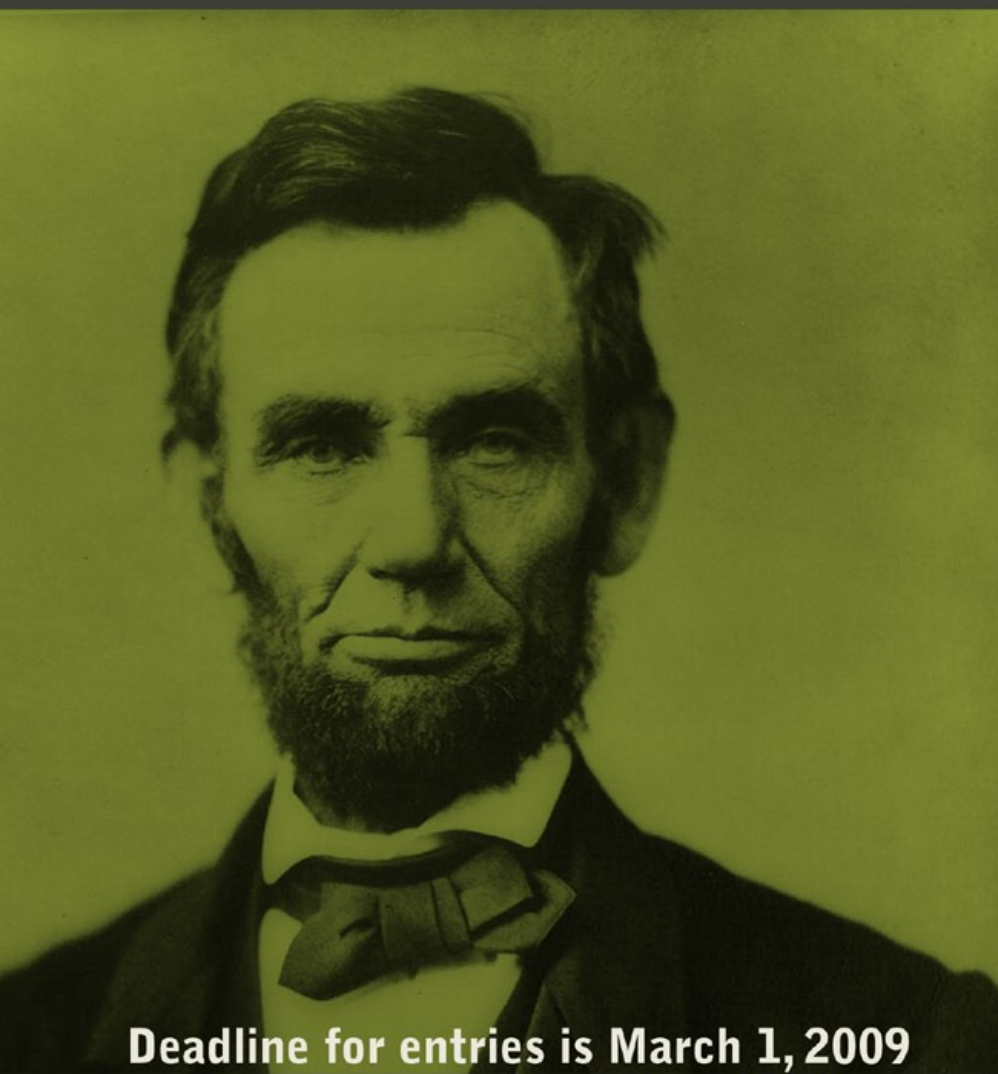




Looking for Your Lincoln Hero

A Contest in Partnership with the Looking for Lincoln Heritage Coalition.



Deadline for entries is March 1, 2009

Finalists announced in April 2009

One finalist out of each age/grade group will be selected to receive the grand prize--a trip to Illinois.

For more information, visit...

myhero.com/lincoln

Tell Us About your Lincoln Hero!

Write an essay that describes the heroic qualities in Abraham Lincoln you most admire and tell us about the person in your life who most represents those qualities. Or create a piece of artwork to illustrate how your hero is like Lincoln.

Finalist Judges for Essays:



- **Paul Rusesabagina**, the real-life hero of "Hotel Rwanda" who saved more than 1000 people from the Rwandan genocide
- **Dr. Daniel Stowell** of the Papers of Abraham Lincoln Project at the Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library

- **Eileen Mackevich**, Executive Director of the US Lincoln Bicentennial Commission
- **Congressman Ray LaHood**, Co-Chair of the US Lincoln Bicentennial Commission, and retiring Congressman representing Lincoln's former seat in Congress.
- **Dr. Marcia Young**, Looking for Lincoln Board member, Harvard PhD., historian here in Illinois
- **Harold Holzer**, one of the country's leading authorities on Lincoln, and Honorary Co-chair of Looking for Your Lincoln Hero Essay Contest.

Finalist Judges for Artwork:



- **Stan Lee**, Marvel Comics creator
- **Kay Smith**, Artist Laureate of Illinois



U.S. Lincoln Bicentennial co-chairs launch "Looking for Your Lincoln Hero" Global Essay and Art Contest

SPRINGFIELD – U.S. Lincoln Bicentennial co-chairs U.S. Senator Richard Durbin (D-Illinois) and Congressman Ray LaHood (R-Illinois) today launched the "Looking for Your Lincoln Hero" Global Essay and Art Contest, a joint on-line venture between The My Hero Project and the Looking for Lincoln Heritage Coalition designed to personalize Lincoln's legacy for a worldwide audience.

"The contest is designed to transport Lincoln's legacy to the present and invites writers and artists to consider who it is in their lives that most inspires them like Lincoln. We want contestants to explore Lincoln's most admired strengths of character and principle then identify someone they know today that inspires them in similar ways," said Senator Durbin.

The contest's honorary co-chairs are Senator Durbin and Congressman LaHood, with judges to include: Paul Rusesabagina, the real-life hero of "Hotel Rwanda" who saved more than 1,000 people from the Rwandan genocide; Dr. Daniel Stowell of The Papers of Abraham Lincoln Project at the Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library; Eileen Mackevich, Executive Director of the U.S. Lincoln Bicentennial Commission; LaHood, retiring Congressman representing Lincoln's former seat in Congress, Kathryn Harris, Director of Library Services, Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library, Dr. Marcia Young, Looking for Lincoln Heritage Coalition board member. Finalist judges for the artwork include Marvel Comics creator Stan Lee and Artist Laureate of Illinois Kay Smith.

"We are pleased to co-chair the 'Looking for Your Lincoln Hero' global online essay and art contest. We hope teachers everywhere will study Lincoln this year, encourage their students to find the Lincoln hero in their lives, and tell us about them in their essays and artwork," said Congressman LaHood.

Lincoln scholar and former New York Governor Mario Cuomo extends an invitation to teachers and students in a statement included on the contest website, www.myhero.com. From there, teachers and students can be linked to learning materials supporting the project.

Support for the contest is being offered by the National Abraham Lincoln Bicentennial Commission, Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library and Museum, The Lincoln Institute, and the Illinois Abraham Lincoln Bicentennial Commission. Illinois Art Laureate Kay Smith has also loaned some of her artwork for the website's Lincoln Art Gallery.

Abraham Lincoln exemplified the qualities of a leader with integrity, compassion, perseverance and an unwavering commitment to the moral principle that all people are created equal. He continues to be a role model for people today. The Looking for Your Lincoln Hero contest encourages young people and adults to think about the people in their lives who share some of Lincoln's heroic qualities and write an essay about them. Art entries should feature the artist's contemporary hero, and may include a brief description relating that hero's qualities to those of Lincoln.

The essays and artwork submitted for the contest by March 1, 2009, will be screened by volunteers in Illinois, Connecticut and California. A total of 25 essay finalists will be selected from Elementary School, Middle School, High School, College/Graduate School, and Adult/Professional categories. Three grand prize winners will be invited to Illinois to visit the Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library and Museum and many Lincoln Legacy sites across the Abraham Lincoln National Heritage Area.

The My Hero Project is a not-for-profit, interdisciplinary website (www.myhero.com) that honors the very best of humanity. All across the globe, students of all ages, along with their teachers, parents, and friends, use myhero.com to learn about those who better the world around them, whether that world is as small as a single household or as large as an entire continent. In turn, myhero.com visitors, who generate nearly two million page hits each month, are also able to share their own stories about people who help make a difference.

The Abraham Lincoln National Heritage Area, enacted this year by Congress, is managed by the Looking for Lincoln Heritage Coalition, a nonprofit corporation dedicated to preserving, interpreting and promoting the Lincoln Legacy in Illinois, including the iconic sites of Lincoln's Home, Law Office, Old State Capitol, Lincoln Tomb, historic New Salem, and the world-class Presidential Library and Museum. The Coalition also helps to tell the stories of many other significant sites across 42 counties of central Illinois where Lincoln enjoyed friendships, married and raised a family, mourned the loss of a child, practiced law, held public office, and debated famous political rivals on his unlikely journey to the White House. The National Heritage Area designation allows enhanced and expanded opportunities to educate, preserve, and interpret the heritage and culture across the region as it relates to Lincoln's life. To plan travel and learn first-hand about Lincoln's life journey, visit: www.lookingforlincoln.com.