



ROBERT T. MATSUI PRIZE IN WRITING ON PUBLIC SERVICE

Spring 2009 Competition Announcement

Submission Deadline: Tuesday, May 26th, 2009 by 12:00 Noon

This writing competition, sponsored by the Robert T. Matsui Foundation for Public Service and the UC Washington Center Director's Office affords UCDC program participants the opportunity for formal reflection on their experiences in public service. Students submitting winning entries will be known respectively as the gold, silver, and bronze winners of the Robert T. Matsui Prize in Writing on Public Service and will received the following cash prizes:

- ❖ Gold: \$500.00
- ❖ Silver: \$250.00
- ❖ Bronze: \$250.00

About Representative Matsui and the Matsui Foundation

The Honorable Robert T. Matsui, a graduate of U.C. Berkeley and the U.C. Hastings College of Law, lived a life of unwavering commitment to public service, including during more than a quarter century representing Sacramento in the United States House of Representatives until his passing in 2005. He championed issues including protection of our Nation's civil liberties and provision of social services to those who need them most. Throughout his work, Mr. Matsui supported open debate, meaningful discourse, and bipartisan compromise. He believed in common decency among people who choose to work in the public service.

The Matsui Foundation for Public Service aims to further these ideals by promoting careers in public service for college and law students and recent graduates. The Foundation is honored to partner with UCDC for this competition and through it to help the leaders of tomorrow being trained at UCDC to think critically about public service today.

The Competition

Written entries should be five to ten double-spaced pages of reflection on public service values and the student's internship experience. Submissions will be judged based on: (1) quality of writing or narrative; and (2) insightful comment on or exploration of the spirit of public service that Representative Matsui exemplified through his career and life.

Timeline & Mechanics: Deadline: TUESDAY, May 26th, 2009 by 12:00 Noon, EST.

For the winter quarter, submissions are due via e-mail to Roya Soleimani (roya.soleimani@ucdc.edu) by noon on **Tuesday, March 26th, 2009 by 12:00 Noon**. In fairness to all participants, late entries will not be accepted.

By submitting an entry, each competition participant agrees to grant the Matsui Foundation permission to publish winners' names and their entries on the Foundation website and in print.

Questions? Contact Roya Soleimani, roya.soleimani@ucdc.edu

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ'S)

Who is eligible to apply?

All University of California students in the UCDC program for the Spring 2009 term are eligible to apply. UC Berkeley students who are here for the Spring 2009 semester may either submit essays for the March 5th Winter Quarter deadline or the May 26th spring quarter deadline, but not both.

What content is required in an essay?

The only content requirement for each submission is a discussion of public service values and the author's UCDC internship experience.

Do you have suggestions for starting a successful essay?

Although not required, students might consider writing on one of the following prompts:

- Describe a conversation you had this term with a supervisor, teacher, or classmate that gave you insight into the value of public service and explain what it meant to you?
- What one day at your office this term most inspired you to public service work and why?
- What has your term in Washington taught you about public service?
- What experience this term taught you something about public service that you students on your home UC campus ought to have the opportunity to learn?

Is proofreading important?

YES! Essays are judged partly on writing quality. Some prior submissions with excellent content have lost out on prizes because proofing errors detracted from the overall quality. We urge applicants to proofread carefully, and to seek help editing essays prior to submission.

Can I read prior winning essays?

Prior essays are available on the Matsui Foundation website.

<http://www.rtmfoundation.org/programs.html>

Can I learn more about Representative Robert T. Matsui?

The Matsui Foundation website has a biography of Representative Robert T. Matsui and links to additional information about him. While we urge you to take a few minutes to learn about him in the course of preparing to write, successful essays will reflect on the author's own thoughts and experiences rather than merely reciting biographic information about Representative Matsui.

<http://www.rtmfoundation.org/aboutrtm.html>

Who awards the prize?

The UCDC Director's Office is responsible for selecting prize winners. In past terms, the Director has created a faculty committee to identify finalists.

Will the Prize Committee consider alternative submissions?

In the past, some students have inquired about making alternative submissions such as video essays. The Matsui Competition welcomes such alternative forms of submission, provided they are of the quality of a first-class essay. You may wish to discuss your plans with Roya Soleimani, the competition coordinator, if you have questions about the form of your submission. She can be reached via email: roya.soleimani@ucdc.edu, or by phone: (202) 974-6345.