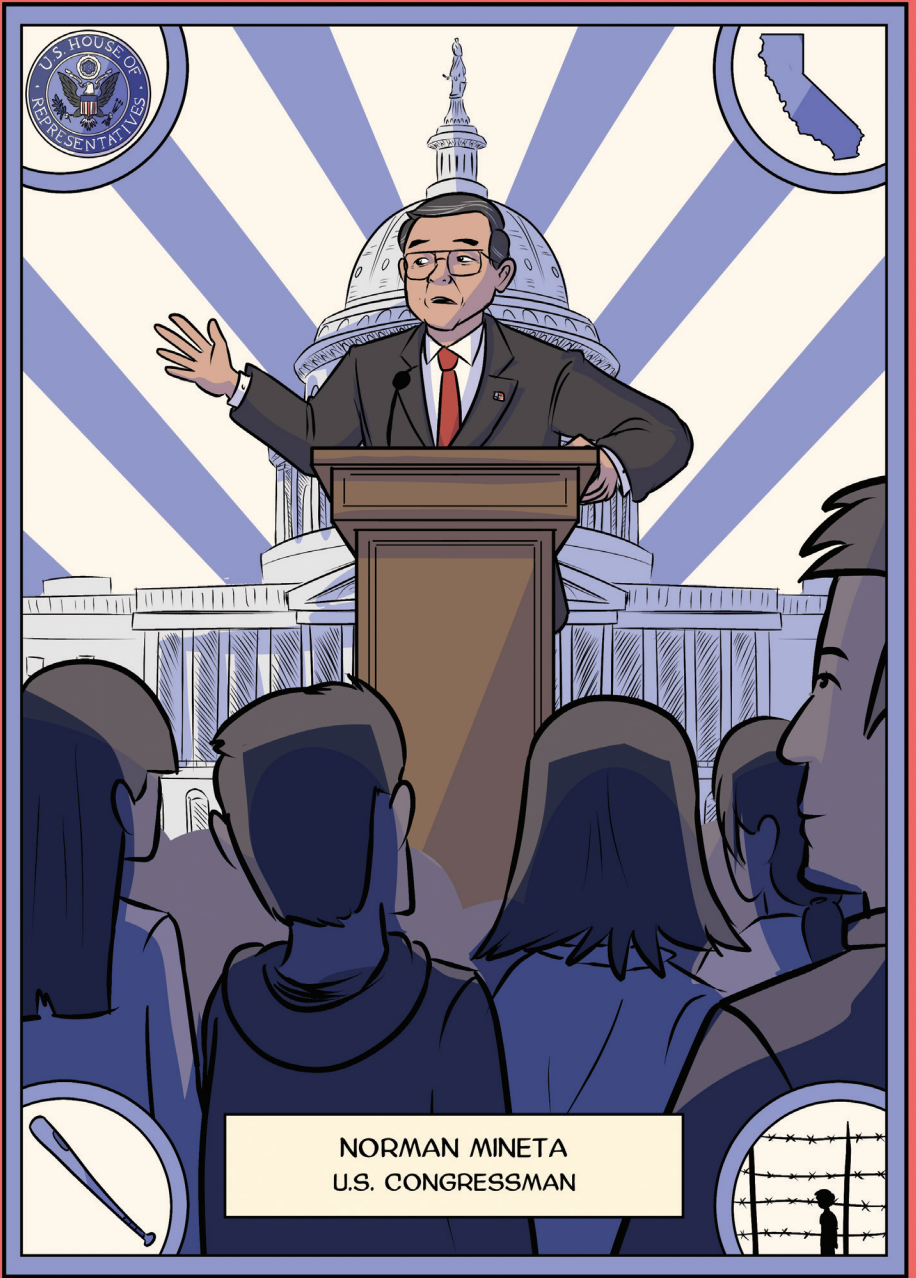
DANIEL AKAKA

September 11, 1924 – April 6, 2018

| U.S. Senator and supporter of Filipino veterans benefits

As chairman of the Senate's Veterans' Affairs Committee, Daniel Akaka supported legislation recognizing the contribution of Philippine veterans, including the 2009 Filipino Veterans Equity Compensation Fund. Prior to becoming the first senator of Native Hawaiian descent in 1990, Akaka served in the Army Corps of Engineers during WWII and taught high school in Honolulu. In 1996, Akaka spearheaded the effort to review the WWII records of Asian-American servicemen. As a result, 30 medals were retroactively awarded to Asian-American WWII veterans, including senator Daniel Inouye. Though not always successful, during his career in the Senate, Akaka continually advocated for legislative solutions to the inequities created by the 1946 Rescission Act.





NORMAN MINETA
U.S. CONGRESSMAN

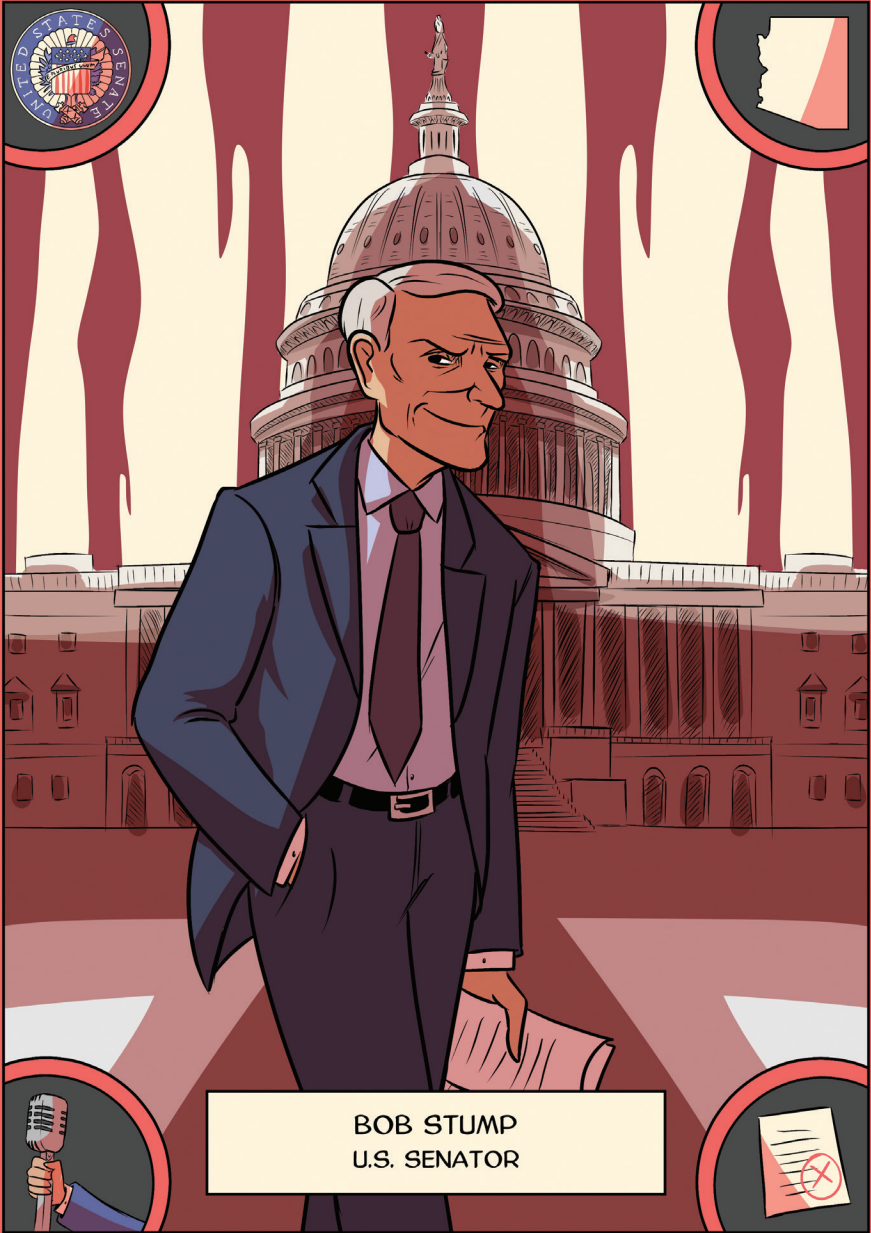
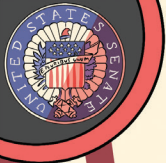
NORMAN MINETA

November 12, 1931 – May 3, 2022

U.S. Congressman and co-sponsor of Filipino Veterans Equity Act

Having spent the war in a Japanese internment camp in Wyoming, in Congress Norman Mineta fought for legislation that recognized injustices committed against Japanese Americans and Filipino WWII Veterans. A veteran of the Korean War, Mineta was first elected to the U.S. House of Representatives in 1975, a position he held for the next twenty years. In the 1970s and 80s, Mineta took legislative aim at obtaining redress for the U.S. government's treatment of Japanese Americans during WWII. In 1995, Mineta co-sponsored the Filipino Veterans Equity Act that would have restored benefits to Filipino Veterans of WWII.





BOB STUMP
U.S. SENATOR



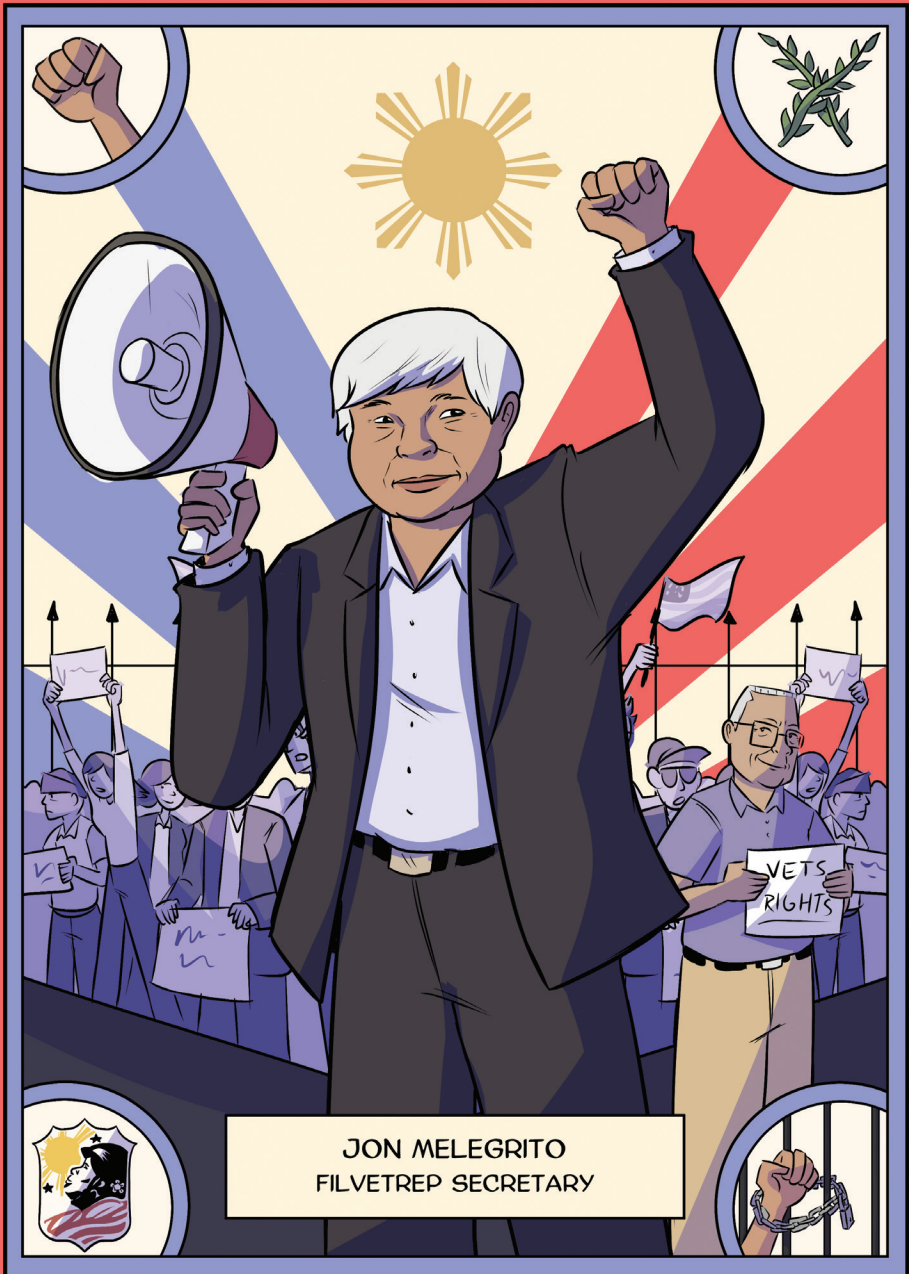
BOB STUMP

April 4, 1927 – June 20, 2003

U.S. Representative and opponent of Filipino veterans' benefits

As chairman of the House Committee on Veterans' Affairs, Bob Stump opposed efforts in the late 1990s to grant equity for Filipino veterans. In 1998, Stump presided over the House Veterans Affairs Committee's debate regarding the Filipino Veterans Equity Act. This legislation would restore benefits to Filipino veterans and had nearly 200 sponsors in the House of Representatives. Stump, who had served in the Navy during the Pacific War, maintained that the Philippine government should be responsible for veterans' benefits, not the United States. Though the Philippines was still a colonial possession of the U.S. during the war, Stump argued that Filipino veterans had fought for their own "soon-to-be independent Philippine nation." Many veterans view Stump as one of their "primary foes" in their pursuit of benefits, as he almost single-handedly stonewalled veterans during his multi-year reign over the Veterans' Affairs Committee.





JON MELEGRITO
FILVETREP SECRETARY

JON MELEGRITO

**Journalist, activist leader, and advocate
for Filipino Veterans benefits**

Jon Melegrito has been a leading voice in the movement to win justice, equity, and recognition for Filipino veterans of WWII. Born in the Philippines, Melegrito immigrated to the U.S. with his parents in the 1960s. Already a community and social justice activist, Melegrito became active in the veterans' movement after moving to Washington D.C. For Melegrito, his advocacy is also personal. He witnessed his father's repeated denial of benefits by the Veterans Administration, despite the fact that his father was a USAFFE soldier who survived the Bataan Death March. For Melegrito it was clear: Filipino veterans were treated like "second-class citizens." So, he joined and helped grow the veterans movement, from participating in demonstrations outside of the White House to walking the halls of Congress to garner support for the Filipino Veterans of World War II Congressional Gold Medal Act.





PAT GANIO
WWII VETERAN AND ADVOCATE

PAT GANIO

March 17, 1921 – June 15, 2019

WWII Veteran and Founder, American Coalition of Filipino Veterans

In 1942, Ganio survived both the fall of Corregidor and imprisonment in Japanese prisoner of war camps. Upon his release, Ganio joined the USAFFE guerrillas and was later wounded in battle. Postwar, Ganio served as a Major in the Philippine Army reserves and became a university educator. After 30 years, Ganio immigrated in the 1980s to the U.S. and began to organize and advocate for Filipino WWII veterans. He helped found the Filipino Veterans Families Foundation and the American Coalition of Filipino Veterans. Together they put pressure on the U.S. government to recognize the contribution of Filipino Veterans of WWII and restore benefits stripped by the 1946 Rescission Act. His decades of activism helped lead to several legislative victories, including the 2003 “Health Care for Filipino Veterans” bill.





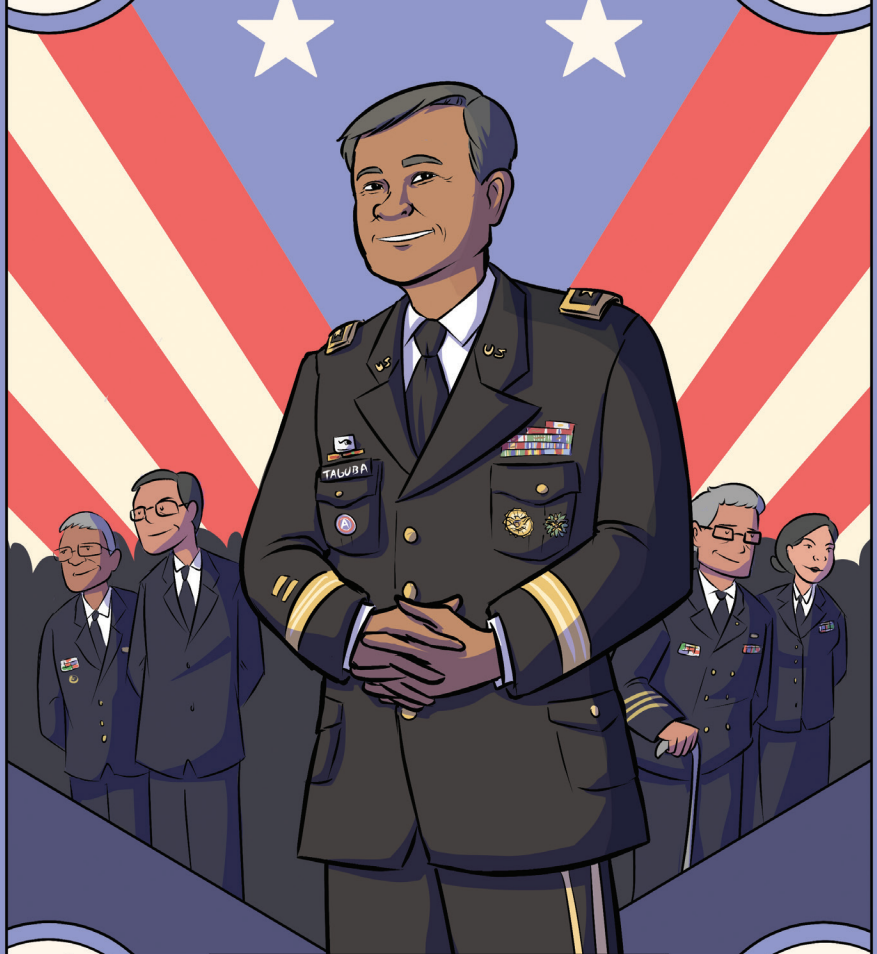
MARIE BLANCO
VICE CHAIR OF FILVETREP

MARIE BLANCO

| Political leader and advocate for Filipino veterans

For over three decades, Marie Blanco tirelessly pushed for legislation that would provide justice and equity for Filipino veterans. Born and raised in Hawai'i to immigrants from the Philippines, Blanco was hired by Hawaii's Senator Daniel Inouye in 1978. There she worked her way up the ranks, eventually becoming Inouye's Chief of Staff for his Washington, D.C. office. After the Supreme Court ruled against Filipino veterans seeking benefits denied by the Rescission Act, Blanco approached Inouye with the idea of seeking justice through congressional legislation. They would introduce bills to repeal the Rescission Act in every Congress for eighteen years and were one of the driving forces behind the 2009 Filipino Veterans Equity Compensation Fund. Marie currently serves as a Vice Chair of FilVetREP, where she was instrumental in procuring congressional support for the passage of the Filipino Veterans of World War II Congressional Gold Medal Act.





ANTONIO TAGUBA
CHAIRMAN OF FILVETREP



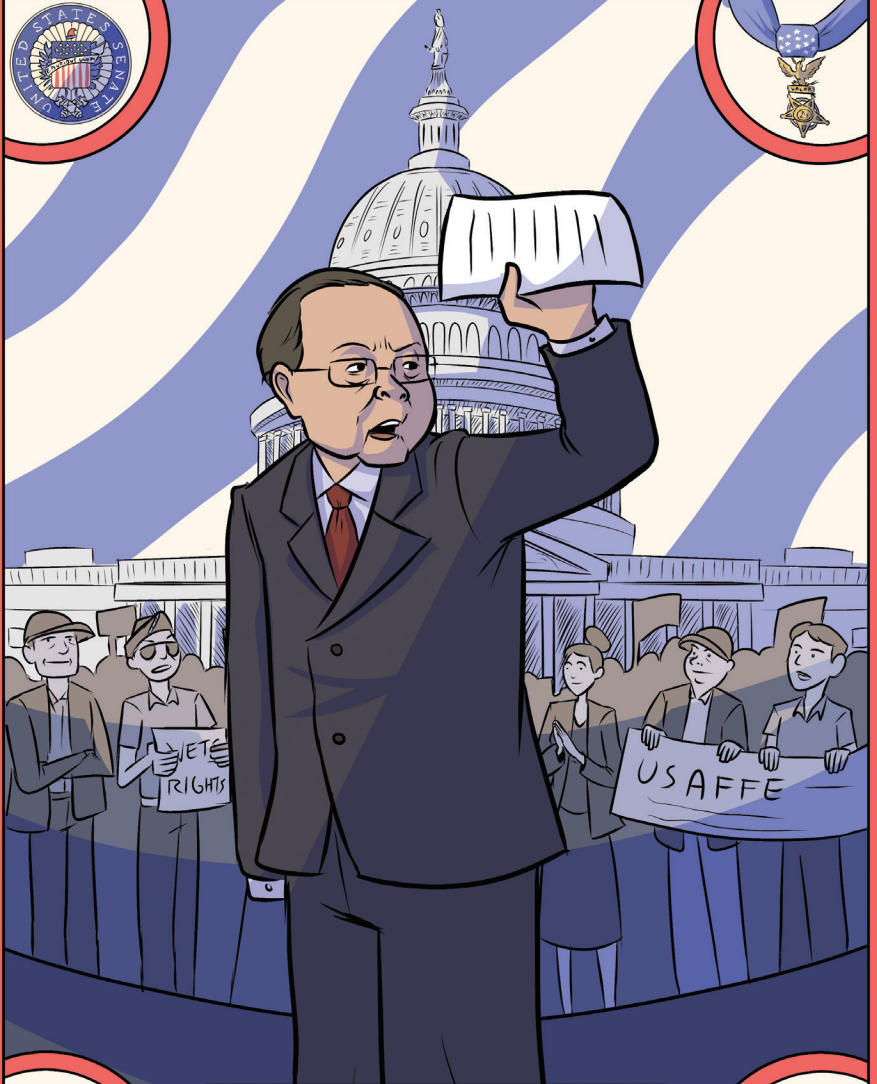
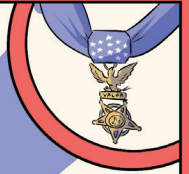
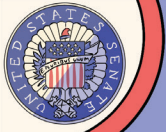
ANTONIO TAGUBA

October 31, 1950 –

**Retired U.S. Army Major General
and Chairman of FilVetREP**

A retired major general in the U.S. Army, Taguba spearheaded the Filipino Veterans Recognition and Education Project's (FilVetREP) campaign to award WWII Filipino Veterans with the Congressional Gold Medal. Taguba, who was born in Manila, has a personal connection to the campaign he helped lead: his father, Tomas Taguba, was a soldier in USAFFE's 57th Infantry Regiment and survived the Bataan Death March. After retiring, Taguba, who spent nearly four decades in the Army, became increasingly active in Filipino and Asian American organizations. Most importantly, Taguba set out to build a national grassroots organization that advocates for the recognition that his father and other Filipino veterans of WWII had been denied. Since the Congressional Gold Medal was awarded, Taguba has travelled to numerous locations throughout the U.S. to award Congressional Gold Medals to veterans or their family members.





DANIEL INOUE
U.S. SENATOR



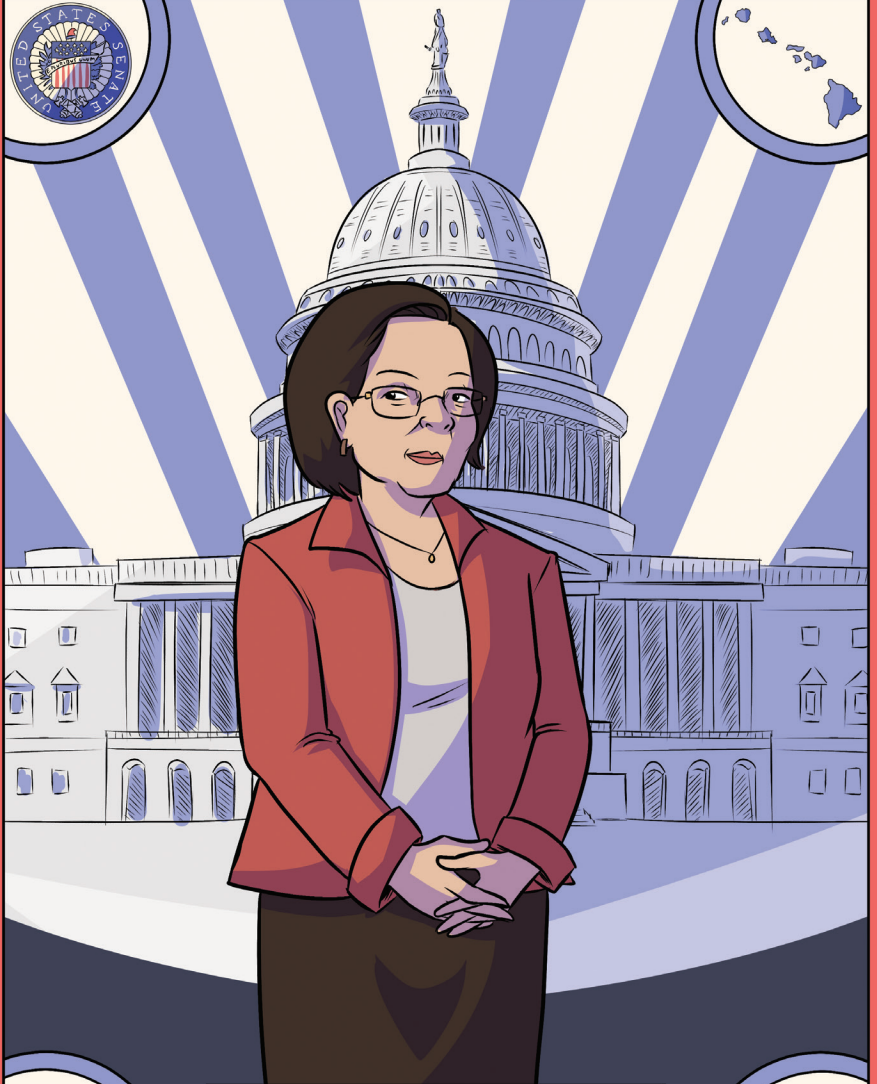
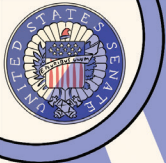
DANIEL INOUYE

September 7, 1924 – December 17, 2012

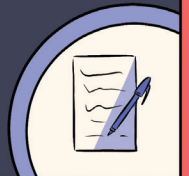
**Senator, decorated military veteran,
and advocate for equality**

Daniel Inouye was the only U.S. senator to receive both the Medal of Honor and the Presidential Medal of Freedom. In the Senate, Daniel Inouye championed legislation that sought equity for Filipino veterans. Alongside his Chief of Staff Marie Blanco, he introduced bills to repeal the Rescission Act in every congress for 18 years. In 2009, Inouye was instrumental in the inclusion of the Filipino Veterans Equity Compensation Fund provision. During WWII, Inouye lost his right arm while serving in one of the most highly decorated military units in U.S. history, the 442nd Infantry Regiment. After returning home to Hawai'i, Inouye turned to politics. In 1959, he was elected to Congress, becoming the first Japanese American to serve in the U.S. House of Representatives. In 1962, Inouye became the first Japanese American to serve as a U.S. Senator, a position he held until his death in 2012.





MAZIE HIRONO
U.S. SENATOR



MAZIE HIRONO

November 3, 1947 –

U.S. Senator and co-sponsor of Congressional Gold Medal Act

The first Asian-American woman to serve in the Senate, Mazie Hirono sponsored the bill awarding WWII Filipino veterans the Congressional Gold Medal. Hirono's grandparents immigrated to Hawai'i from Japan to work on sugar plantations. Though Mazie Hirono would be born in Japan in 1947, her mother moved her family back to Hawai'i in 1955. Before joining the senate in 2012, Hirono served in the House of Representatives for six years. In addition to the Congressional Gold Medal, Hirono championed an immigration bill, the Filipino World War II Veterans Parole Program, that sought to reunite Filipino WWII veterans with their children or other family members.

