

**Mas Takahashi**  
**100th Infantry Battalion, C Company**

*Keeping his buddies' memories alive.*



Masao “Mas” Takahashi never spoke about himself. He fought heroically in the 100<sup>th</sup> Infantry Battalion during World War II, yet he preferred to speak about his fellow soldiers. Always humble, Mas dedicated his life to keeping the memories of his buddies alive. Mas passed away in 2015, but will forever remain deep in our hearts.

Mas was born in 1924 in Modesto, California. The youngest of five, Mas was placed with his siblings in a home for children after the death of his mother. During World War II, Mas was sent to Manzanar, one of the War Relocation Authority “camps” where Japanese Americans were incarcerated.

Mas left Manzanar for Detroit, and he was soon drafted into the Army. He was sent to Camp Blanding in Florida, where he completed his basic training as a rifleman. Mas was deployed to France and became part of C Company, 100<sup>th</sup> Infantry Battalion. He served in the Champagne Campaign, the assault on the Gothic Line, and the Po Valley Campaign, earning the Bronze Star Medal and the Combat Infantryman Badge. His brother, Yoshio, was a member of the 442<sup>nd</sup> Regimental Combat Team, M Company.

After war’s end, Mas returned to normal life in the states, but he made it a point to always keep the legacy of his fellow soldiers alive. He remained an active and pivotal member of Go For Broke National Education Center (GFBNEC) his entire life. Mas tirelessly attended GFBNEC functions, hoping to share the story of his buddies who fought so valiantly for America.

During 2014-2015, Mas traveled to high schools throughout Southern California, telling the story of the Japanese American soldiers of WWII. He humbly told the hundreds of gathered students about the experience of his buddies who fought alongside him. He told them to never forget what they fought for, and to keep fighting today to make America a better place. His words brought tears to the eyes of many students, who were otherwise unaware of what happened during World War II.

In memory of Mas, an anonymous donor is co-sponsoring the GFBNEC Student Essay, Performance & Visual Arts Contest. True to Mas’ continued passion for keeping the legacy of his buddies alive, hundreds of high school and college students nationwide will get the chance to research and write about the Japanese American soldiers of World War II. Many will even take up their cameras and film short videos, all in the effort to sustain this important legacy. Thanks to Mas’ lasting efforts and the efforts of the anonymous donor, Mas’ impact will continue to make this world a better place. He is sorely missed, and he is always remembered.

**2018 High School and College Essay, Performance & Visual Arts Contest – Honorees**

The contest has been made possible by the generous support of two Supporting Sponsors: Ken and June Shimabukuro, and an anonymous donor in memory of World War II Veteran Masao Takahashi.