

From the Director: Tom Ikeda

Spring in Seattle is a wonderful time. The days are longer so that you can actually see sunshine during the daily work commute. Weekend days are warm and dry enough to go bike riding. And the blossoms from hundreds of cherry trees along Lake Washington are spectacular. This natural beauty helps me appreciate why both my grandfathers decided to settle in Seattle over a hundred years ago.

Spring is also Densho's time to plan our summer interview trips. We are planning to visit Honolulu and Minneapolis in June, and Los Angeles, Walnut Grove, and Isleton, California, in July. These areas are part of a geographic expansion of our interview collection. For more information about these trips, read my blog entry at blog.densho.org about how the interviews are funded during these difficult economic times. And during the summer, keep checking back at the blog to see pictures and read about our interviews.

I also hope to see some of you at the Minidoka Symposium and Pilgrimage in Twin Falls, Idaho. For more details on the Minidoka and Tule Lake pilgrimages see the short article below.



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From the Archive

Hatsuji Becomes Harry: Names and Nisei Identity

*"When I got married and had kids, I didn't try to share with them too many Japanese things. And when they were born, I made sure none of them had Japanese first names."
-- May K. Sasaki*

What we call ourselves says much about how we want the world to see us. Aspiring entertainers adopt stage names; militants drop the surnames of their oppressor ancestors; immigrants voluntarily or involuntarily end up newly dubbed in their new country. Usually outsiders don't presume to rename someone else's child. But time and again in the years preceding World War II, Nisei children had "American" names bestowed on them by Caucasian customers, playmates, and teachers who could not -- or would not -- grapple with the strange-sounding names given by their Issei parents.

>> [Read more of this article](#)

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Densho News

Densho 2008 Annual Report

The annual report of Densho's financial and program activity in 2008 arrives in people's mailboxes in the first days of May. This is our opportunity to publicly acknowledge and thank Densho's many individual, corporate, and foundation supporters. Because our collecting is going full force, our reports are barely printed before the numbers for the Digital Archive change. The 2008 report says the free online collection contains 340 video



interviews and 9,500 photos and documents. This week, Production Manager Dana Hoshide informed us that the count stands at 353 interviews and 10,022 photos and documents. That's over 700 hours of video oral histories preserved for the ages. The 2008 annual report is available on our website, but for those who prefer to read a printed version, we will be pleased to mail a copy to eNews subscribers who provide a postal address.

>> [Read the Densho annual report](#)



State Grant Program Cut: Education Funding Lost

Densho has been notified that our education funding is being cut. Faced with a \$9 billion deficit, the state legislature slashed the Washington Civil Liberties Public Education Program (WCLPEP) from the budget as part of severe cuts to K-12 and higher education. For the past half dozen years, WCLPEP grants have underwritten Densho's curriculum development, evaluation, and teacher training. Until replacement funding is secured, Densho will promote use of our existing social studies curricula but will not develop new lessons. We are grateful for donations of any size in support of our education outreach.

>> [Learn about the Washington Civil Liberties Public Education Program](#)

>> [Donate to Densho's education work](#)



Densho Poll: Future of the Nikkei Community

The question of racial, cultural, and generational identity has been a constant at Densho. The makeup of our staff over the years has consisted of Sansei and Yonsei from Seattle's Nikkei community, half-Japanese Sansei and Yonsei from further east, and marriage partners of Japanese Americans from Seattle and beyond. What's more, we are building relationships with Shin-Issei and Japanese leaders. From our various audiences, we hear comments and questions about the future of the Nikkei community. Our Nisei supporters wonder if the high rate of intermarriage means the loss of Japanese American culture. Our Yonsei and Gosei students and volunteers tell us they consider themselves Japanese American while not rejecting a second or even third family heritage. This month's poll asks your opinion of what it will mean to be Nikkei after the World War II generation gives way to an increasingly multicultural Rokusei generation.

Last month's poll on Densho's education work tells us our supporters want Densho to focus on middle-school students. The favored topics for teaching are civil liberties and Japanese and Asian American history. Readers urge us to continue delivering 1) online educational resources, 2) teacher training and classroom talks, and 3) curriculum development. Adult education programs are considered a lower priority. Future eNews editions will report about Densho's curriculum evaluation project (see a blog about the classroom visit portion of that project).

>> [Take the Nikkei identity survey](#)

>> [Read a blog about Densho classroom visits](#)



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New to the Archive

Look inside the Archive: Permission to Enter "Hostile Territory"

A recent addition to the Densho Digital Archive is the life



history of Eugene Tatsu Kimura. His is an unusual story in that he was born in Sheridan, Wyoming, and returned there after being briefly incarcerated at the Puyallup, Washington, "assembly center." He spent most of his early childhood in Seattle, and was enrolled at the University of Washington when war with Japan was declared. His widowed mother applied to the government agencies for their release, which was granted. Kimura recalls how the Nisei at Puyallup thought them foolhardy for going into the "wild woods" of Wyoming on their own. Kimura later attended the University of Nevada and earned a doctorate in pharmacology from the University of Chicago. We thank him for contributing his life story to the Densho collection.

>> See the featured sample from the Densho Digital Archive
>> Register for the free Densho Digital Archive



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National News and Events

National Asian Pacific American Heritage Month

May is Asian Pacific American Heritage Month, when we honor and celebrate the millions of Asian Pacific Americans whose contributions have helped make America a strong, vibrant, and free society. Asian Pacific American Heritage Month is observed with community festivals, government-sponsored activities, and educational activities for students. This year's theme is "Lighting the Past, Present, and Future." Check your local events listings for opportunities to celebrate APA contributions to civic, economic, and cultural life.

>> See Asian Pacific American Month Resources



Japanese American Confinement Sites Grants: Question and Answer Sessions

The National Park Service announces that Japanese American Confinement Sites grant applications are now available for the preservation and interpretation of U.S. confinement sites where Japanese Americans were detained during World War II. For fiscal year 2009, Congress appropriated \$1 million to be used by this program. Eligible applicants may apply for grants that will be awarded through a competitive process. Applications are due June 1. Informational meetings are being held around the country. Meetings scheduled to date are:

Pacific West Region

Seattle, Washington
Date: Tuesday, May 5
Time: 6:00 pm - 8:00 pm
Location: Densho: The Japanese American Legacy Project
1416 S. Jackson St.
Phone: 925-943-1531, ext. 122 (NPS)
206-320-0095 (DENSHO)
Website: www.densho.org

Honolulu, Hawaii

Date: Thursday, May 7
Time: 6:00 pm - 8:00 pm
Location: Japanese Cultural Center of Hawaii
2454 South Bretania Street
Phone: 808-541-2693, ext. 723 (NPS)
Website: <http://jcch.com>

Los Angeles, California

Date: Thursday, May 7
Time: 6:00 pm - 8:00 pm
Location: Japanese American Cultural and Community Center
244 S. San Pedro Street, Suite 505
Phone: 925-943-1531, ext. 122 (NPS)
213-628-2725 (JACCC)



Website: <http://www.jaccc.org/index.htm>

San Francisco, California

Date: Friday, May 8

Time: 6:00 pm - 8:00 pm

Location: Japanese Cultural & Community Center of Northern California

1840 Sutter Street, Suite 201

Phone: 925-943-1531, ext. 122 (NPS)

415-567-5505 (JCCNC)

Website: <http://www.jccnc.org/>

>> Read more about the Japanese American Confinement Sites Grants

>> Get directions to the informational meeting locations:

Exhibit Honors Fred Korematsu's Pursuit of Justice

From May 16 to 31, the Law Library at Seattle University School of Law will feature an extensive exhibit about the incarceration of Americans of Japanese ancestry during World War II, and the legacy of Fred T. Korematsu's pursuit of justice through his Supreme Court case and subsequent *coram nobis* rehearing. The highlight of the exhibit is a collection of Korematsu family photographs and his personal memorabilia, which have never before been on public display. Also shown are photographs and artifacts on loan from Seattle's Wing Luke Asian Museum, as well as photographs from the National Archives. The exhibit is free and open to the public. The Korematsu family materials will be available for viewing only from 9am to 4pm, Monday through Friday. The Seattle University School of Law's new Fred T. Korematsu Center for Law and Equality advocates for social equity of race, ethnicity, gender, sexuality, class, disability, age, and religion.

>> Read about the Fred T. Korematsu Center for Law and Equality



Minidoka and Tule Lake Pilgrimages

The 2009 pilgrimage from Seattle and Portland to the Minidoka, Idaho, incarceration camp will take place June 26-28. A Civil Liberties Symposium precedes the pilgrimage at the College of Southern Idaho. Almost 13,000 Japanese Americans from Washington, Oregon, and Alaska were forcibly removed and detained at the desolate camp near Twin Falls. Gloria Shigeno, co-chair of the pilgrimage planning committee, says, "Our purpose is to honor all those who were incarcerated and suffered disrupted lives due to the rampant racism of the times and to pledge anew that 'never again' will this be tolerated."

Registration for the Minidoka pilgrimage is due June 10.

The 2009 Tule Lake pilgrimage from multiple departure points in California, Oregon, and Washington takes place July 2-5. Tule Lake was the largest and most controversial of the War Relocation Authority camps, converted in 1943 to a high-security segregation center for those deemed "disloyal" after a flawed loyalty registration. The pilgrimage is dedicated to the spirit of dissent. Survivors and their families are invited to share their memories as a valuable part of our history.

Registration for the Tule Lake pilgrimage is due May 15.

>> Register for the Minidoka pilgrimage

>> Register for the Tule Lake pilgrimage



To subscribe, go to www.densho.org/about/enews/subscribe.asp

Densho: The Japanese American Legacy Project - 1416 S. Jackson Street - Seattle, WA 98144

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