



Puka-Puka Parade



JANUARY 2017

NO. 11/2017

“FIGHTING TWO WARS” GALA LUNCHEON by Jayne Hirata

On December 5, 2016, 45 members of the 100th ‘ohana attended the “Fighting Two Wars: Japanese American Veterans Tribute” at the Hawaii Convention Center. Among those attending the luncheon were 100th veterans **TED HAMASU**, **KAZUTO SHIMIZU**, **RIKIO TSUDA** and **DR. COOLIDGE WAKAI**, as well as 100th BOD members Past-President **LLOYD KITAOKA**, President **HARRY NAKAYAMA**, 2nd Vice President **JOHN OKI**, Headquarters/Medics Chapter President **DOROTHY TAMASHIRO**, and Secretary **WARREN YAMAMOTO**. Baker Chapter President **ANN**

KABASAWA was there too, serving as one of the volunteer photographers.

The 100th Battalion, 442nd Infantry Regiment Army Reserve Color Guard opened the program with the presentation of the colors of all of the units and closed the program with the retiring of the colors.

When emcee **LESLIE WILCOX** announced that there were 66 WWII Japanese American veterans from the 100th, 442nd, MIS and 1399th in the crowd as I remembered the days when having only 70 100th veterans at our Anniversary Banquet was considered a very small number. Many of the day’s speakers stated

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In Memoriam

MAX MAKOTO IWAI

(Dog Company)
passed away on
November 18, 2016

HIROMICHI FUJIMURA

(Baker Company)
passed away on
November 21, 2016

*Our deepest sympathy to their
families, friends and fellow
100th veterans*

IN APPRECIATION

Doomo Arigatoo Gozaimasu for the following
generous donations which were received from
November 3, 2016 to December 3, 2016:

EDUCATION CENTER

- \$13 Donation Box
- \$150 **JOY TERAOKA** in memory of **MARY HAMASAKI, JUDGE TAKASHI KITAOKA, RAY AND AKI NOSAKA and ROBERT SATO**
- \$250 **DRAKE BEIL**
- \$500 **CHARLES E. McCLELLAN, JR. and PENELOPE KEITHLEY** of California in honor of **JERRY H. SAKODA's** 100th birthday

Our sincere apologies if any donations were inadvertently omitted or are listed incorrectly. Please let the Office know if your donation was not listed or if there are any corrections that are need to be made. Mahalo!



Volunteers needed to help the Descendants Chapter take down and pack up all of the holiday decorations. Adults who are able and willing to climb up ladders are especially needed. Just come to the Clubhouse on **Saturday, January 7, starting at 9:30 am.**

Please contact **BERT HAMAKADO** at club100dc@gmail.com or via 946-0272 if you have any questions.



100TH VETERANS INVITED TO THE ARMY RESERVE BALL

100th Infantry Battalion WWII veterans and a guest are invited to attend the Annual Pacific Army Reserve Ball - "Relevance Into the Future" - that will be held on **Saturday, February 18, 2017** from 5:00 pm to 11:00 pm at the Hawaii Convention Center. Dinner for you and your guest will be complementary (no charge to you).

Entertainment for the Ball will include performances by the Lt. Dan Band led by well-known actor **GARY SINESE** who some of you may have met at the recent "Fighting Two Wars" luncheon, popular Las Vegas comedian **TERRY FATOR**, and singer **NIA SUMMERS**.

Formal attire is requested. For civilians, this means business suits or evening gowns.

If you would like to attend the Ball, please RSVP with your name and the name of your guest to the address below, indicating you are a 100th WWII veteran. Please write your full name and indicate your dinner choice (Fish, Chicken, Beef or Vegetarian). Please return your completed form by **January 11, 2017** to:

HQ, 9th Mission Support Command
ATTN: G8, Ms. Carol Momohara
1557 Suehiro Road, Fort Shafter Flats
Honolulu, HI 96819-2135

Please also indicate on the RSVP form whether you will need transportation to and from the Ball venue. Transportation will be provided by soldiers of the 100th Battalion, 442d Infantry Regiment.

You may also RSVP with **MS. CAROL MOMOHARA** via telephone at (808)438-1600 or via email at carol.s.momohara.mil@mail.mil. Any questions about the Ball may also be directed to Ms. Momohara. Please do NOT RSVP with the 100th Infantry Battalion Veterans Club.

100th veterans who did not receive an invitation may contact **JAYNE HIRATA** via the Clubhouse Office (946-0272 or club100vets@gmail.com) and one will be sent to you.

“FIGHTING TWO WARS” GALA LUNCHEON

Continued from page 1

that this would probably be the last time that we would be able to collectively honor all of our *Nisei* veterans at one venue. So sad but so true.

The program included short presentations on each unit by speakers who gave very personal, heartfelt speeches. 100th descendant **GOVERNOR DAVID IGE** remarked that his father, 100th veteran **TOKIO “BOBBY” IGE**, never spoke about his wartime experiences to his children, a common occurrence amongst many sons and daughters of WWII *Nisei* veterans. It was only by speaking to friends of his father and doing his own research that Governor Ige learned about the accomplishments of the 100th and what his father did in the War.

MIS veteran **GOVERNOR GEORGE ARIYOSHI** who spoke about his experiences as a young student on the day Pearl Harbor was attacked. Rather than focus on the political or military impact the attack had on our country as one would expect, Governor Ariyoshi told the audience that his mother was frantic with worry, being unable to get in touch with him to see if he was safe. Although he finally arrived home unharmed late in the evening, his mother would not let him out of the house after dark every day thereafter.

Unfortunately, there was no presentation on the 442nd as, due to a last minute emergency, **KEN INOUE**, the son of 442nd veteran the late **SENATOR DANIEL K. INOUE**, was unable to attend the event. As he was also supposed to introduce the keynote speaker, Leslie Wilcox ably stepped in to introduce **ADMIRAL HARRY HARRIS, JR.**

Admiral Harris also gave a very personal speech, reflecting that while his father and uncles inspired him to serve his country, it was his Japanese mother who was born in Kobe who taught him the meaning of service. He said values such as *giri* (obligation) and *gimu* (duty) had served him well not only in life but in his military career.

Admiral Harris also highlighted the accomplishments of individual *Nisei* veterans from various military units, including this on 100th veteran,

the late **MITSUYOSHI “MITS” FUKUDA**:

“Consider Major Mits Fukuda -- the highest ranking *Nisei* infantry officer of World War II. Only three other *Nisei* achieved the rank of Major during the war -- a glass ceiling if there ever was one. He served in the 100th Battalion and was appointed as its commander during the final Po Valley campaign in Italy. He was the first American of Japanese ancestry to command an infantry battalion in the history of the US Army -- a monumental achievement.”

From speaking with many of the 100th attendees, the moment that stood out for them was the closing performance by the student choir from Leilehua High School, particularly the singing of “Danny Boy”. It was a beautifully haunting rendition and tears ran down the faces of many in attendance. It felt as though the spirits of those WWII veterans who were no longer there with us were in the room with their brothers in arms.

This incredible event started out many, many months ago as the dream of MIS descendant **MARK MATSUNAGA** who did an amazing job putting all of the many pieces together from day one until the day of the event. I would like to thank the following 100th descendants and friends who tirelessly worked behind the scenes to make the day a special one for our veterans:

- Ann Kabasawa, Lloyd Kitaoka, and **CLYDE SUGIMOTO** who represented the 100th on the Planning Committee;
- The volunteers who helped assemble 1000 individual favors, especially Ann Kabasawa, **JANIS KATO**, **MARYANN TANABE**, and the Cub Scouts and their parents from 'Iolani School;
- **BERT HAMAKADO**, **GARY HAYAKAWA**, Janis Kato, and **SHELLEY SANTO** for their help with the 100th merchandise;
- Ann Kabasawa, Lloyd Kitaoka, **LOIS NAKAGAWA**, Clyde Sugimoto, Shelly Santo, Maryann Tanabe and the soldiers from the 100th/442d for their help on the day of the event.

If I have neglected to include your name on this long list of thank yous, please contact me and I will include it in the next *PPP*.

DOG CHAPTER NEWS by Joy Teraoka

With much sadness, recently we have lost two more members of Dog Chapter — **MARY HAMASAKI** and **SHIGERU “STU” TSUBOTA**. Our deepest sympathy to both the Hamasaki and Tsubota families.

On October 1st, with commitment and dedication, Mary attended our Dog Chapter meeting at the Clubhouse. She came with President **HARRY NAKAYAMA**. I was the only other member present. At that time it was obvious she wasn't feeling up well. Just a few days later, she was admitted to Kuakini Hospital with pneumonia. For about a month she valiantly battled her illness, but sadly, Mary passed away at the hospital on November 4, Friday.

Mary was always there to help me with 100th IBV matters. When I was editor of the *Puka-Puka Parade* she helped proof the articles, checking names and dates for accuracy and punctuation. Her sharp mind meticulously caught errors and corrected them. She was there for every printing as we rolled out the newsletters, collated and mailed them to our vast membership. For our Dog Chapter parties, she helped contact members by phone or email to inform them of our events.

Mary was such a treasure — a role model in her quiet way — raising a wonderful family, taking attentive care of her disabled husband, making time for volunteer activities at the 100th Clubhouse.

On November 29, 2016, her family held a lovely Celebration of Life for her at the Pagoda Hotel Restaurant. She is inurned and resting in peace at the National Cemetery of the Pacific at Punchbowl with her husband, **TADAYOSHI HAMASAKI**.

Another faithful Doggie we have lost is **SHIGERU TSUBOTA**, better known as “Stu.” He was the last-surviving member of the sixteen original AJA officers of the 100th Infantry Battalion. He not only served with the 100th in Europe, but remained in the Army for 23 years as an intelligence/counter-intelligence officer. Stu was one of the initial 100th members who instigated having the 100th Battalion soldiers contribute a few dollars of their battle-field pay towards a future social hall and meeting place in

Honolulu. This dream culminated in the building of our present Clubhouse.

For many years Stu lived with his first wife, **ROSEMARY KAYAMA** in the Mainland. They raised a family of five children there. Rosemary passed away in 1986. In 1988 he married **MIEKO KABUTAN** of Honolulu who was a widow with five children of her own. Together they and their lively brood of children spent many happy years until Mieke's death in 2006.

In his widowed years, he lived at Kahala Nui's Hiolani Nursing Facility. His devoted and dedicated caregiver, **JOSLYN**, took such good care of him, bringing him to 100th meetings, parties, and taking him out to restaurants and other activities. For her efforts in making his life comfortable, she certainly deserves a star of recognition.

A touching Celebration of Life was held on December 4, 2016, at the 100th Clubhouse. Many members and friends of the Tsubota family spoke lovingly about Stu. May he rest in peace.

Although our 2016 party was much smaller in number compared to previous years, we were able to celebrate another Christmas on December 18, Sunday from 12 noon to 4:30 p.m.

Happy New Year to All of You.



MORE DOG CHAPTER NEWS

From an e-mail dated December 15:

Dear Members of Club 100,

Thank you very much for your support of our family during this time. My mother would have been so grateful to see all the friends who have paid tribute to her.

If you have not checked out the website for updates, please view: www.maryhamasaki.com and scroll own to the Remembrances. Our webmaster found an article written by **BEN TAMASHIRO** (also a 100th member) in 1985 about Mary Hamasaki.

Gratefully, **NAOMI YAP**, Mary's eldest daughter

HEADQUARTERS CHAPTER NEWS by Janice Sakoda, daughter of Gary K. Uchida

From all the feedback we've received, it seems our annual Christmas party was enjoyed by all. It was great to see HQ veteran **ED IKUMA** there. I found out the evening of the Christmas party that he had just been discharged from the hospital that very day! You couldn't tell just by looking at him as he looked great!!! (He had fallen the day before and was kept overnight for observation). In addition to Ed Ikuma, we had 3 other veterans at our party: **KAZUTO SHIMIZU** (C Chapter), **TED HAMASU** (Rural) and **MASAHARU SAITO** (Rural). We were so glad to have these four veterans in our midst. Not only do they represent the 100th veterans but, on a more personal note, they represent our dads who have passed on. We were also glad to have Rural Chapter join us!

The delicious (and abundant!) food was prepared once again by **GARY MIZUSHIMA**, assisted by his sister **KAY**, **ARLENE SATO** and **DOT TAMASHIRO**. MANY, many hours go into the food preparation (shopping, prepping, cooking, and even cleaning up) and we are very fortunate they are willing to do this year after year. *DOMO ARIGATOO*, Gary, Kay, Arlene and Dot!!!

We were also very fortunate to have **SKIP TOMIYAMA** as our MC as well as provide the great music and provide the centerpieces for our tables. Skip does a great job year after year and I appreciate her very much.

This year, **ELLIE SHIMOGAKI** headed the kids craft table and did an excellent job of coming up with crafts for the kids to do. The kids decorated wooden stars, cookies, and Christmas trees (made with sugar cones). Thank you, Ellie, for providing the kids these fun crafts. (On a side note, I saw Arlene Sato's granddaughter taking her freshly-decorated cookie to her parents with a HUGE SMILE on her lips! So precious!)

And I had great helpers shopping for bingo prizes. It was fun seeing the variety of items **JOHN OKI** and **SUSAN MORISHIGE** purchased with their limited

budget. John and Susan, thank you for your willingness to help... it is much appreciated. You did a great job.

And of course, thank you to all who donated to our party... *poke*, chips, and other *pupu* items; bingo prizes, desserts and monetary gifts. I want to give a special "thank you" to **ETHEL TERUYA** for her generous monetary gift and **HIDENOBU HIYANE** for his generous Zippy's Gift Certificate which we used as a special bingo prize. Both Mrs. Teruya and Mr. Hiyane weren't able to attend, so the extra effort to make their donation is very much appreciated.

No Christmas party would be complete without a visit from Santa. Thank you, Santa, for stopping by despite your busy schedule to give our *keikis* their wonderful gifts. To the little ones (and some big ones), you were the highlight of the party.

I know I missed mentioning a bunch of people who helped out this year but in the interest of space, please accept my "thank you" for your help.

I heard **MIDORI HIRANO** wasn't feeling well at our Christmas party. Hope you are doing much better and will be on the mend very soon, Mrs. Hirano.

Please join us for our HQ/Medic meeting on Saturday, January 14, 2017 at 10:00 a.m.

CHARLIE CHAPTER NEWS by Arlene Sato and Warren Yamamoto

There will be no Charlie Chapter meeting in January 2017. Our next meeting will be on Saturday, February 25 at 10:00 am.



MILDRED FENCL, widow of **WARREN FENCL**, an Honorary Member of Charlie Chapter, passed away in Illinois. She and Warren were frequent visitors to Hawaii to visit the 100th vets. They were one of the first large contributors to what is now the 100th Infantry Battalion Legacy Organization's Scholarship Fund. (*Editor's Note:* Mrs. Fencel peacefully passed away on December 6, 2016 at age 92 and was laid to rest alongside her husband in Illinois. The photo is from her memorial page at www.reevesfuneral.com).

MEDAL OF FREEDOM CAMPAIGN FOR COLONEL YOUNG OAK KIM ENDS

(Published in the Rafu Shimpō on December, 16, 2016,
<http://www.rafu.com/2016/12/medal-of-freedom-campaign-for-col-kim-ends/>)

(Editor's Note: *On November 21, 2016, President Barack Obama named 21 recipients of the Presidential Medal of Freedom, the Nation's highest civilian honor, presented to individuals who have made especially meritorious contributions to the security or national interests of the United States, to world peace, or to cultural or other significant public or private endeavors. 100th veteran, the late Colonel Young Oak Kim, had been nominated for the award but was not selected as one of the 21 awardees.*

The following article has been edited for space)

WASHINGTON — **SAM YOON**, executive director of the Council of Korean Americans, issued the following statement on Nov. 17.

“Yesterday, **PRESIDENT BARACK OBAMA** announced this year's recipients of the Presidential Medal of Freedom. While the late **COLONEL YOUNG OAK KIM** was not selected for the award, we want to thank each and every one of you for supporting our effort to nominate him.

If selected, Col. Kim would have been the first Korean American ever to receive our nation's highest civilian award.

Col. Kim was the first Asian American in the history of the United States Army to command a battalion in combat. He proudly led the famed all-Japanese American 100th Infantry Battalion/442nd Regimental Combat Team during World War II and volunteered to serve in the Korean War, where he fought with distinction.

For his military service, Col. Kim earned an unprecedented number of awards: Distinguished Service Cross, two Silver Stars, two Bronze Stars, three Purple Hearts, two Legions of Merit, Italy's



Bronze Medal of Military Valor and Military Valor Cross, France's la Legion D'Honneur, and the Republic of Korea's Moran Order of Military Merit.

Even more impressive than Col. Kim's military awards, however, was his ability to overcome the racial divide.

Indeed, Kim was truly a man ahead of his time. Upon his commission as a second lieutenant in 1943, Kim was assigned to the 100th Battalion/442nd Regimental Combat Team. As the unit's only Korean American, Kim was offered a transfer due to the Army's fear of ethnic conflict exacerbated by Japanese colonial rule over Korea. But Kim refused, declaring, “There is no Japanese or Korean here. We're all Americans and we're fighting for the same cause.”

Today, when the racial divide remains an explosive force in too many corners of the United States, all of us would do well to heed Col. Kim's prescient words. We are stronger when we work together, rather than vilify those who are different. Indeed, America's diversity is our greatest strength, which should be celebrated and respected.

Upon retiring from the Army, Col. Kim selflessly and without fanfare devoted his personal resources toward serving the underprivileged and the marginalized throughout Los Angeles. He was instrumental in building up numerous nonprofit organizations throughout L.A. to help inner-city youth, the elderly, and minority communities.

Among his many accomplishments, Col. Kim spent ten years to build the Go For Broke Monument and National Education Center in remembrance of the thousands of Nisei veterans who fought during World War II at a time of intense discrimination against Japanese Americans ...

For more information on the campaign, visit: <http://councilka.org/colonel-young-oak-kim/>

AN INVITATION TO THE NISEI VETERANS LEGACY ANNUAL FUNDRAISER



Everyone is invited to the Nisei Veterans Legacy Annual Fundraiser - "Preserving the Past, Inspiring the Future, Honoring the Legacy of the *Nisei* Veterans of WWII" on **Thursday, March 2, 2017** starting at 5:30 pm. The Fundraiser will be at the Pomaika'i Ballrooms at Dole Cannery Iwilei (where our Anniversary Banquet was held in 2016).

The cost for the Fundraiser is \$75 a person which includes complementary heavy *pupus* and one drink. *Nisei* veterans are free.

A Silent Auction will be held from 5:30 pm to 6:30 pm. The Formal Program starts at 7:00 pm. Governor **GEORGE ARIYOSHI**, a veteran of the Military Intelligence Service, will be the keynote speaker.

If you would like to attend the Fundraiser, please RSVP by **February 20, 2017** with **JENNIFER OKUBO** by emailing jokubo@nvlchawaii.org or calling (808)497-3288 to receive a Registration Form. Please send a completed Registration Form and a check payable to "Nisei Veterans Legacy Center" to the following address:

Nisei Veterans Legacy Center
P.O. Box 2476
Honolulu, HI 96804

Transportation for veterans, wives and widows can be arranged upon request. Please indicate if you will need transportation when you RSVP.

If you would like to make a donation to the Silent Auction, please do so by February 3, 2017 by contacting Jennifer Okubo or **COURTNEY KAJIKAWA** at (808)525-7051. Any donations would be greatly appreciated.

If you would like to lend a hand and volunteer to help with the event (or with preparations before the event), please contact Jennifer Okubo.

Got questions? Please contact Jennifer Okubo.

For more information on the Nisei Veterans Legacy, please visit their website at www.nvlcawaii.org.

GREEN THUMB CLUB by Janice Sakoda

Happy New Year! Can you believe it's the start of a brand new year? Are you keeping warm enough?

Cool weather should bring about some beautiful cherry blossoms and the Green Thumbers are raring to find out when the blossoms will be at its peak. Once we have an idea of the best time to see it, we will email members to set a time and date to drive out to Wahiawa to take in the Cherry Blossoms and visit the Botanical Garden. Right now we're looking at the last Saturday in January—January 28 but that's subject to change. (Anyone live out in Wahiawa to tell us when the blossoms have started?) Please let me know if you'd like to be added to our email list.

February we are planning a farm tour to the North Shore; details are still being worked out.

March is slated to have us weeding at Kapiolani Community College Cactus Garden.

Hope you will join us on our excursions and meetings!

FROM THE EDITOR'S DESK

HANAKOKOLELE

GLENN TOMA contacted us to report that his father, the late **SHIZUO TOMA**, was in Headquarters Company, not in Baker Company as was previously published in the PPP.

The donations in last month's "In Appreciation" were received by the office from October 2 to November 2, 2016.

MILITARY FUNERAL HONORS

The number one question asked of the Office every year is "How do I get Military Funeral Honors for my dad?". Families of eligible veterans should request funeral honors through their funeral director who will contact the Army to arrange for the funeral honors detail. If the deceased was a WWII veteran of the 100th and you would like the 100th/442d Color Guard to perform the funeral honors, please advise your funeral director to note this on the request form he or she will submit to the Army. If this specific request is not added, the funeral honors will be performed by whichever detail is on duty that day.

The Office does NOT arrange funeral honors.

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BOARD Meeting	To be determined
ABLE Chapter	No meeting
BAKER Chapter	Saturday, January 7 at 1:00 pm
CHARLIE Chapter	No meeting
DOG Chapter	No meeting
HQ/MEDICS Chapter	Saturday, January 14 at 10:00 am
GREEN THUMB CLUB	Saturday, January 28 at 11:00 am
LINE DANCING	Wednesdays, January 4, 11, 18 and 25 at 9:00 am

“UN-DECK” THE HALLS Saturday, January 7 from 9:30 am
RSVP DUE FOR ARMY Wednesday, January 11
RESERVE BALL

Dates and times subject to change. Please contact your Chapter President, Committee Chairperson or the Clubhouse Office for information or updates.



JANUARY 2017

PUKA-PUKA PARADE ADDENDUM



**ADM. HARRY HARRIS, COMMANDER, U.S. PACIFIC COMMAND
AMERICANS OF JAPANESE ANCESTRY (AJA) NISEI VETERAN TRIBUTE,
HONOLULU, HAWAII
DEC. 5, 2016
AS DELIVERED**

(Editor's Note: A video of Admiral Harris' speech is available at the US Pacific Command website at <http://www.pacom.mil/Media/Speeches-Testimony/Article/1020637/commander-us-pacific-command-americans-of-japanese-ancestry-aja-nisei-veteran-t/>)

Thanks, **LESLIE (WILCOX)**, for the generous introduction. Before getting to my formal remarks, I'd also like to recognize **GOVERNOR IGE** and **GOVERNOR ARIYOSHI** -- it's great to share the dais with you both to pay tribute to the *Nisei* veterans. **MAYOR CALDWELL** and state and national government leaders; members of the diplomatic and consular corps; **ADMIRAL FARGO**, **ADMIRAL FALLON**, **GENERAL BRAMLETT**, and my classmate **ADMIRAL DAN HOLLOWAY**; fellow flag and general officers; distinguished guests, and most of all, a special welcome to the *Nisei* veterans and their loved ones who are here with us today. Folks, let's give a round of applause.

Ladies and gentlemen, the *Nisei* warriors literally shaped our military and our nation. They're all heroes in my book. They're heroes in any book. So I'm honored to participate in this tribute to Japanese American World War II veterans.

As I've often said, the most important event in my life is World War II, and I wasn't born until the mid-1950s.

You see, my father and four of his brothers fought in that war -- enlisted men in the Navy and in the Army. Their sea stories and foxhole tales formed some of my earliest memories, and shaped the boy I was and the man I became. Through them, I learned of the tremendous sacrifices of the Greatest Generation. Those who fought for victory helped achieve nothing less than the survival of the free world.

Through them I was inspired to serve.

Everything my father and uncles went through, the *Nisei* warriors went through, and more -- they also had to deal with discrimination, distrust, and outright hostility from the same country they were defending with their lives. From our country -- yours and mine.

So it's no exaggeration to say that I stand on the shoulders of giants. For me to be a Japanese-American 4-star admiral in command of all joint forces across the Indo-Asia-Pacific, well, it's because of these *Nisei* trailblazers. The men of the 100th Battalion, the 442nd Regimental Combat Team, the Military Intelligence Service, or MIS, the 522nd, the 232nd, 1399th, and the 300 *Nisei* women who joined the Women's Army Corps.

At PACOM headquarters, there's a wall of photos and citations that remind us of the sacrifices of some of our nation's bravest individuals -- those who received the Medal of Honor for conspicuous gallantry under fire.

In all, as Governor Ige said, 21 Americans of Japanese ancestry received our nation's highest award for heroism in World War II, including **SENATOR DAN INOUE**.

And consider **BEN KUROKI**'s story. Despite Army Air Corps prohibitions -- first, on *Nisei* serving overseas,

and later on *Nisei* serving in combat in the Pacific -- Mr. Kuroki flew 58 combat missions in Europe, North Africa, and the Pacific as a gunner on B-24 and B-29 aircraft. After the war, he said, 'I had to fight like hell for the right to fight for my own country.'

Consider 1st Lieutenant **SEIYA OHATA**, who still lives on Maui. He was a doctor in the Army Medical Corps and is recognized as the only Japanese American to have served in Operation Overlord, the Allied landings on D-Day in 1944. He cared for the heavy casualties resulting from the largest amphibious assault ever conducted.

In 2015, when asked what he would like future generations of Americans to learn from the experiences of Americans of Japanese ancestry in World War II, he replied, quote, 'That we were true Americans!' What a humble hero.

Consider Major (**MITSUYOSHI**) **MITS FUKUDA** -- the highest ranking *Nisei* infantry officer of World War II. Only three other *Nisei* achieved the rank of Major during the war -- a glass ceiling if there ever was one. He served in the 100th Battalion and was appointed as its commander during the final Po Valley campaign in Italy. He was the first American of Japanese ancestry to command an infantry battalion in the history of the US Army -- a monumental achievement.

Consider **CHITO ISONAGA**. She went to school in Japan for six years but lived on Kauai when the war began. The Women's Army Corps, or WAC, wouldn't take *Nisei* women until late in the war. Chito volunteered as soon as she had the opportunity. She knew Japan would lose the war, and she wanted to use her language skills to help her family and friends in Hiroshima. Her service, both as one of the first WACs into Japan after the war and a 30-year career with the Central Intelligence Agency that followed, is a testament to her personal impact.

And then there's **NORMAN KIKUTA** from Maui who was declared physically unfit for ROTC at the University of Hawaii. The 442nd also rejected him, so he volunteered and was accepted in to the MIS. It turns out that Norman was fit enough to complete parachute training and then deploy to the Philippines with the 11th Airborne. He was fit enough to make the division's combat jump at Tagaytay Ridge. He was fit enough to participate in the liberation of Manila. In fact, he was so fit, he's here with us today. Please raise your hand Norman -- folks, how about a round of applause for this American hero.

I'm certain there are more stories in this audience of American heroes today that deserve our applause -- stories of patriotism and courage in the face of adversity.

And there was a lot of adversity. So let me be candid here. Our country hasn't always dealt minorities and immigrants a fair shake -- even those who are American citizens. That said, the many cultures resident in the American experience share a common underpinning of honor, pride, and perseverance that has added immeasurably to our strength as a nation.

In 1946 **PRESIDENT TRUMAN**, at a ceremony awarding the 442nd its seventh Presidential Unit Citation, said, 'You fought not only the enemy, but you fought prejudice, and you have won. Keep up that fight, and we will continue to win, to make this great Republic stand for just what the Constitution says it stands for: the welfare of all the people all the time.' Unquote.

The *Nisei* warriors - before they were veterans, when they were still young men and women - volunteered to fight for their country, to wear the cloth of our nation, despite our nation's bigotry and prejudice. They were tested at home and in combat on battlefields from Europe to the Pacific.

At home, through their deeds and examples, the *Nisei* veterans continued the fight, this time against the injustice of discrimination. Thanks in part to their efforts, today, our nation and our military embrace diversity -- and we are stronger for it.

These brave Americans paved the way for me to serve. My own background isn't near as interesting as the

stories of *Nisei* veterans, so I'll keep it short. We've all heard Shakespeare's words that brevity is the soul of wit, and I'd rather you remember me as someone witty than as someone who kept you too long after lunch.

I spent much of my childhood growing up on a tiny farm in Crossville, Tennessee. But my roots are here in the Pacific. My mother was Japanese. I was born in Japan, and I've spent almost half my career in the Pacific.

I said earlier my father and my uncles inspired me to serve. But, it was my mother who taught me the true meaning of service.

While my father served aboard the aircraft carrier USS Lexington and other ships throughout the Pacific, my mother experienced the cruelties of war in Japan. She was from Kobe. Maiden name Ohno. She lost her home, her school, some of her family members and friends in air raids. After surviving the destruction that war brought to Imperial Japan -- as well as the post-war depravations of the late '40s in Japan -- she met and then married an American Sailor, my father.

Once settled in America, she adapted with grace and became an American citizen in 1974. Her proudest moments were voting and serving on jury duty!

I learned much from my mother. She taught me to be proud of my heritage and she taught me the twin concepts of *giri* and *gimu* -- obligation and duty.

These concepts have served me well throughout my career. The 21st century is often called the Pacific century, and America is surely a Pacific nation, a Pacific power, and a Pacific leader. Today the world is interconnected and interdependent in ways that were unimaginable at the end of World War II.

And we're also facing complex security challenges and threats. **SECRETARY OF DEFENSE CARTER** has rightly called the Indo-Asia-Pacific the single most consequential region for America's future. He's identified five strategic, and very real, global challenges to US security that drive our defense planning and budgeting for the next decade -- North Korea, China, Russia, violent extremism to include ISIL, and Iran.

And guess what? Four of these challenges are resident in the PACOM area of responsibility today. We can't turn a blind eye to these challenges. And we can't give any nation or insidious non-state actor a pass if they purposefully erode the rules-based security order.

PRESIDENT REAGAN once said, 'We cannot play innocents abroad in a world that is not innocent.' I think that's exactly right. So how do we protect and defend the interests of the United States in the vast and challenging Indo-Asia-Pacific region?

Well, first and foremost, we're prepared to fight tonight. But I think we all agree that it's better to deter aggression proactively than to respond to aggression reactively. Deterrence is a combination of capability, resolve, and signaling -- and a big part of this is building alliances and partnerships. To continue along the prosperous and peaceful path that has served the Indo-Asia-Pacific so well for over seven decades, we must expand partnerships among like-minded nations to uphold the rules-based global operating system that arose after World War II. This helps build what Secretary Carter has called a principled security network.

Today, Japan is a critical part of that network and a staunch defender of the global operating system.

And for those who may not have heard this morning's news, **PRESIDENT OBAMA** will meet with Japanese **PRIME MINISTER ABE** in Honolulu on December 27th. The meeting will be an opportunity for the two leaders to review our joint efforts to strengthen the U.S.-Japan alliance. President Obama will also accompany Prime Minister Abe to the USS Arizona Memorial at Pearl Harbor and showcase the power of reconciliation that has turned former enemies into the closest of allies, united by common security interests and shared values.

This reconciliation is part of the great legacy of the *Nisei* veterans.

Ladies and gentlemen, I've spoken too long. So I'll conclude by saying that the banner of freedom advances in our world only when brave souls take it up. That's what the *Nisei* did. For those of us who stand the watch today, we'll continue to follow in your wake. We won't let you down.

May God bless those veterans, and the brave men and women of our armed forces, each and every one of our Soldiers, Sailors, Airmen, Marines and Coast Guardsmen and DoD civilians - past and present - who have stepped forward to defend our nation. May God bless this incredibly beautiful state of Hawaii. And may God bless this land of liberty we call America. Thank you very much.

ALL PAU

