

APRIL 2021 PPP ADDENDUM



GFBNEC'S SERIES "SHARING STORIES AROUND THE TABLE" EXPLORES GENERATIONAL INFLUENCE OF WWII NISEI VETS

https://www.goforbroke.org/news/press_releases/pr-3-24-21.pdf

Virtual Premiere on March 27, 2021 to Feature Bicultural Story of 442nd RCT's **FERNANDO SOSA MASUDA**

LOS ANGELES (March 24, 2021)—Go For Broke National Education Center (GFBNEC) today announced the premiere online episode of its third new program series, Sharing Stories Around the

Table, on Saturday, March 27 at 12 p.m. PDT on GFBNEC's YouTube and Facebook channels. The series examines the significance and influence of the Japanese American World War II veterans' story from an intergenerational and multi-ethnic perspective.

The first episode, "I Feel with My Heart," centers on the unique life story of Fernando Sosa Masuda, a Japanese-Mexican American WWII veteran who served in the segregated Japanese American 442nd Regimental Combat Team (RCT). Born and raised in the East Los Angeles neighborhood of Boyle Heights, Sosa Masuda grew up unaware of his Japanese heritage and his "Masuda" surname, which his family had dropped to better assimilate with their Spanish speaking peers. He and his six siblings were among the few Los Angeles residents of Japanese descent who were not sent to government incarceration camps during WWII. In January, 1945, Sosa Masuda was assigned to the 442nd RCT in Naples, Italy, guarding captured German soldiers. The episode shares Sosa Masuda's detailed post-war recollection of growing up in East L.A., discovering his dual ethnicity and trying to fit in while his Japanese American unit buddies were trying to figure him out.

In presenting Sosa Masuda's story, GFBNEC features host **MAYA HERNANDEZ**, a Japanese Mexican American who grew up in all corners of the U.S. and in Japan, and who was also a part of the 2018 Northern California Cherry Blossom Festival Queen Program Court. Hernandez is joined by special guest **MIA LOPEZ**, a Japanese-Mexican American from Southern California and a First Princess on the 2019 Nisei Week Court. GFBNEC President and Chief Executive Officer Mitchell Maki will join in the conversation as Hernandez and Lopez delve into the shared experiences of bi-cultural identity within their own Japanese and Mexican American families. Throughout the episode's premiere, Hernandez and Lopez will be live-chatting on the YouTube feed.

GFBNEC is slated to release three more episodes of Sharing Stories Around the Table on **June 26, September 25** and **December 18, 2021**. On its YouTube channel are GFBNEC's two additional new series, Heroes Among Us: Stories of Courage, Patriotism and Sacrifice which premiered on January 25, 2021 with "The Gothic Line," and Living the Nisei Dream which premiered on February 27, 2021 with guest hip-hop artist and educator, **KAZE JONES**, and special appearance by **IRENE TSUKADA SIMONIAN**, owner of Bunka Do.

"I Feel With My Heart" and other episodes of GFBNEC's online series will be available free of charge at GFBNEC's online links: <https://www.youtube.com/goforbrokeeducationcenter/> and <https://www.facebook.com/goforbrokeeducationcenter/>. For more information about GFBNEC's educational programming and resources, visit www.goforbroke.org

2021 JAVA MEMORIAL SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM: CELEBRATING THE LEGACY OF WORLD WAR II NISEI MILITARY SERVICE

<https://java.wildapricot.org/JAVA-Memorial-Scholarship-Program>

The Japanese American Veterans Association is excited to announce its annual Memorial Scholarship Program for 2021. The scholarships will benefit a range of graduating high school seniors, undergraduate students, and post-graduate and professional education students.

The scholarships include The **U.S. SENATOR DANIEL K. INOUE Memorial Scholarship** (\$3,000) honoring the late U.S. Senator Daniel K. Inouye's iconic career of military and civilian public service; the **JAVA Founder's Scholarship** (\$3,000), awarded in memory of **JAVA's founder, COLONEL SUNAO PHIL ISHIO**, U.S. Army, his wife **CONSTANCE** and their son **DOUGLAS ISHIO**; the **KIYOKO TSUBOI TAUBKIN Legacy Scholarship** (\$2,000), a tribute to Ms. Kiyoko Tsuboi Taubkin, a longtime supporter of JAVA; as well as **JAVA Memorial Scholarships** (\$1,500), honoring Nisei veterans, JAVA members and/or their family members. The 2021 JAVA Memorial Scholarships are:

- 1) **DR. AMERICO BUGLIANI Scholarship** in honor of his liberator, **PAUL SAKAMOTO**, 100th Infantry Battalion/442nd RCT veteran.
- 2) **TAK AND CAROLYN FURUMOTO Scholarship** in honor of **SAM KIYOTO FURUMOTO**, Tak's late father, whose tenacity, industry, and positive attitude continue to inspire and shape Tak and his family today.
- 3) **Ranger Grant Hirabayashi Scholarship** in honor of **RANGER GRANT JIRO HIRABAYASHI**, MIS.
- 4) **COLONEL JIMMIE KANAYA Scholarship** in honor of Colonel Jimmie Kanaya, U.S. Army, a three-war veteran – WW II, Korean and Vietnam.
- 5) **Mitsugi Kasai Scholarship** in honor of **CWO 4 MITSUGI MURAKAMI KASAI**, MIS veteran.
- 6) **BEN KUROKI Scholarship** in honor of Sergeant Ben Kuroki, a gunner in the US Army Air Corps, 505th Bombardment Group.
- 7) **Matsui Scholarship** in honor of **VICTOR MATSUI**, MIS veteran, and his wife **TERU**.
- 8) **COLONEL VIRGIL R. MILLER Scholarship** in honor of Colonel Virgil R. Miller, Commander of the 442nd, who led the Nisei soldiers in their rescue of the Texas "Lost Battalion" in the Vosges Mountains of France during WWII.
- 9) **ROBERT NAKAMOTO Scholarship**, in honor of past JAVA President and Korean War veteran, Bob Nakamoto.
- 10) **Betty Shima Scholarship**, in honor of **BETTY FUJITA SHIMA**, lifelong partner of 442nd veteran, **TERRY SHIMA**.
- 11) **Shirey Scholarship**, in honor of **MAJOR ORVILLE SHIREY**, 442nd veteran and wife, **MAUD SHIREY**.

Descendants of those who served in the 100th Infantry Battalion, the 442nd Regimental Combat Team, the Military Intelligence Service, 1399th Engineer Construction Battalion, 522nd Field Artillery Battalion or descendants of Japanese American soldiers who served during World War II in other United States military units to include the Women's Army Corps or Army Nurses Corps.

Current members of JAVA whose membership began prior to April 1, 2019 are eligible to apply. Children of current JAVA members are also eligible to apply if the applicant's parent or guardian was a member of JAVA prior to April 1, 2019.

Past or present members of the Army's 100th Battalion, 442nd Infantry Reserves, ROTC, or U.S. Marine Corps Platoon Leaders Course are encouraged to apply for the Senator Daniel K. Inouye Memorials Scholarship. Applicants should demonstrate their lifelong commitment to public and uniformed service leadership for the nation.

Applicants should first review published rules and forms. Applications and supporting documents must be electronically submitted no later than **11:59 p.m. on Friday, April 30, 2021** to javascholarship222@gmail.com with either “2021 Inouye Memorial Scholarship,” “2021 Founder’s Memorial Scholarship,” “2021 Kiyoko Tsuboi Taubkin Legacy Scholarship,” or “2021 JAVA Memorial Scholarship” and the applicant’s name in the subject line. Applications not received by that date or that fail to meet the submission requirements will NOT be considered. Applicants will be notified of a decision by early June 2020. Awards will be presented at a JAVA scholarship awards ceremony on July 17, 2021.

An overview of the 2021 JAVA Memorial Scholarship Program Overview can be found here: <https://java.wildapricot.org/resources/Documents/2021%20JAVA%20Scholarship%20Application%20Instructions%20Overview.pdf>

Apply for the 2021 US Senator Daniel K. Inouye Memorial Scholarship at this link: <https://form.jotform.com/210508457961156>

Apply for the 2021 JAVA Founder's Scholarship at this link: <https://form.jotform.com/210507882820151>

Apply for the 2021 Kiyoko Tsuboi Taubkin Legacy Scholarship at this link: <https://form.jotform.com/210507937555157>

Apply for the eleven 2021 JAVA Memorial Scholarships at this link: <https://form.jotform.com/210458137069053>

OBITUARY OF MASAYOSHI ‘MAS’ TSUIDA

Published in San Diego Union-Tribune on March 14, 2021.

<https://www.legacy.com/obituaries/sandiegouniontribune/obituary.aspx?n=masayoshi-tsuida&pid=198038827>

MASAYOSHI 'MAS' TSUIDA

October 21, 1919 - January 31, 2021
San Diego

Masayoshi 'Mas' Tsuida, 100/442 RCT veteran of World War II, passed away peacefully on January 31, 2021, at the age of 101 at his home in San Diego.

Mas served in the U.S. Army with distinction while his wife and family were incarcerated at Poston, AZ. A veteran of the all-Japanese American infantry, 100th/442nd RCT, Company C, Mas received numerous military honors including the Bronze Star and the Purple Heart. In 2011, the 100/442 RCT veterans received the Congressional Gold Medal. In 2014, Mas and other WWII veterans were presented with France's Legion of Honor medal.

Life-long resident of San Diego, CA, Mas attended San Diego High School where he was an admitted ruffian. After the war he became a navigator and skipper in San Diego's commercial fishing industry where he had many Italian and Portuguese friends. After retirement, his favorite pastimes included reading Western novels and watching sports on TV. He was a huge Chargers and Padres fan, but, he was most happy when he won jackpots at slot machines at local casinos!

Mas is survived by his wife **GRACE KAMINAKA TSUIDA**, son **GLENN TSUIDA**, daughter-in-law **CAROLYN TSUIDA**, son-in-law **ARNIE MOORIN**, four grandchildren: **ANGELA TSUIDA**, **LISA (BILLY) WOMACK**, **KACIE TSUIDA**, **KALENA TSUIDA** and three great-grandchildren: **CARINA**, **DOMINIC AND JAXSON WOMACK**. Mas was predeceased by his son **MARK (CAROLYN)**, daughter **NADINE MOORIN**. and four siblings: **MASAHARU “FATTY” TSUIDA**, **MASAKO MATSUHARA**, **HIDEKO “BUBBLES” SHIMASAKI** and **KIYO “PARKER” UDA**.

Although Mas lived with wartime shrapnel in his leg, he had a positive attitude and exuded warmth and caring his entire life. He is greatly missed!

KISUKE "RICHARD" KUSAKA'S STORY by RANDALL KUSAKA

KISUKE KUSAKA was born into a family of sugar cane plantation laborers. His father, **KIICHIRO**, and paternal grandfather, **OKISABURO**, worked in the fields around Kalaoa Camp, near Papaikou on the Big Island.

At the age of 6, he enrolled in English and Japanese schools. He was 12 when he started part-time work at the plantation to help feed the growing family. He dropped out of English school after the eighth grade for full-time plantation work. He continued Japanese schooling for two more years before dropping out. He was fluent at reading, writing and speaking Japanese.

Some of his English school teachers could not pronounce his name, so each gave him a *haole* name. One year he was called Paul. Another year he was Richard, after English King Richard the Lionhearted. He liked Richard and used it when he was an adult. He identified himself as Richard K. Kusaka or Kisuke R. Kusaka.

He saw no future as a plantation laborer, so in 1939 he ran away from his Big Island home for what had to be a better life in Honolulu.

He secretly saved his pennies until he had enough to pay for steerage passage on a ship going from Hilo to Honolulu.

After reaching Honolulu, he spent his first two or three nights sleeping on a bench in Aala Park. He worked short stints at Pearl Harbor and a bakery in Palama. His Army discharge paper listed his prior civilian occupation as "plumber."

His civilian life ended when he was drafted into the Army on November 14, 1941. He was at Schofield Barracks when Japanese warplanes attacked Oahu on December 7, 1941. He put on his uniform and rushed to report for duty, but when the *haole* soldiers looked at his face and name, they arrested him and locked him in the stockade, where he was joined by other Japanese American soldiers.

One day, soldiers drove him and other Japanese American soldiers to Waimanalo, where they were ordered to look out for Japanese ships. The military feared the Japanese would return to invade Oahu. They were given rifles but no bullets. He said the soldiers feared the Japanese Americans would shoot them in the back.

If they saw the invading fleet, they were to contact a command post at the Pali lookout. Where's the walkie talkie, one of them asked. The answer was they wouldn't get one. The authorities didn't want them using any radio equipment to contact the enemy. So how were they supposed to warn the command post? The answer: Send a runner.

Imagine, the Japanese invading Oahu and someone having to run from Waimanalo up to the Pali lookout. That's how ridiculous it was for them at that time, he said.

In 1942, he and other Japanese American soldiers formed the 100th Infantry Battalion, the famed "One Puka Puka" whose battlefield courage, heroism and sacrifices earned the nickname "Purple Heart Battalion."

He was injured three times while fighting in Europe. The first time, shrapnel hit the bridge of his nose and knocked him to the ground. When he opened his eyes, he was shocked to find he could not see. For a moment



he feared the shrapnel blinded him, but he quickly realized blood covered his eyes. After wiping away the blood, he was relieved he could see.

The second injury was a minor wound to his left leg on November 30, 1943, near Scapoli, Italy.

The third injury occurred when he stepped on a landmine about a month before Germany surrendered in 1945. After being drafted into the Army before the war started, after going through hell all those years and surviving relatively uninjured, it was the cruelest of fates for him to step on a landmine just a month before the war ended.

He was his squad's point man. Prior to that campaign, his commanding officer told him that he had spent enough time at point and it was time for someone else to take that hazardous position. He refused to give it up, because a new guy wouldn't have the experience he had and could get hurt or killed.

On April 6, his squad was sitting on a rise in the vicinity of Seravezza, Italy, and waiting for orders to move out. He sent a runner to find their lieutenant, but the runner returned after failing to find him.

Looking down the slope, he could see other squads bunching up behind his. It was like a traffic jam, and dangerous for the soldiers who were potential sitting ducks. He decided they had to move. He used his bayonet to probe the ground in front of him to make sure it was clear. He looked back at his squad, raised his hand, barked "Let's go!" and took a step forward.

Boom!

When he opened his eyes, someone was tying a tourniquet around his mangled left leg. He told them to remove his grenades. He was surprised the explosion had not set them off. Someone picked him up and ran him back to the medical area.

Where was the landmine? After all, he had used the bayonet to make sure the ground was safe. He extended his arm, made the probing motion, and said, "It was under my elbow."



He shared other stories of his wartime experiences:

After an exhausting day of fighting, he and other Able Company soldiers started digging fox holes in the frozen ground. He and his friend next to him managed to scrape out shallow holes.

The breaking light of dawn woke him up. He was cold and hungry, his bones felt frozen in place and his muscles ached from a night of constant shivering. He turned to the fox hole next to his and called out to his friend, who was sitting upright, his chin resting on his chest, his eyes closed.

He called his name, but instinctively knew there would be no response. He touched the body and it was frozen stiff. Of the many deaths he witnessed, this one still gave him chills decades later.

He said that wartime soldiers had few personal items they carried in the field from battle to battle. Soldiers carried Zippo lighters, letters from home, Bibles, photographs and other small personal objects, but he possessed something few had: a fountain pen.

After a hard-fought firefight, a wounded friend called his name. He knelt by his buddy's side as a medic patched his wounds. The friend asked to borrow his pen because he wanted to write a letter to his mother back in Honolulu. He promised that after he recovered he would find him and return it.

He was reluctant to part with his pen because it was his cherished connection to his civilian life and he didn't know where or when he would find another. But this was his friend and for his friend's mother, so he took it out of his pocket and placed it in the man's hand. His friend smiled and promised again he would give it back.

But fate intervened. He stepped on a landmine a month before the European War ended. He went to a hospital in Michigan, where he stayed a year, and transferred to another hospital for six months of rehabilitation. He returned to Honolulu and was discharged at Tripler Hospital in 1947.

He remembered the friend who had his pen. The friend had probably recovered from his wounds and might be living at his family home. He didn't blame him for not returning the pen because war made such promises hard to keep. He found the friend's address and decided to visit.

He walked up to the man's house. Behind the fence an elderly woman tended her flowers. He caught her attention and, speaking Japanese, asked if his friend was living there.

The woman looked quizzically at him and questioned why he was asking for her son. He introduced himself and said he was a friend from the Army.

Tears came to the woman's eyes and she beckoned him to enter her home. She said nothing as she led him into the living room toward the family shrine. Her tears made him suspect his friend had not survived. The friend's photograph in front of the shrine confirmed it.

And in front of the photograph, on a small wooden stand, was his fountain pen.

The mother said her son's last letter mentioned how he borrowed a fountain pen from his buddy, Kisuke Kusaka, to write to her. He had promised to return it after his wounds healed. So when she found the pen among his possessions returned to her, she put it in an honored place awaiting the day she could fulfill that promise.

Although it was one of the saddest days of his life, he felt some joy that his pen allowed the man to write a final note to his mother.

While he willingly shared some wartime stories, other stories upset him. For example, when asked how many men he killed, he reacted with an ice-cold glare, but after a moment, he answered he killed seven men. There might have been an eighth, but the soldier fell off a cliff and he could not see the body to confirm the kill.

He was also upset by how movies and television programs portrayed fighting soldiers. He grumbled that he never bit down on a grenade pin to pull it out. He used a plier to remove the pin and then taped the handle in place. 1-2-3...tear off the tape, flick off the handle and throw the grenade.

He shook his head when he saw movie soldiers brace their Browning Automatic Rifle on their hip to shoot as they ran across a town square. He said not only was it difficult to aim that way, the recoil would injure their hip and even break their hip bones.

He was awarded Purple Heart Medals for his second and third injuries. His other decorations included the Good Conduct Medal, World War II Victory Medal, six Battle Stars, Asiatic-Pacific Theater Ribbon, and European-African-Middle Eastern Theater Ribbon.

He died in 2000 and his ashes are interred at the Hawaii State Veterans Cemetery in Kaneohe. He was 80 years old, just a little more than four months short of his 81st birthday.

THE GO FOR BROKE SOLDIERS STAMP DEDICATIONS by **WAYNE OSAKO**

Email received on March 23, 2021

“Always be proud of your heritage.” - **FUSA TAKAHASHI** (93), *Stamp Our Story* Founder/Co Chair, and Go For Broke veteran widow.

The U.S. Postal Service has announced that the official release date of the *Go For Broke Japanese American Soldiers of World War II Forever Stamp* is **Thursday, June 3rd, 2021**. The first city of issue for the stamp will be Los Angeles, California, where Ms. Takahashi and her friends started the stamp campaign in 2005.

The little stamp with a big story cannot come soon enough for its supporters, especially in light of the rise in anti-Asian American violence and hate crimes.

The USPS is currently working with the *Stamp Our Story Campaign* and community partners that rallied for the stamp such as the Japanese American Veterans Association (JAVA), Go For Broke National Education Center (GFBNEC), Japanese American Citizens League (JACL), National Japanese American Memorial Foundation (NJAMF), Nisei Veterans Legacy, and Friends of Minidoka, among many others. The goal is to collaborate and assist the USPS in their national rollout for the stamp.

A USPS national video dedication is being made, and special regional stamp dedications are being developed across the nation to commemorate the inspiring American legacy of the Go For Broke Soldiers. Organizers seek to celebrate the release of the historic stamp, which is the first to feature the image of an Asian American soldier. The stamp is also one of only a few in US postal history to feature a historical Asian American Pacific Islander (AAPI) subject.

Stamp Our Story is the coalition of family and friends of the *Nisei* soldiers that backed the proposal for the Go For Broke Soldiers Stamp, and includes the many organizations that have supported the cause. *Nisei* is the term for American citizens whose parents immigrated from Japan. Due to public petitioning by *Stamp Our Story*, a multitude of lawmakers across the country from both sides of the aisle sent letters of support for the proposal to the Postmaster General, that included 91 congressional lawmakers, three governors, seven state assemblies, and numerous mayors and local officials. The campaign even received the overseas support from French citizens and officials in areas that were liberated from German forces by the Go For Broke Soldiers.

Formerly called the *Nisei World War II Soldiers Stamp Campaign*, the effort was started in 2005 by three California *Nisei* women who each endured incarceration in US detention camps during the war: Fusa Takahashi (93) of Granite Bay, **AIKO O. KING** (93) of Camarillo, and the late **CHIZ OHIRA** of Gardena. Two of the women are widows of U.S. Army Go For Broke veterans of the war. Ms. Takahashi's husband, **KAZUO TAKAHASHI**, was a Military Intelligence Service veteran from San Francisco, California. Ms. Ohira's husband, **TED OHIRA**, was a 100th/442nd Regimental Combat Team veteran from Makaweli, Hawaii. Ms. Takahashi and Ms. King grew up in California's Central Valley farming communities, and they became lifelong friends in the Amache, Colorado camp. Ms. Ohira came from the prominent **MASAO AKIYAMA** Family who owned and operated the well-known "KM Aikyama Company," a general store in the heart of Little Tokyo in Los Angeles. She and her family would be forcibly removed and sent to the Poston, Arizona camp during the war.

“In the past, our founders have each expressed their wish that the stamp bring people and organizations together to remember and to honor what the Go For Broke Soldiers accomplished, and to be reminded of their American legacy that impacts us all today,” said *Stamp Our Story* Co-Chair **WAYNE OSAKO**, who has been helping the campaign founders since 2006. His *Nisei* parents were confined as children in the Heart Mountain and Jerome incarceration camps, and a number of his relatives served in the 100th/442nd RCT, MIS, and WAC. “Organizations such as JAVA, GFBNEC, JACL, NJAMF, and the many veterans family organizations have been friends of the campaign and we are forever grateful. We would like to highlight that campaign co-founder Aiko King was an avid Ventura JACL member, whose chapter strongly supported the campaign. Also, the late Chiz Ohira, our co-founder, was also a founding member of GFBNEC, and her husband, Ted Ohira, was a founding GFBNEC board member,” Osako emphasized.

Some dedications are planned to be virtual, and some in-person, though limited due to the ongoing pandemic. Outreach to communities is currently being conducted to see if there is interest in developing local events. Ceremony planning is already underway in Hawaii, California, Oregon, Idaho, and Texas. Those interested are encouraged to reach out to their local affiliated veterans organizations that may already be in contact with Stamp Our Story. If not, they can get more information at www.StampOurStory.org.

Due to the ongoing pandemic, the USPS will produce a national-level dedication in a virtual form only through a ten-minute video that will officially announce the release of the Go For Broke Soldiers Stamp online. *Stamp Our Story* and coalition partners are working with the USPS on the video tribute, which will feature multiple voices from the community sharing the story behind the stamp to the American public.

The campaign has long sought to honor the legacy of the *Nisei* men and women who served in the U.S. military during the war despite intense racial prejudice and war hysteria directed at them, and at the whole Japanese American community. The civil rights of over 120,000 Americans of Japanese heritage were removed, and they were forcibly confined in incarceration camps across the country.

Despite this injustice, 33,000 Americans of Japanese heritage enlisted anyway to show their American loyalty and help in the US war effort. The 100th/442nd RCT would become the most decorated unit for its size and length of service in US history, including 21 Medals of Honor, and 8 Presidential Unit Citations. Using their linguist skills, the MIS soldiers are acknowledged by historians as being critical to Allied victory in the Pacific Theater, shortening the war by at least two years, and saving countless lives in the process. The MIS were also important during the US Occupation of Japan, helping to rebuild and restructure Japan into a stable democracy which is now one of the strongest allies to the US. Following the end of the war, returning Go For Broke veterans became community leaders and entrepreneurs, and a number of them became prominent lawmakers, such as the late Senators **SPARK MATSUNAGA** and **DANIEL K. INOUE**.

Supporters also point out that the Go For Broke veterans not only helped to rebuild the Japanese American community, but they also contributed to building a stronger and more unified nation at large. “Their American story continues to inform and inspire us today,” said Osako. “Their legacy is a reminder to us all of the longstanding patriotic service from AAPIs that continues today. In addition, the Go For Broke Soldiers had an intense “can do” spirit that propelled them through incredible obstacles both on the battlefield, and at home in the US. This persevering spirit that we learn from their story can help all of us get through the difficulties of today.”

Ms. Takahashi, campaign founder, shared the following statement to supporters: “We thank all of you who have supported the stamp campaign over the past 15 years. It took the support from many, many organizations and individuals to make this stamp become a reality. We invite you to celebrate the stamp with us when it comes out. And remember to always be proud of your heritage. As *Nisei*, it’s what our parents taught us that made these soldiers give their best. Thank you!”

The USPS named the stamp after the “Go For Broke” motto of the U.S. Army’s 100th/442nd Regimental Combat Team (RCT), but which now commonly refers to *all* of the American men and women of Japanese heritage who served in the war. Most served in the 100th/442nd RCT, Military Intelligence Service (MIS), 1399th Engineer Construction Battalion, Women’s Army Corps (WAC), Cadet Nurse Corps, and Army Nurse Corps.

Find more information at www.StampOurStory.org. We also encourage you to visit the websites of our coalition partners, who have extensive resources on the Go For Broke Soldiers.

BIG ISLAND VET TO REPRESENT THE ‘GO FOR BROKE’ SOLDIERS ON A NEW COMMEMORATIVE STAMP by THE HAWAII NEWS NOW STAFF

<https://www.hawaiinewsnow.com/2021/04/03/big-island-native-will-represent-go-broke-soldiers-new-commemorative-stamp/>



HONOLULU, Hawaii (HawaiiNewsNow) - A Big Island veteran will be the face of a new stamp commemorating the “Go for Broke Soldiers,” a group of famed Japanese-American soldiers who fought in World War II.

The stamp honoring the 100th Infantry Battalion/442nd Regimental Combat Team will feature an illustration of **SHIROKU “WHITEY” YAMAMOTO**. (Photograph above of Whitey Yamamoto from the Hawaii Nisei Story website at <http://nisei.hawaii.edu/page/whitey>).

Yamamoto was born in 1923 in Ninole, a community on the windward side of the Big Island.

After his high school was suspended for months following the attack on Pearl Harbor in 1941, Yamamoto volunteered with the Civilian Conservation Corps, which built Saddle Road that connected Kona to Hilo. He later joined the 442nd Regimental Combat Team.

Yamamoto’s image was chosen after **SHARI TAMASHIRO**, a Kapiolani Community College cybrarian, posted a photo of the soldier on her Hawaii Nisei Story website at <http://nisei.hawaii.edu/page/home>.

The photo featured on the stamp was taken in Southern France, where Yamamoto was deployed along with other soldiers in the 442nd.

Yamamoto passed away a few years ago after decades of volunteering at the Army Museum at Fort DeRussy.

The creation of the stamp is part of the the “Stamp Our Story” project, which works to shine a light on the stories of Nisei Soldiers and their “Go for Broke” attitude. This phrase became a rallying cry and basis for teamwork for the Nisei Soldiers, which many attribute their admirable spirit of courage and service to their battlefield victories.

The stamp will be available for purchase from the U.S. Postal Service on June 3.

(PPP Editor's Note: The Hawaii Nisei Story website tells the stories of Americans of Japanese ancestry during World War II in their own words including veterans of the Varsity Victory Volunteers, the 442nd RCT, the Military Intelligence Service, the 1399th Engineer Construction Battalion and the 100th. Veterans from the 100th who are featured on the website include **STANLEY AKITA** (<http://nisei.hawaii.edu/page/stanley>), **JUDGE TAKASHI KITAOKA** (<http://nisei.hawaii.edu/page/takashi>), and **RAY NOSAKA** (<http://nisei.hawaii.edu/page/ray>).

Transcripts of their interviews are available at the website along with photographs, videos and other informational material.

The Hawaii Nisei Story website also profiles perspectives on life on the home front from Japanese American women including those of **YUKI KITAOKA**, the wife of Judge Kitaoka (<http://nisei.hawaii.edu/page/yuki>).

2021 HIGH SCHOOL AND COLLEGE STUDENT ESSAY, PERFORMANCE, AND POETRY CONTEST

GO FOR BROKE NATIONAL EDUCATION CENTER WEBSITE
https://www.goforbroke.org/news/annual_events/studentcontest/index.php

Go For Broke National Education Center (GFBNEC) supports the legacy of Japanese American WWII veterans who served their country at a time when the United States denied their civil rights. Join us in advocating for civil liberties and equality, the cornerstone of our American democracy, by entering our 2021 contest.

In addition to monetary award prizes, first place winners from each category will be acknowledged in our 20th Annual Evening of Aloha Gala on November 6, 2021. All winning entries will be published in an online booklet on our website.

TO ENTER: Submit a 400-500 word **ESSAY**, or a work of **POETRY** (2 typed pages or less) on one of the following topics:

- The Japanese American WWII veteran experience remains relevant to our society today. Explore one of the ways this is true.
- One goal of GFBNEC is to inspire new generations to embody the Japanese American veterans' core values of courage, sacrifice, equality, humility and patriotism. How has the Nisei veterans' story impacted your life, identity and/or values? How do you embody any or each of these values?

DEADLINE: Email entries by **Wednesday, June 30, 2020, 11:59 PST** as a Word doc to studentcontest@goforbroke.org. Include: category you are entering; phone number; school/university currently attending; title of your entry; and 2020-2021 grade/level.

ELIGIBILITY

- Contest is open to all high school (9th through 12th grades) and college (undergraduate and graduate) students.
- 2020 winners are ineligible for entry in the same category, but may submit an entry under a different category.
- Applicants who wish to be considered for the "**LAWSON IICHIRO SAKAI Memorial Scholarship**" must also submit an essay or poetry entry in the GFBNEC Student Contest. Contest applicants are not required to apply for the scholarship.

AVAILABLE RESOURCES

- For more detailed information about the Japanese American WWII veterans, visit our online educational resources at www.goforbroke.org and watch the videos on our YouTube channel (<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UC-UqSdYoWI0O85JAx3u0m1A>).

Hear the first-person perspectives in GFBNEC's Hanashi Oral History Collection of over 1,200 audio-visual interviews that provide valuable insight on the veterans experience. Visit www.goforbroke.org/hanashi, or our affiliated website, the Japanese American Military History Collective at ndajams.omeka.net.

CONTEST PRIZE AWARDS

In total, 12 awards based on category and level will be distributed as follows:

Essay, High School Division

\$1,000: First Prize

\$500: Second Prize

\$250: Third Prize

Poetry, High School Division

\$1,000: First Prize

\$500: Second Prize

\$250: Third Prize

Essay, College Division

\$1,000: First Prize

\$500: Second Prize

\$250: Third Prize

Poetry, College Division

\$1,000: First Prize

\$500: Second Prize

\$250: Third Prize

All first place winners will be acknowledged in our 20th Annual Evening of Aloha Gala on November 6, 2021. All winning entries will be published in an online booklet on our website.

Thank you to the following sponsors for their continued generous support: Pacific Global Investment Management Company in memory of **MANABI HIRASAKI** (WWII veteran) and **SIG KAGAWA, KEN AND JUNE SHIMABUKURO** and anonymous in memory of 100th WWII Veteran **MASAO "MAS" TAKAHASHI**.

Note: All submissions will be reviewed by a panel of judges selected by GFBNEC. Winners will be notified by Friday, July 30, 2021. In order to stay informed on GFBNEC news and updates, all participants will be added to the eTorch online subscriber list.

NEW - LAWSON IICHIRO SAKAI MEMORIAL SCHOLARSHIP

https://www.goforbroke.org/news/annual_events/studentcontest/index.php

Go For Broke National Education Center is pleased to announce the launch of the "LAWSON IICHIRO SAKAI Memorial Scholarship," an annual scholarship established by family and friends of the Nisei WWII veteran to recognize students with outstanding community service. One high school student and one college (undergraduate/graduate) student will be selected based on active participation and support of their community. For 2021, a \$500 scholarship will be given to each student. **Only applicants who participate in the 2021 GFBNEC Student Essay and Poetry Contest are eligible for consideration.**

About Lawson Iichiro Sakai

Born in Los Angeles in 1923, Lawson fully embodied the spirit of courage, patriotism and sacrifice. Following the attack on Pearl Harbor, he tried to enlist in the military service, but was classified as an

“ineligible alien.” When the 442nd Regimental Combat Team, a segregated unit of Japanese Americans, was formed in 1943, Lawson immediately volunteered. During his service he participated in the liberation of Bruyeres, France, and the rescue of the “Lost Battalion” in 1944, receiving a Bronze Star, a Purple Heart, and Combat Infantryman Badge. After the war, Lawson founded the “Friends and Family of Nisei Veterans” group and generously shared his WWII experience as a way of honoring those he fought alongside with. A dedicated member of the GFBNEC family, Lawson’s commitment to community serves as a driving force of this scholarship.

Apply online for the Lawson Ichiro Sakai Memorial Scholarship at the GFBNEC website at this link: https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSdgXi9W9ctKIIJZ_yliGxNB6aZeAD0rTn89wUqvCI0dTuZFLw/viewform

GFBNEC is honored to administer this scholarship on behalf of the generous family and friends of Lawson Sakai.

CITY COUNCIL OKS EXPANSION OF GO FOR BROKE GROUND LEASE

by **KENJI LIU**

<https://www.rafu.com/2021/03/city-council-oks-expansion-of-go-for-broke-ground-lease/>



After decades of work by the community to gain control over the First Street North block, Los Angeles City **COUNCILMEMBER KEVIN DE LEÓN** recently greenlit the expansion of a September 2020 ground lease with Go For Broke National Education Center (GFBNEC) and Little Tokyo Service Center (LTSC). (Photograph above is a preliminary rendering of an affordable housing and education center on First Street North in Little Tokyo, courtesy of LTSC)

The City Council then passed the motion unanimously, paving the way for construction of affordable housing and an education center on the southeast corner of Temple and Aiso, just north of Union Center for the Arts.

First Street North, bounded by Aiso Street on the west, Alameda Street on the east, First Street on the south and Temple Street on the north, is one of the last three remaining pieces of public land that can be controlled by the community and is home to some of Little Tokyo’s most important cultural institutions, legacy businesses, and historic sites.

“For Councilmember de León to have introduced his motion in City Council to expand the lease to provide for 200+ affordable housing units and community-benefitting uses on the ground floor commercial space was

truly bold action that the Little Tokyo community has long awaited,” said **ERICH NAKANO**, executive director of LTSC. “Not six months into his term, he is making good on his commitment to address the homelessness crisis, and to partner with the community to ensure an equitable, dynamic future for Little Tokyo.”

Development of the block had long been in limbo under former **COUNCILMEMBER JOSE HUIZAR**, who was facing federal investigation for bribery and corruption. Huizar did, however, help secure a smaller ground lease for a parcel adjacent to the Go For Broke Monument at Temple and Alameda.

Huizar was arrested in June 2020 for accepting \$1.5 million in bribes from developers for downtown projects in Council District 14, and 34 counts of racketeering indictments. With Council District 14 left without representation, de León started his term early in October 2020, enabling community efforts to move forward.

“I’m really excited and grateful — we’ve been working towards community control for First Street North for so long, and it’s almost hard to believe that the opportunity is finally here,” said **KRISTIN FUKUSHIMA**, managing director of Little Tokyo Community Council (LTCC). “And this window to finally achieve our long-time community vision is only made possible through the support and action of Councilmember de León.”

GFBNEC, whose mission is to educate and inspire character and equality through the virtue and valor of World War II American veterans of Japanese ancestry, has been partnering with LTSC, a community development and social services organization, since 2018 to envision and build a five-story education center and affordable housing, including veterans’ housing.

“Developing the First Street North block has been talked about for many years. Councilmember de León is putting that talk into action,” said **MITCH MAKI**, President and CEO of GFBNEC. “Our organization, Little Tokyo Service Center, and the surrounding Little Tokyo community will be the beneficiaries of this project.”

Truly affordable housing has been in sharp decline and Little Tokyo’s rent-burdened households grew from 49% to 59% between 2010 and 2018 (exceeding the 2018 L.A. County average of 55%), and is very likely to have worsened during the pandemic.

De León has been supportive of Sustainable Little Tokyo’s (SLT) community vision for First Street North since the start of the Council District 14 race, calling it “the guiding document for all things as it relates to the development and the growth of Little Tokyo” at a candidate’s forum in February 2020. With this expansion, it appears de León is committed to being a true partner and taking on community issues at the City Council level.

“Little Tokyo Service Center came to CD14 seeking to develop a larger project on the site and Councilmember De León immediately recognized the benefit, in addition to the fact of LTSC’s long and outstanding record of building sensible affordable housing,” said a spokesperson for the councilmember. “By expanding the lease, we were able to work out more density, thereby providing for more units as part of the mixed-used development.”

In coalition with Japanese American Cultural & Community Center, LTCC, and LTSC, the SLT Community Vision covers three public parcels of land — First Street North, Mangrove, and the Metro Regional Connector station development.

SLT is in the process of updating the community vision, having engaged approximately 150 members of the community through seven virtual workshops. Though this process has been on pause due to the pandemic, it will continue once it is safe to gather in person.

In the meantime, the Little Tokyo/Arts District Metro Regional Connector station site has been moving forward. Though Metro had originally proposed awarding the development to an outside developer, community backlash forced them to initiate a new request for proposals, for which LTSC may re-apply to be the developer.

For the past few years, SLT’s MyFSN campaign has fought to bring greater awareness of the First Street

North block's significance and the potential danger of outside developers being recruited to build on it while ignoring the community's vision.

"We are so appreciative of Councilmember de León's support in bringing part of our community vision to life," said **SCOTT OSHIMA**, SLT program director. "With an expanded lease, we will be able to build more affordable housing, affordable retail space, and community and cultural space to anchor our historic Japantown for future generations."

Approval of the councilmember's motion by consent by the City Council's Information, Technology & General Services Committee followed the public comment period, with over seven Little Tokyo stakeholders speaking in strong support. The motion moved to the full City Council, where it was approved on Tuesday.

"I want to commend LTSC and GFBNEC for their incredible commitment towards this project. They have a long, outstanding record of building sensible, affordable housing when we all know we need it so badly in Los Angeles," said de León on Tuesday. "By expanding this lease we'll be able to work on more density and thereby provide more units. This project ensures that First Street North will be revitalized in this historic part of Downtown L.A."

The councilmember's office said, "the community has a strong record of activism and community-centered advocacy. Continued engagement is the most effective way to keep this project moving forward, particularly as it relates to public hearings."

Oshima agreed, "We will continue to work with the councilmember to secure the rest of the First Street North block, as well as the other public lands, the Regional Connector station site and Mangrove."

Join the Little Tokyo Community Forum on Thursday, April 8, from 6:30 to 8 p.m. SLT will continue community engagement on this project to determine the arts and cultural, community, commercial, and open/green spaces. Join on Zoom through <http://bit.ly/lt-forum>; or call (669) 900-6833, enter meeting ID 862 3366 8906 #, and press # for participant ID.

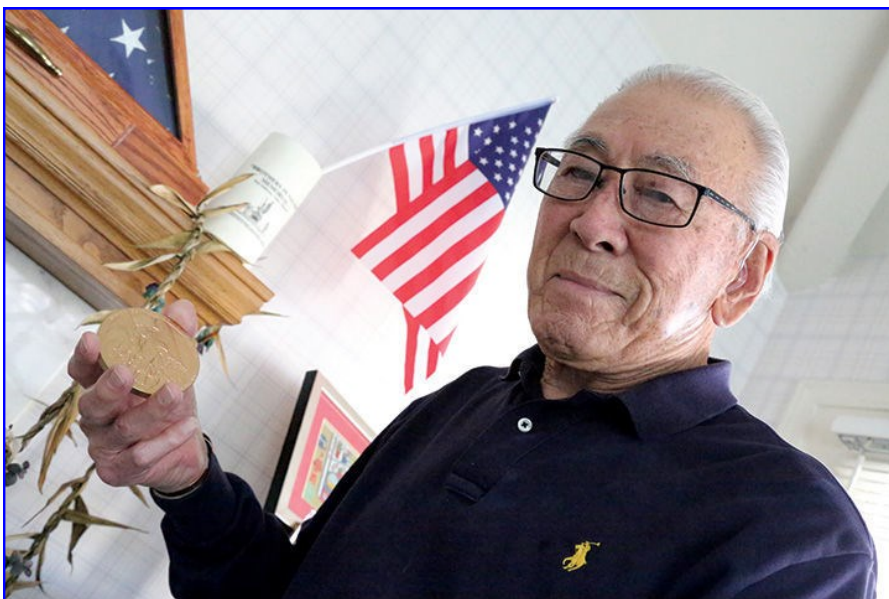
LOCAL MEMORIAL WILL HONOR JAPANESE-AMERICAN VETERANS

by **MICHAEL MOORE**

<https://morganhilltimes.com/local-memorial-will-honor-japanese-american-veterans/>

CITY COUNCIL APPROVED
CIVIC CENTER LOCATION
OUTSIDE MORGAN HILL LIBRARY

Local residents are raising funds for a memorial to be installed outside the Morgan Hill Library for the 442nd Regimental Combat Team, of which local resident **LAWSON SAKAI** — who died in June 2020 — was a member. (2016 file photograph on the right is of Lawson Sakai of Morgan Hill holding his Congressional Gold Medal, given to Nisei veterans of the Army's 100th Infantry Battalion, 442nd Regimental Combat Team in 2010)



The 442nd RCT served in combat during World War II, and was composed entirely of Japanese-American soldiers.

The memorial outside the library, proposed by Morgan Hill resident and business owner **JON HATAKEYAMA**, will be modeled on a postage stamp to be issued later this year in honor of the Japanese-American soldiers of World War II. The postage stamp is entitled "Go for Broke," the motto of the 442nd

RCT, according to Hatakeyama's proposal.

In less than two years in combat, the 442nd became the most highly decorated unit of its size in U.S. military history, according to Hatakeyama. The unit earned more than 18,000 military honors, including 9,486 Purple Hearts, 4,000 Bronze Stars and 21 Congressional Medals of Honor—the highest military award a service member can earn.

“Initially, Americans of Japanese descent were not allowed to enter military service during the initial phases of World War II. However, as the need for soldiers increased, their value as interpreters and their dedication to their country proved invaluable,” reads Hatakeyama's proposal. “The irony for these Japanese-Americans was, as they were giving their lives fighting (for) their country, their government had placed the families of these soldiers into internment camps...without any due legal process.”

Local resident Lawson Sakai, who died in June at the age of 97, fought in World War II with the 442nd RCT. Sakai was born in Los Angeles in 1923 and graduated from Montebello High School in 1941. He tried to enlist in the Army the day after the bombing of Pearl Harbor December 7, 1941. However, he was rejected as an “enemy alien,” he told this newspaper in a 2016 interview.

“They called me an ‘enemy alien’ and said I wasn't an American anymore,” Sakai said in 2016. “It was just that blunt.”

In 2016, at a meeting in Morgan Hill of the Friends and Family of Nisei Veterans, the Consul-General of Japan presented Sakai with the prestigious Japan Foreign Ministry Award. In 2014, Sakai served as the Grand Marshal for the Morgan Hill Independence Day parade.

Hatakeyama said in an email that Sakai was an “acquaintance” and he had known about his service in the renowned 442nd RCT for many years. Hatakeyama's proposal is largely inspired by Sakai and his service.

Hatakeyama had initially wanted the memorial for the 442nd to be placed at a new traffic roundabout to be constructed near West Dunne and Peak avenues, for the future Hale Avenue extension. However, he later determined a suggested installation at the Morgan Hill Civic Center, near the public library entrance, would more safely accommodate gatherings and visitors who might be attracted to the installation. The Morgan Hill City Council unanimously approved the location at the March 17 meeting.

Now, Hatakeyama and the Morgan Hill Community Foundation are aiming to raise about \$3,000 to design and construct the memorial. The installation would include a bronze plaque recognizing the 442nd RCT, a concrete monument and signage thanking the donors.

“This is going to be an amazing tribute to what our Japanese-American neighbors have done for our community, our country and for the world,” **PAMALA MEADOR**, who is leading the fundraising effort for MHCF, told the council March 17.

Hatakeyama owned a family dentistry business near West Dunne and Peak avenues for more than 40 years. He said in an email that a memorial to Japanese-American combat veterans is particularly important at the present time, when incidents of prejudice and racism toward Asian-Americans are on the rise.

“I believe this project will show other communities an intelligent, thoughtful and unique approach to counter racism,” Hatakeyama said. “Surely, this would add a measure of pride for our local citizens, community organizations and to our local and regional elected officials.”

How to donate

Anyone who would like to donate to the memorial for the 442nd RCT to be installed at the Morgan Hill Civic Center, can send donations to Morgan Hill Community Foundation, P. O. Box 1974, Morgan Hill, CA 95038. Checks should be made out to Morgan Hill Community Foundation, and include “442nd Memorial” on the memo line.

