

Congressman 
Rahm Emanuel

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**Emanuel Announces Chicago WWII Veterans Oral History Anthology,
Joined by World War II Vets, Chicago Public Schools, University Reps**

“We Must Preserve History of Chicago’s Own ‘Band of Brothers’”

CHICAGO, IL—Flanked by Chicago’s World War II veterans, representatives from Chicago Public Schools and area universities, U.S. Representative Rahm Emanuel (D-IL) announced the Chicago World War II Veterans Oral History Anthology at the Thompson Center Sunday morning.

Joining with a cross-section of Chicago veterans’ organizations, representatives from Chicago Public Schools, local universities and colleges, Emanuel said, “World War II veterans are living repositories of an important segment of American history. This project will document their memories, stories and experiences in a community-wide, collaborative effort. But this project will do more—it will build bridges between generations.”

The Chicago World War II Veterans Oral History Anthology will equip members of Chicago’s youngest generations with audio recorders, notepads and cameras to record the wartime stories of the “greatest generation” and their families. Based on those recordings, a video will be developed that encapsulates these stories. Once the video has been produced in partnership with veterans’ organizations and Chicago Public Schools, there will be a series of events at area schools where the video is shown, and veterans will tell their stories and answer questions. Emanuel will also submit a copy of the video and other documentation to the Library of Congress American Folklife Center, where the anthology will become a permanent part of the Library’s Veterans History project. Area schools will also receive a copy of the video.

“The project will build a unique bridge from one generation to another and CPS students will be enriched by it,” said Chicago Public Schools Chief Executive Officer Arne Duncan.

Ken Penn, Jr. Vice Commander, 6th District of Illinois, American Legion said, “We lose veterans every day across this country, and I applaud Congressman Emanuel’s initiative to preserve their voices, images and memories for future generations. Wouldn’t it be great to be able to go to the library or the neighborhood school to hear the recollections of Civil War veterans of the Battle of Gettysburg? This project gives that gift to generations to come.”

More than 60 years after he earned them, Chicago veteran Lincoln Peters finally received the medals and decorations he is owed for his U.S. Army combat service during World War II. Emanuel, who bestowed the awards upon Peters in a ceremony, worked with the Army and the National Personnel Records Center to obtain the medals.

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Peters served as a rifleman in the 41st Infantry Division that fought in the South Pacific during World War II, and was one of the first fighting units that General Douglas MacArthur commanded during the beginning offensive against Japan. Peters was wounded during the battle of Mindanao in the southern Philippine Islands. He will receive the Bronze Star Medal, the Purple Heart, the Good Conduct Medal, the American Campaign Medal, the Asiatic-Pacific Campaign Medal with Double Bronze Star Attachment, the World War II Victory medal, the Combat Infantryman Badge 1st Award, the Philippine Liberation Ribbon, the Honorable Service Lapel Button for World War II, the Expert Badge & Rifle Bar, and the Sharpshooter Badge & Carbine Bar. Peters is currently a Commander at the Assyrian-American AMVETS Post #5.

Emanuel said, “The sacrifices America’s veterans have helped protect our freedom, protect our rights and protect our security, all of which seem more precious than ever in the aftermath of September 11th and during this time of war. I hope we can all re-dedicate ourselves to honor the commitment we have made to our veterans.”

This spring, the Chicago World War II Veterans Oral History Anthology will be officially underway as Chicago high schools, colleges and universities begin recruiting student interviewers, and veterans’ organizations will begin identifying veterans who want to participate. Students will begin interviewing Chicago’s veterans by Memorial Day, continuing throughout the summer. Video screenings will begin in Chicago area schools, culminating in a Veterans Day celebration. The videos and other artifacts from the Chicago World War II Veterans Oral History Anthology will be submitted to the Library of Congress American Folklife Center, becoming a permanent piece of the Library’s Veterans’ Oral History project.

For more information, visit Emanuel’s website at www.house.gov/emanuel.

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