

The background of the poster features a large, waving American flag in the upper half. Below the flag, a dark silhouette of a guard tower with a walkway at the top is visible. Two horizontal strands of barbed wire run across the middle of the image, one above and one below the main title.

# Upholding Democracy and Constitutional Rights for All: No More Concentration Camps

52<sup>ND</sup> ANNUAL MANZANAR PILGRIMAGE

APRIL 24, 2021

**THE MANZANAR COMMITTEE**

WEBSITE: [www.ManzanarCommittee.org](http://www.ManzanarCommittee.org)

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# CONGRATULATIONS TO THE MANZANAR COMMITTEE IN THE SPIRIT OF OUR HISTORY



MY GRANDFATHER IN THE MIDDLE HOLDING THE SIGN WITH HIS RIGHT HAND,  
AT THE SANTA FE INTERNMENT (CONCENTRATION) CAMP



MY MOM, HER MOM, SOME OF HER BROTHERS AND SISTERS,  
AND IN LAWS AT TULE LAKE

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52nd Annual Manzanar Pilgrimage  
April 24, 2021 • Manzanar National Historic Site

PROGRAM

UCLA Kyodo Taiko.....	4
Bonbu Stories .....	4
Harold Payne .....	4
Featured Speaker – Jim Matsuoka .....	5
Student Speaker – Seia Watanabe .....	5
Congratulations to Rob Bonta, Attorney General .....	6
Katari 2021: Telling Stories In a Virtual World .....	7
Manzanar Overview .....	8
From Manzanar to Anti-Asian Violence Today .....	9
The Continuing Fight for Justice for Japanese Latin Americans .....	10
We Are Americans, poem by Perrin Tanimoto .....	11
Name It: Anti-Asian Femicide.....	12
When Will They Ever Learn?.....	13
Japanese Americans and Black Reparations .....	14
2021 Manzanar Updates .....	16
Meet the new Minidoka National Historic Site team! .....	18
Sue Kunitomi Embrey Student Awards Program.....	19
Manzanar At Dusk .....	20
In Memoriam .....	21
Historicizing the Model Minority: Antiracist Racism and the Politics of Disavowal .....	28
2021 Banner Carriers .....	30
Leslie Aguilar Named Inaugural Recipient of the Arnold Maeda Manzanar Pilgrimage Grant.....	34
eBay halts sale of Manzanar drawings, says it will work to stop selling camp artifacts .....	36
Acknowledgments .....	38
Manzanar National Historic Site 2021 Staff .....	38





## UCLA Kyodo Taiko

UCLA Kyodo Taiko is the first collegiate taiko (Japanese drum) group in North America, making their debut at the Opening Ceremony of the University of California, Los Angeles' commemoration of the 50th Anniversary of the Japanese American Incarceration which was held in February 1992.

Comprised entirely of UCLA students and led by 2020-2021 Co-Directors, Michael Tabe and Troy Sisson, UCLA Kyodo Taiko has performed at local K-12 schools, Nisei Week activities, the Tofu Festival and the Lotus Festival in Los Angeles, the Intercollegiate Taiko Invitational, during halftime at UCLA men's basketball games, the 2018 Community Art Days in Bishop, California, sponsored by the Inyo Council for the Arts, and many other campus, community and private events.

Kyodo Taiko has performed at 14 Manzanar Pilgrimages.



## Harold Payne

Harold Payne is a Multi-platinum songwriter and performer, who has written songs for such diverse artists as Rod Stewart, Patti Labelle, Carlos Santana as well as longtime collaborator, Bobby Womack; And literally from Peter Paul & Mary to Snoop Dogg. Having grown up in Gardena, California, Payne heard stories from several neighbors who served in the 442nd battalion or had been incarcerated during WWII. He was inspired to write songs about their experiences.

He currently is creating custom, improv & summary songs for special events as well as "Keynote concerts". He did a Tedx Talk entitled "Preparing for Spontaneity" & created custom songs for Regis Philbin, The National Speakers Association conference & transformational comic Kyle Cease at the Dolby theater.

## Bonbu Stories



Bonbu Stories is an Asian American arts collaborative dedicated to using music as a medium for raw storytelling and building connections. Miharuru Okamura, Sydney Shiroyama, Miko Shudo, Kendall Tani, Emily Yoshihara and Vicky Zhang formed Bonbu Stories under the mentorship of PJ Hirabayashi (TaikoPeace), and Dan and Chris Kubo. Being deeply rooted in their Asian American identities and cultures, they strive to share the beautifully raw, honest, broken, emotional stories that are often untold. Bonbu is a Buddhist term meaning "ordinary/ imperfect/ unenlightened being". This term carries with it a sense of compassion and acceptance for human life and our flaws, mistakes, and, ultimately, potential for growth. Bonbu Stories centers its work and creative process around this definition, believing in the power and value of vulnerability, authenticity, and interconnectedness.



## Introducing Our Featured Speaker

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### Jim Matsuoka

Born in Los Angeles' Little Tokyo, Jim was among the 11,070 Japanese/Japanese Americans who were unjustly incarcerated at Manzanar during World War II. Since then, he has worked as a union representative and as a long-time community activist and mentor.

He was one of the 150 people, and just one of a handful of former incarcerated, who participated in the first organized Manzanar Pilgrimage in the winter of 1969. He spoke passionately of the traumatizing effect of the camps on our community and was an original member of the Manzanar Committee. In addition, he was one of the leaders of the National Coalition for Redress/Reparations (NCRP; now known as Nikkei for Civil Rights and Redress) during the successful movement for redress and reparations in the late 1970s through 1980s. As a tireless, selfless, and honest activist who fought for justice regardless of the risk, Jim Matsuoka received the Manzanar Committee's Sue Kunitomi Embrey Legacy Award in 2018.



## Introducing Our Student Speaker

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### Seia Watanabe

Seia Watanabe is a 3rd-year student at California State University Long Beach (CSULB) where she majors in Communication Studies and Film Production Management. She currently works as a Video Producer and serves as the President of CSULB Nikkei Student Union (NSU). As a Los Angeles native, Seia began her involvement in the Japanese-American community during her time in college, after joining NSU, and has since been involved in various programs such as Nikkei Community Internship (NCI), Katari, and Nisei Week.





## Congratulations to our new AG

# Rob Bonta

*Attorney General, State of California*

Rob Bonta, former member of the California State Assembly representing the 18th District (Oakland, Alameda and San Leandro), was confirmed on April 22 by the California State Senate as California Attorney General, after his appointment to the office by Governor Gavin Newsom to the office that was vacated by Kamala Harris, who was elected as Vice President of the United States in November, 2020.

Bonta's passion for opportunity and equality was instilled in him at a very young age by his parents, who taught him to understand injustice and the importance of joining the struggle to empower vulnerable and disadvantaged communities. His father was involved in the Civil Rights Movement, and stood with Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. in the Deep South—marching for equality and justice in Selma, Alabama. His mother was, and continues to be, a long-time leader in the Filipino social justice movement.

Growing up in a trailer, a stone's throw away from César Chávez's home, Bonta watched closely as his parents worked for the United Farm Workers of America and organized Filipino and Mexican American farm workers, infusing his formative years with first-hand experience of one of the greatest peaceful social, racial, and economic justice movements in history.

Bonta attended Yale University in New Haven, Connecticut, where he graduated cum laude with a B.A. in history in 1993, and played on the Yale Bulldogs men's soccer team. After completing his undergraduate studies, he attended

the University of Oxford for one year, studying politics, philosophy, and economics. In 1995, Bonta enrolled at Yale Law School and graduated with a Juris Doctor in 1998.

Bonta is the first Filipino American to serve as California Attorney General. Throughout his career in public service, he has fought to reverse historic injustices—many affecting communities of color. He has been a leader in the fight to reform our justice system and stand up to the forces of hate. This had a huge impact on his life choices and pursuits,

inspiring his life's commitment to helping people.

Some of the legislation in which Bonta played a key role includes Assembly Bill 32, the historic legislation to end the use of for-profit, private prisons and detention facilities

in California; the TRUTH Act, which stands up for, defends, and protects our immigrant neighbors. Signed into law in 2016, it requires immigrants be informed of their rights before speaking with ICE agents. It also mandates that local law enforcement hold a public forum to discuss their immigration policies, and makes all ICE-related records and data subject to the Public Records Act; and Senate Bill 10 in 2018, to end an unfair, unsafe, predatory, for-profit money bail system and replace it with a system that's safer and fairer. SB 10, which Bonta co-authored with California State Senator Bob Hertzberg, to implement a system based on an individual's risk and not on their wealth.

Congratulations Attorney General Rob Bonta!





# Katari 2021: Telling Stories In a Virtual World

Over the January 16 weekend, the students who will be organizing the Manzanar At Dusk program participated in our Katari Program. Katari, which means “to tell stories” in Japanese, is two days of intensive, experiential, place-based learning about the unjust incarceration of over 120,000 Japanese and Japanese Americans during World War II, held at the Manzanar National Historic Site.

Katari seeks to bridge the generation gap that has made it much more difficult for young Japanese Americans to teach others about this history. Due to the shifting dynamics and demographics within the Japanese American community, including a growing recent immigrant population from Japan, and the younger generations, a large group of Japanese Americans are either two or three generations removed from the experiences of those who were forced to endure America’s concentration camps, or they have no connection to this history at all. As such, an increasing and alarming number of young people lack the knowledge and experience to be able to keep the stories of Japanese American incarcerated alive.

With the pandemic, this year was a little different. We were able to transform the Katari Project to a virtual format. We had 13 students from UCLA, UC San Diego, Cal Poly Pomona, CSU Long Beach, CSU Fullerton, and UC Riverside Nikkei Student Unions all join in through Zoom. Over the two, eight- hour sessions, students were able to

engage with several speakers. The speakers ranged from former incarcerated, members of the Big Pine Paiute Tribe, rangers from the Manzanar National Historic Site, and Manzanar Committee members. On Saturday, students learned about the Paiute and Shoshone history, living conditions, the “Loyalty Questionnaire”, the Manzanar Revolt, and forms of resistance. On Sunday, students learned about the Children’s Village, life for Japanese Americans after incarceration, the path to activism of Sue Kunitomi Embrey and Jim Matsuoka, the history of the Manzanar Pilgrimage, redress, and allyship with other communities. While we believe that place- based learning is essential to the Katari Project, we were able to adapt our project for the virtual world that we live in currently.

Every year, we are blown away by the knowledge and the interest that the students show throughout the weekend, and we can tell that they were able to take away valuable information that they will now be able to share with their student organizations at their respective schools. We encourage everyone to read the students’ reflections and participate in our virtual Manzanar at Dusk after the virtual Manzanar Pilgrimage on April 24. If you would like to read more about the Katari Project, please visit our web site at [www.manzanarcommittee.org](http://www.manzanarcommittee.org).





# Manzanar Overview *by Brian Niiya*

## Overview

Manzanar was one of ten long-term concentration camps established by the federal government to hold the 110,000 West Coast Japanese Americans who had been forcibly removed from their homes in the spring and summer of 1942. Japanese Americans—over 60% of whom were native born American citizens—were evicted and incarcerated without charge or trial strictly on the basis of having Japanese ancestry. Forty years later, a congressionally appointed commission concluded that the root causes of the roundup were “race prejudice, war hysteria and a failure of political leadership.”

Manzanar was the first of the concentration camps to be specifically built to hold Japanese Americans, opening on March 21, 1942 as the “Owens Valley Reception Center” under the management of Wartime Civil Control Administration, a civilian branch of the U.S. Army. After about ten weeks, War Relocation Authority, a civilian agency newly created to administer the concentration camps, took over the renamed “Manzanar Relocation Center.”

A total of over 11,000 individuals were held at Manzanar (with a peak population of just over 10,000). Inmates lived in crudely constructed wooden barracks without running water that were furnished only with cots and an oil burning stove. The camp was surrounded by a barbed wire fence and eight guard towers. Entire families lived a single barracks room. Inmates ate, bathed, and toileted communally in buildings separate from living quarters. Despite the difficult conditions and unjust confinement, inmates did their best to make Manzanar as livable as possible, building furniture out of scrap lumber, planting gardens, and organizing such recreation activities as sports leagues, dances, and movie screenings. It was also the site of significant unrest, most notably what has been called an “uprising” in December 1942 that saw military police firing into a crowd of inmates resulting in two deaths and many injuries.

Eventually, inmates deemed “loyal” by the government were allowed to leave Manzanar, but initially only for destinations away from the West Coast. When eligibility to serve in the army was restored to Japanese Americans, Manzanites were among those who volunteered or who were drafted. Though the war ended in August 1945, Manzanar remained open for three more months. The last inmates left on November 21, 1945.

In December 1969, Los Angeles area activists organized the first public pilgrimage to any of the American-style concentration camps, and about 150 people gathered at

the Manzanar site on December 27, 1969. The Manzanar Committee, organized after that first pilgrimage has put on annual pilgrimages ever since

Manzanar also became the first such site to have a historical landmark plaque in 1973, and in 1992 it became the first site to become a unit of the National Park Service. Since that time, the NPS has managed and interpreted the Manzanar National Historic Site.

## Key Facts About Manzanar

- **Location:** In the Owens Valley, just east of the Sierra Nevada range in east-central California. Built along Highway 395, about five miles south of Independence, ten miles north of Lone Pine, and 225 miles north of Los Angeles.
- **Elevation:** The average elevation of Manzanar is about 3,900 feet
- **Size and layout:** The inmate area of Manzanar was about one mile square and divided into thirty-six residential blocks, each of which consisted of fourteen barracks, a mess hall, a recreation hall, two latrines, a laundry room, and an ironing room. Each block held between 250 and 300 people.
- **Population:** Manzanar’s peak population was 10,046 on September 22, 1942. A total of 11,062 inmates were held at Manzanar at one time or another.
- **Births:** 541
- **Deaths:** 146
- **Arrival of first inmates:** March 21, 1942
- **Departure of final inmates:** November 21, 1945
- **Camp Newspaper:** The Manzanar Free Press, first issued dated April 11, 1942, final issue dated October 19, 1945
- **Percentage of population from towns with population over 25,000:** 83.4, the highest of any WRA camp. About 72% of Manzanar’s original inmate population came from the city of Los Angeles and about 88% from Los Angeles county.
- **Number sent to Tule Lake:** 2,165. Manzanar sent the largest number of inmates of any WRA camp to Tule Lake as part of the segregation process. Jerome sent a slightly higher percentage of its peak population.
- **Volunteers for armed forces:** 42
- **Percentage of citizen males eligible for military service who volunteered:** 5.4, slightly below the figure for all camps of 5.8
- **Draft resisters:** none

# From Manzanar to Anti-Asian Violence Today *by Brian Niiya*

Racialized attacks against Asian American elders. A gunman targeting Asian American victims. Asian American communities living in fear. Recent headlines, yes. But unfortunately, the current spate of anti-Asian violence is just the latest chapter in a story that has recurred ever since the first wave of migration from Asia in the mid-1800s. We've seen this movie before.

There have been several waves of anti-Asian violence starting with the horrifying attacks on Chinese immigrant workers throughout the western United States in the 1870s and 1880s, that resulted from organized anti-Chinese agitation led by labor leaders and politicians. Among the incidents: the massacre of nineteen Chinese immigrants in Los Angeles in 1871 and looting of LA's Chinatown; the Rock Springs Massacre of 1885, where the Chinese quarter in the mining town of Rock Springs, Wyoming was torched, the entire Chinese population of an estimated 600 to 700 driven out of town, and twenty-eight Chinese immigrants killed; and the Snake River Massacre of 1887 that saw thirty-one Chinese miners killed by a white gang in Hell's Canyon, Oregon. And these are just the "highlights."

Another wave took place after the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor in December 1941. Though much has been written on the race based mass removal and incarceration of Japanese Americans on the West Coast that began a few months later, not much has been written about the intervening months that saw seven Japanese Americans killed in cases that might today be considered hate crimes. None of the perpetrators were caught. There were also numerous assaults, rapes, and swindles. And once behind the barbed wire of American concentration camps, seven more Japanese Americans were killed by guards of one kind or another, and there were many other shootings, beatings, and other incidents in and around the camps. Japanese Americans returning to the West Coast after leaving the camps in 1945 were greeted by a myriad of arson, vandalism, and terroristic threat incidents, along with twenty incidents of shots being fired into homes. Miraculously, no one was killed or seriously injured in these terroristic incidents.

There was a wave of anti-Asian American violence in the 80s and 90s in response to the trade war with Japan and continuing anti-Asian stereotyping. The most notorious of the cases was the murder of Vincent Chin in Detroit in 1982. But there were many others: the killing of Jim Loo in 1989 in a

pool fight by assailants who spouted racial epithets and blamed him for the deaths of American soldiers in Vietnam; the killing of 15-year-old Hung Truong in 1990 by skinheads who yelled "white power"; various attacks on South Asian Americans by the "Dotbusters" gang; and perhaps most tragically, the 1989 schoolyard shooting in Stockton that resulted in the deaths of five Southeast Asian American children and the wounding of thirty others. In a familiar ring, a police investigator denied that race was an issue—despite the gunman targeting a school whose student population was 71% Asian American—claiming that the killer was "full of hate" for all.

There were also the racist attacks on Southeast Asian American refugees in Texas in the early 1980s, the targeting of Korean American businesses in the Los Angeles riots/protests of 1992, and the targeting of Sikh Americans after the Sept. 11 terrorist attacks in 2001. The latter set of incidents included the murder of Balbir Singh Sodhi in Mesa, Arizona on September 15 and the mass shooting in a gurdwara in Oak Creek, Wisconsin during a Sikh prayer service that left six dead.

The underlying reasons for these incidents that span over 150 years of Asian American history are distressingly similar: stereotypes of Asian Americans as model minorities/unfair competitions, as perpetual foreigners and not "real" Americans, and as all the same or fungible. These perceptions of Asian Americans make us ready targets when the wind shifts in society due to economic downturns, wars and other disputes with Asian countries, or, in the present case, a worldwide pandemic that cynical politicians blame on China to cover up their own mishandling of the crisis. But the same essential factors that brought us Manzanar nearly eighty years ago are behind the surge in anti-Asian American violence today. Events like the Manzanar Pilgrimage can help in a small way by educating the public about the events of 1942 and beyond, drawing the parallels to today. But we as a society must all do our part in changing the narratives about Asian Americans and making our long history a part of the national story.

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Brian Niiya is the content director for Densho and editor of the Densho Encyclopedia. He edited two print editions of the *Encyclopedia of Japanese American History* (1993 and 2001). A native of Los Angeles, he lives and works in Honolulu, Hawai'i.

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# The Continuing Fight for Justice for Japanese Latin Americans

by Bekki Shibayama

Over the past year, incidents of anti-Asian racism and violence have been constant re-minders of how I felt when I first learned of my father's kidnapping by the U.S. government. As a young child, I was introduced to the harsh reality of racial oppression and felt fearful for my own safety. The words "with liberty and justice for all" that I had recited every morning in grammar school suddenly began to ring hollow, and I wondered how my country could have stripped away my family's basic freedoms and human rights.



The Shibayama family in Lima, Peru. 1939.

During World War II, my father, Art Shibayama, and his parents, three younger sisters and two younger brothers were seized from their home in Lima, Peru. They were robbed of their successful business and livelihood. They were stripped of their passports and legal documents and imprisoned in a Department of Justice internment camp in Crystal City, Texas. In the end, they were left stranded without a country to call their own.

My father, my aunts and my uncles were mere children, ranging from 5 to 13 years old of age, when they were seized and marched onto a US Army transport guarded by soldiers with rifles, machine guns, and whips. Overnight, their promise for a bright and successful future was snatched away because the US government was seeking out hostages to use in exchange for US citizens being held by Japan. But more grievous than the loss of material success was the loss of those

intangibles called honor, dignity, and security. For my father, the most heartbreaking loss of all was that of his beloved grandparents who had helped raise him. They were taken from Peru earlier, were in fact exchanged and deported to war-devastated Japan, and were never seen by the family again.

When the Civil Liberties Act of 1988 was passed, my father and the other 2,260 former Japanese Latin American internees were deemed ineligible for the official presidential apology and reparations since they were not U.S. citizens nor permanent residents at the time of internment. They were excluded for being so-called "illegal aliens," a status forced on them by the actions of the US government.

Unable to secure justice in the U.S. courts nor Congress, my father and two uncles filed a case with the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights (IACHR) of the Organization of American States in 2003. A hearing was granted thirteen years later and in March 2017 my father was finally given the opportunity to testify in a public hearing about his family's wartime experiences.



Art Shibayama testifying at the IACHR hearing. March 2017.

Last year, the IACHR published a groundbreaking ruling stating that the U.S. government owes redress to my father and uncles for the human rights violations perpetrated on them as children during World War II. While we celebrate this long-awaited favorable ruling, it is a bittersweet victory

## Justice for Japanese Latin Americans continued



Japanese Peruvian men being sent to the U.S. April 1942.

since the decision was not made during my father's life-time. Most important, there is still work to be done to convince the US government to comply by paying reparations owed to Japanese Latin Americans, by providing full disclosure and educational funds, and by ending the recurrence of such violations of fundamental human rights.

Please sign our Campaign for Justice: Redress Now for Japanese Latin Americans! petition requesting the U.S. government to comply with the IACHR's ruling: <https://www.change.org/p/president-biden-please-comply-with-international-law-justice-now-for-japanese-latin-americans>

It is my hope that the legacy of my father is honored and realized when government-orchestrated kidnappings, indefinite detentions, family separations, forced deportations, and children in America's detention camps become a thing of the past.

To learn more about the Japanese Latin American internment and continuing fight for redress, please visit the Campaign for Justice website: <https://jlacampaignforjustice.org/>

## We Are Americans

*By Perrin Tanimoto*

They took us  
from our homes  
We are Americans  
They rid us  
of our belongings  
We are Americans  
They called us  
the enemy  
We are Americans  
This happened then  
Our lesson  
learned  
Yet it still happens now  
Maybe not to us  
but to others  
So remember  
forever  
We are all Americans.



Perrin Tanimoto was the First Place winner in the 3rd-5th grade category of the 2020 Sue Kunitomi Embrey Student Awards Program. She is currently 11 years old and in 6th grade at Mark Twain Middle School.

Asked about her poem, Perrin said, "My

inspiration was a trip to visit my Great-Grandmother Mary, otherwise known as GG. Originally, I wanted to interview GG as part of my Manzanar project, asking questions about her experience living in Gila River. The interview was very informative but clearly a much larger project. Some of GG's answers inspired me to write a poem instead. Considering the injustices that we face in today's world; I think the poem speaks to a broader group of people than the interview would."



# Name It: Anti-Asian Femicide

by Margo Okazawa-Rey, Professor Emerita

**Hyun-Jung Grant**, mother of two sons, described as beautiful and strong-willed.

**Soon Chung Park**, close to her relatives, many of whom lived in New York and New Jersey.

**Suncha Kim**, mother of two children and a grandchild, Regina.

**Yong Ae Yue**, mother of two mixed-race Black sons, “loved Korean Karaoke and had a weekly ritual of making a traditional Korean dinner” for her family.

**Xiaojie Tan**, was a business owner. Daoyou Feng, “she was sweet and kind.”

**All murdered in one single afternoon.**

It “was a really bad day for him.” He is a self-admitted sex addict. He is a devout Christian; he did not have a racial motive.

We have heard similar sympathetic expressions and excuses too many times when young white men kill. This murderer’s story is consistent with the common profile of the majority of mass shooters in the US: young, white men, with access to guns, committing violence in the name of real or perceived grievances. And, irrespective of race, all shooters have been MEN.

The murders are among the nearly 4000 reported incidents of Anti-Asian violence since March 2020. And, women have been victimized at twice the rate of men. Last week’s murders are all part of the gendered, anti-Asian violence. But there’s more. All 6 women were immigrants; 4 were working class Korean.

Anti-Asian violence in the US is not new. It started in the 19th century against the first arrivals and has continued unabated, periodically more direct and more violent. It’s deeply rooted in US economic interests and military policies and in the political rhetoric and actions of national leaders,

from Kung Flu and China Virus, to anti-Chinese and anti-North Korean rhetoric dominating US foreign policy conversations right now.

Anti-Asian violence directs us to connect the dots: between US foreign policies and domestic policies; between white supremacist racism and misogyny.

Another dot to connect: the illusory “model minority” with “when it benefits those in power” including as part of their divide-and-conquer practices. “Industrious” Asian-Americans from “lazy” African Americans, and worse, most notably.

The Five Civilized Tribes, the first “model minorities,” were removed from their land like other native peoples during US Indian Removal policy and later Japanese Americans were interned. With the widespread violence, Asian Americans are being forced to confront, once again, the precarity of being a minoritized peoples. Asian-American women also face what the World Health Organization terms femicide, “intentional murder of women because they are women....”

Is the reason for the murders a temporary “bad day”? Psychopathology? Moral distress? Make no mistake: the murder of the 6 women is unequivocally racist and misogynist. Let’s call it what it is: Anti-Asian femicide.

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Margo Okazawa-Rey is an activist and educator working on issues of militarism, armed conflict and violence against women. Margo was a member of the historic Black feminist Combahee River Collective. She is a founding member of the Afro-Asian Relations Council, East Asia-U.S. Women’s Network Against Militarism, and the Institute for Multiracial Justice and the International Network of Women Against Militarism. She has a long standing relationship to social justice work in South Korea and with the Women’s Centre for Legal Aid and Counseling in Palestine.

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# When Will They Ever Learn?

By Anonymous

Due to Covid-19, people are being made to stay home to prevent a major spread of the virus. Being deemed a pandemic, this virus has caused great hysteria and fear among the people, both here and throughout the world. This connects to what was going on during World War II with the feeling of fear and the mass hysteria, both events causing many people to act irrationally.

Today, people feel just a small portion of what the Japanese Americans felt when they were forced into the confined spaces of the prison camps. With the quarantine currently set in place, people are made to stay in their homes with little or no contact with others on the outside. Even though they are in the comfort of their own homes, some feel impatient and frustrated. In just a few days of quarantine, some of my friends are already begging for the quarantine to be lifted so that they might be able to go out.

When I see and hear on social media people's reactions to this relatively light confinement, it makes me stop to think how much worse all the Japanese American families must have felt, forced out of their homes, and put into concentration camps. This is not to lessen or diminish what we are currently going through, because it is, indeed, a challenge. But we should also never forget the years of confinement and imprisonment endured by the Japanese Americans during World War II.

Initially, I did not think that this light confinement to our homes would be a difficult challenge, but it is. The long hours and many days spent within the four walls that make up my home have been difficult. Although I am able for the most part to leave as I please, even with the risk of contracting Covid-19, I feel like a caged animal in my house. The lack of socializing with friends from school hit me the hardest. Missing my friends as much as I do came as a surprise because I had taken even a small conversation with them for granted. We should never take our friends for granted, and we should never take our liberty for granted. Even a trip to the corner store to get snacks after my school wrestling practice is now an activity I cannot do. We should never take freedom for granted.

Japanese Americans during their World War II imprisonment went through and felt this on a much greater scale. Many were forced to sell their businesses, some of which had been owned by families for generations. They were forced to leave behind everything they had ever known due to the fear and hysteria propagated by a biased news media and by political demagogues acting as fear mongers, similar to what we see today. As I miss socializing

with my friends from school, the children and people of my age among the imprisoned Japanese Americans must have missed the friends that they left behind when their lives were turned upside down. Moreover, as I miss leaving my house, the people in those incarceration camps certainly missed being in their own homes. I have the choice to leave my house, but the people in the prison camps did not. They were bound there by U.S. soldiers armed with weapons pointing inward.

Japanese Americans who were in the prison camps were treated unjustly. They were deprived of their basic human rights in violation of the Constitution. The instructions of *Executive Order 9066* completely and exclusively singled out "ALL PERSONS OF JAPANESE ANCESTRY." This is a direct violation of the Fifth and Fourteenth Amendments which guarantee Due Process and Equal Protection under the law. Singling out one group of people is wrong. It contradicts everything that we say we stand for and believe.

People say that we teach history in schools to avoid making the same mistakes made in the past. But from what I see, we still have a lot to learn. What does the Constitution really mean to us today? It seems all too often like the Constitution is only used to benefit one's own cause and is frequently disregarded when it has no benefit to them. *Do we want to believe in the Constitution or not?* Is the Constitution just a decoration? Is the Constitution only for special occasions, or is it for everyday use and for everyone?

When looking back and comparing it to today, has anything really changed? People are still being singled out. In today's socioeconomic state, poverty is on a rapid rise. Less and less people are able to afford basic necessities and health insurance. Without insurance it is almost impossible for people to get the proper care needed. The fatality rate is disturbingly high among ethnic minority groups. *Is it a coincidence that the death is higher among minority and low-income groups?* Immigrants make up the majority of low-income groups, most of which are families that are living paycheck to paycheck. The stimulus checks given out deliberately excluded immigrant families. Is everyone now being treated equally under the law? Have we learned anything from history?

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The Anonymous author is a 12th grade student at Communication and Technology School at Diego Rivera Learning Complex, LAUSD.

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# Japanese Americans and Black Reparations

By Glen Kitayama

"Is Japanese American reparations solely about redress for Japanese Americans? Or is it also about racial justice for all?"<sup>1</sup>

– Eric K. Yamamoto

"I am also going to Manzanar because I would like to bring this experience and this issue to the greater consciousness of the American people."<sup>2</sup>

– Representative Mervyn Dymally

"What I saw during my presidency was the politics of white resistance and resentment, the talk of welfare queens and the talk of the undeserving poor and the backlash against affirmative action. All that made the prospect of actually proposing any kind of coherent, meaningful reparations program struck me as, politically, not only a non-starter but potentially counter-productive."<sup>3</sup>

– President Barack Obama

The case for Black Reparations is very clear. Writer Ta-Nehisi Coates noted in his article *The Case for Reparations* that the history of systemic racism in this country is so intertwined in our institutions that it's impossible to imagine America without it.<sup>4</sup> The end of slavery in 1865 began a brief period of reconstruction, but never fulfilled all of the promises of land ownership to former slaves, equal protection under the law, and the right to vote. Soon afterward, Jim Crow segregation became the law of the land and was upheld by the Supreme Court in the 1896 case of *Plessy v. Ferguson*. During this time, lynchings were a common practice in the Southern states to ensure that Black people knew their place in the social order. According to the Equal Justice Initiative, 4,075 documented lynchings terrorized the African American community between 1877 and 1950.<sup>5</sup> These facts alone demonstrate why we should support the call for reparations. But the story doesn't end there.

In a Zoom interview for the Los Angeles Day of Remembrance in February 2021, scholar and activist Mariko Fujimoto-Rooks noted that we could look at how Black veterans of World War II were discriminated against as a case study in systemic racism<sup>6</sup> just as Ta-Nehisi Coates used housing discrimination to demonstrate how deeply embedded racism is in our society. While other Americans, including our Nisei soldiers, were able to take advantage of the G.I. Bill to pay for college tuition and purchase property, Black Americans were effectively shut out from reaping the same rewards.

Because of this, an entire generation of Black veterans lost out on the opportunity at upward mobility and could not pass on their wealth to future generations. White supremacy and systemic racism didn't end after the Civil War; didn't end after World War II; and didn't end with the Civil Rights

Movement. It just evolved into a new form. The unjust imprisonment and murders of unarmed Black civilians by our militarized police forces serve as a reminder of how intertwined white supremacy is in our society.

As Japanese Americans, we hold a special place in American history because we were able to force the government to apologize and pay reparations for unjustly incarcerating our community during World War II. We didn't win this battle alone. Representatives Mervyn Dymally and Ron Dellums were early supporters of Japanese American Redress as were the rest of the Congressional Black Caucus. They supported the bill despite the understandable push-back from people who felt that Black Reparations should be at the top of the agenda.<sup>7</sup>

So, what was achieved with Japanese American redress? The cash payment and the apology were important, but the healing process was equally important. Activist Kathy Masaoka noted the similarity of the Commission for Wartime Relocation and Internment of Civilians (CWRIC) and the one being proposed for Black Reparations in H.R. 40:

"HR40 is an important first step towards reparations for the Black community. In 1981 when the idea of a commission was first proposed, many of us were against it. We were angry at the suggestion that a commission was needed 'to study whether a wrong had been committed.' But we soon realized its value and came together to mobilize our community."<sup>8</sup>

As the talk about redress and the American concentration camps became part of a community and nationwide dialog, Japanese Americans began to comprehend the trauma that came from being incarcerated during World War II. On a personal note, most everyone in my family was against redress when the idea first came up in the 1970s because they

### Japanese Americans and Black Reparations continued

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thought it was a waste of time and believed that we should continue to move on with our lives. When I was growing up in the 1970s, my mom always emphasized how much her parents loved America and talked about how much fun she had as a kid when she was incarcerated in camp. As the discussion about redress continued, however, both of my parents came to realize how much the incarceration affected our family. As the years passed, she began to share a little more about her experiences. Once we started talking about redress, she shared how the FBI came to the house in Terminal Island in the early hours of December 8, 1941 and dragged her father out of bed to take him to jail. He was one of 1,291 Issei leaders taken into custody without formal charges in the aftermath of Pearl Harbor.<sup>9</sup> My mother was a nine-year-old girl at the time and wouldn't see her father again for another 3 years when the family was reunited at the Granada Concentration Camp in Colorado.

Bryan Stevenson of the Equal Justice Initiative is a strong proponent of America coming to terms with our collective history:

“We have committed ourselves in this country to silence about our history, to ignorance about our history, to denying our history. And that's the first part of this relationship that has to be repaired. We've got to be willing now to talk honestly about who we are and how we got here.”<sup>10</sup>

Stevenson noted that as Americans, we enthusiastically embrace all that is good about our country, but are quick to distance ourselves from the negative parts of our history. Most people willingly admit that slavery was wrong, but reject any responsibility since it happened so long ago. If this argument sounds familiar, it's the same argument that was used against Japanese Americans seeking redress.

As Kathy Masaoka stated in her testimony in favor of HR 40, creating a commission is an important first step in making our country whole again. We may think that we know all that there is to know about slavery and its impact on our country, but in reality, we've never really dealt with the root cause that continues to this day: The white supremacist belief that Black, Indigenous, and People of Color (BIPOC) are less than human.

Until we have an honest discussion about our collective history in the United States and truly understand that we are all interconnected equal partners in America, we will continue to live in darkness. Let's take the first step and support H.R. 40.

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Glen Kitayama is a member of the Manzanar Committee. His Masters of Arts thesis at UCLA provided much of the foundation for NCRR's book, *NCRR: The Grassroots Struggle for Japanese American Redress and Reparations*.

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<sup>1</sup> Eric K. Yamamoto, *Racial Reparations: Japanese American Redress and African American Claims*, Boston College Third World Law Journal (v. 19, n. 1, article 13), December 1, 1998, p. 486

<sup>2</sup> Greg Robinson, *Mervyn Dymally*, [https://encyclopedia.densho.org/Mervyn%20Dymally#cite\\_note-1](https://encyclopedia.densho.org/Mervyn%20Dymally#cite_note-1)

<sup>3</sup> Bailey Aldridge, *Obama says 'white resistance and resentment' stopped him from pushing for reparations*, <https://www.mcclatchydc.com/news/politics-government/article249507695.html>

<sup>4</sup> The New Yorker, *Ta-Nehisi Coates Revisits the Case for Reparations*, June 10, 2019, <https://www.newyorker.com/news/the-new-yorker-interview/ta-nehisi-coates-revisits-the-case-for-reparations>

<sup>5</sup> Equal Justice Initiative. *Lynching in America*. <https://eji.org/reports/lynching-in-america/>

<sup>6</sup> Interview with Mariko Fujimoto-Rooks at Los Angeles Day of Remembrance, February 13, 2021. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=AHozc4QX2qk>

<sup>7</sup> Greg Robinson, *Mervyn Dymally*, [https://encyclopedia.densho.org/Mervyn%20Dymally#cite\\_note-1](https://encyclopedia.densho.org/Mervyn%20Dymally#cite_note-1)

<sup>8</sup> Kathy Masaoka testimony to the House of Representatives Judiciary Committee: *Hearing on H.R. 40: Exploring the Path to Reparative Justice in America*, February 17, 2021. <https://docs.house.gov/meetings/JU/JU10/20210217/111198/HHRG-117-JU10-Wstate-MasaokaK-20210217.pdf>

<sup>9</sup> See Brian Niiya, ed. *Japanese American History: An A-to-Z Reference from 1868 to the Present*. (New York: Facts on File, 1993, p. 53)

<sup>10</sup> Ezra Klein interview with Bryan Stevenson, *Bryan Stevenson on how America can heal: A conversation about truth and reconciliation in the U.S.*, July 20, 2020. <https://www.vox.com/21327742/bryan-stevenson-the-ezra-klein-show-america-slavery-healing-racism-george-floyd-protests>



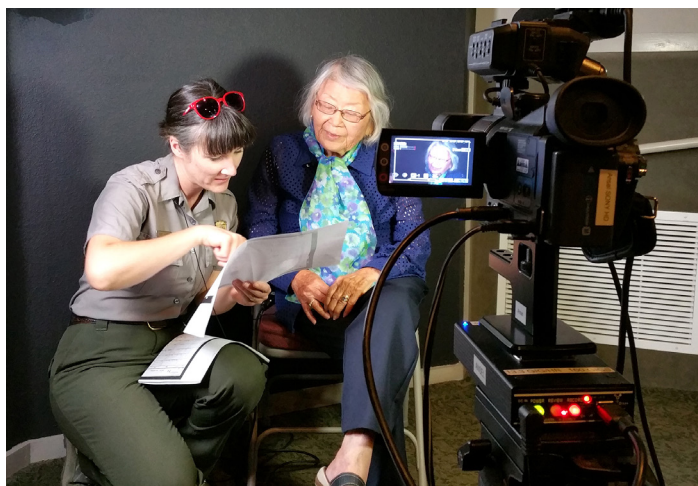
# 2021 Manzanar Updates

Congratulations to Manzanar Committee on your 52nd annual (and 2nd virtual) Pilgrimage!

While the visitor center has been closed for the past year, we continue working on a variety of programs and projects. The tour road and site remain open. More than 60,000 people visited the site.

## Cultural Resources

Manzanar's Community Archeology Program (CAP) received the **2021 Award for Excellence in Public Archaeology Programming from the Society for American Archaeology**. Our CAP is recognized as an "exemplary long-term public engagement program that highlights best practices in archaeology outreach and education." Over the past year, the CR team has **restored the sentry posts and entrance** to their 1940s appearance. Archeological work continues on **Children's Village and hospital** while the arborist cares for the **100+ year-old orchard trees**.



Oral History with Genie Hisae Obana



Three new panels on the Manzanar "Riot"

## Interpretation

The staff has largely worked from home during the pandemic. We processed 125+ **oral histories** and are working on transcripts for 75. Rangers respond to ongoing research and Junior Ranger requests. We completed and installed **three panels on the Manzanar "Riot"** and are working on others. We are doing virtual programs, reaching around the world in some cases. Our team is also working on **two new brochures on Indigenous and other local history** as well as on a **mobile app**. We participated in the **Tadaima!** program last summer and offered a **virtual Katari** program.

## Maintenance

Our Maintenance team has completed **system upgrades and ongoing maintenance**. They repainted much of the visitor center, inside and out. They always assist with many Cultural Resources and Interpretation projects. We appreciate them **working on-site** over the past year, and opening the Barracks 8 and Mess Hall doors each day so visitors can peer in.



# #No More Concentration Camps

## Manzanar Updates continued



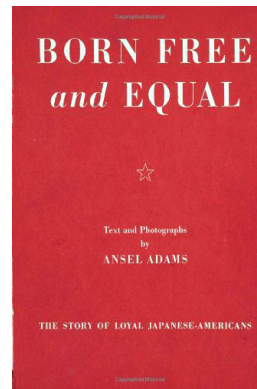
Volunteers uncover Children's Village



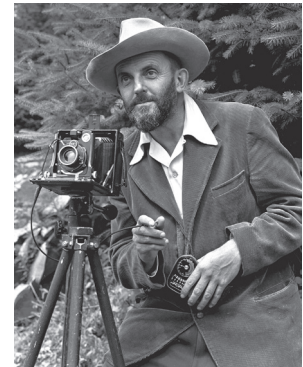
Rock left on the cemetery monument

## Management and Administration

Our Superintendent and Administrative team have kept Manzanar moving ahead over this unprecedented year. They have led a **team to guide pandemic-safe decisions**. Our Superintendent and a ranger worked with **Eastern Sierra Interpretive Association** to republish Ansel Adams' *Born Free and Equal*, coming out this summer.



Original edition





# SHOP OUR WEBSTORE TODAY!

Use your phone camera to scan the code to be directed to the webstore



The Federal Visitor Centers remain closed to slow the spread of COVID-19.

Our online store is open and fully stocked with Manzanar National Historic Site related retail items. Items are available for pick-up (at some locations) and shipping.

Our membership program provides a discount for purchases and further supports ESIA and our agency partners, including Manzanar National Historic Site.

We hope to see you soon and thank you for your support.

Questions? Call (760) 872-1220 or email [admin@esiaonline.org](mailto:admin@esiaonline.org)



## Meet the new Minidoka National Historic Site team!

Minidoka National Historic Site is celebrating its 20th anniversary of becoming a park unit of the National Park Service! This Memorial Day weekend, the Visitor Center will be reopening to the public for the summer season. The new Visitor Center offers interpretive exhibits, a 30-minute park film, and a bookstore.

However, those who have visited Minidoka in the past may notice some personnel changes. **Hanako Wakatsuki** will be serving as the new superintendent at Honouliuli National Historic Site and Annette Rousseau will be the new Chief of Interpretation at Martin Van Buren National Historic Site. We wish them both the best!

Acting Chief of Interpretation and Education **Kurt Ikeda** will be taking the helm alongside Park Ranger Emily Teraoka and Maintenance Worker Sam Bowlin. Although they have big shoes to fill, they are looking forward to continuing the great work of their predecessors.

Raised in the South Bay of Los Angeles, Kurt is a 2nd generation Japanese American. Through his work at Minidoka, he strives to carry on the memory of his grandfather.

His grandfather's last wishes were to pilgrimage to Crystal City, Texas. In 2016, Kurt followed those wishes and journeyed to the site of his family's incarceration. While walking the grounds of a school that now occupied the former camp, he realized the importance of preserving and protecting these places.

In 2018, Kurt left his career as a high school teacher and AAPI nonprofit director to serve as an intern at Minidoka. After working at the Japanese American Museum of Oregon in 2019, he returned to Idaho. Inspired by the work of community leaders like Kanji Sahara, Stephanie Nitahara, and Hanako Wakatsuki, he strives to help visitors make personal connections to their public lands.

**Emily Teraoka** began working at Minidoka as an intern in May 2019, then as a park ranger in 2020. Originally

from Fresno, California, Emily is of Japanese and Mexican ancestry. Her grandparents, along with their parents and siblings, were incarcerated at Jerome, Rohwer, and Gila River. Working with the Japanese American Confinement Sites has helped Emily reconnect with her family's history, since her relatives (like many camp survivors) had felt uncomfortable sharing their WWII experiences. She feels fortunate that her position at Minidoka allows her to take an active role in her family's legacy and to address the systemic issues that led to their hardships.

Emily holds a master's degree in Creative Writing, which helps her carefully interpret the WWII incarceration of Nikkei and other relevant topics. But based on her personal experiences as a women's college graduate and member of the LGBTQ community, she is also an advocate of inclusivity. As a public servant, she strives to help make the national parks accessible for underprivileged communities and hopes visitors of all backgrounds feel welcome.

Alongside the park, there are several more exciting developments. The Friends of Minidoka are completing a one-hour Minidoka documentary produced for public television broadcast, and an accompanying educational curriculum consisting of four sets of short films and study guides. This project is funded by a JACS grant as a collaboration with Portland-based North Shore Productions. Work on the project wraps this fall with distribution starting in 2022. Friends of Minidoka is also fundraising for the Robert C. Sims Community Education Fund, which awards scholarships for bus transportation for field trips to Minidoka. More information at [www.minidoka.org](http://www.minidoka.org).

The Minidoka National Historic Site Visitor Center, in southern Idaho, will be open on Fridays, Saturdays, and Sundays throughout the summer. The 1.6-mile trail is open to visitors from sunrise to sunset. Covid-19 restrictions are currently in place. Check out our website for updates. <https://www.nps.gov/miin/>

## Sue Kunitomi Embrey Student Awards Program

For five years the Manzanar Committee has sponsored an awards program that encourages young people to reflect on civil rights issues and consider how they can support and actively participate in social justice issues that impact their communities. The program was renamed the Sue Kunitomi Embrey Student Awards Program.

As a founding member of the Manzanar Committee, Sue Kunitomi Embrey was an educator, community activist, labor union organizer, writer, and member of the Day of Remembrance Los Angeles Planning Committee. She was a role model for many Sansei and Yonsei as she fought tirelessly to establish Manzanar as a National Historic Site and become part of the National Parks Service. She was instrumental in organizing the annual pilgrimages to Manzanar (now in its 52nd year) to ensure that this dark chapter of American history is never forgotten. Sue's life demonstrates how a principled person of vision can impact the world, and she is a fitting inspiration for the young students who participate in the program.

The Sue Kunitomi Embrey Student Awards Program is an annual creative works program in which K-12 students may submit essays, short stories, poetry, works of art, including drawings, collages, posters, and works involving technology, including animation, podcasts, movies, or videos. Winning entries are eligible for various prizes, and their works may be presented at the annual Manzanar Pilgrimage and on the Manzanar Committee web site.



“The Sue Kunitomi Embrey Student Awards Program provides students an opportunity to demonstrate their understanding of the guiding principles of social justice of the past and how they relate to our society today,” said Manzanar Committee Co-Chair, Jenny Chomori, a retired Los Angeles Unified School District teacher. “Our Student Awards Program is a vehicle for students to demonstrate their understanding of human and civil rights and to show how they can help to educate others on the current issues facing our communities.”

The information and application for the sixth Sue Kunitomi Embrey Student Awards Program is available at: <https://manzanarcommittee.org/program-details-application/>



# Manzanar At Dusk

Connecting the injustices of the past with similar injustices of the present will be the focus of the 2021 **Manzanar At Dusk** program, part of the annual **Manzanar Pilgrimage** which is being held virtually this year. The Manzanar At Dusk program follows the 52nd Annual Manzanar Pilgrimage that same day, on Saturday, April 24, 2021.

Now in its 23rd year, Manzanar At Dusk is co-sponsored by the Manzanar Committee and the Nikkei Student Unions (NSU) at California Polytechnic University, Pomona (CPP); California State University, Fullerton (CSUF); California State University, Long Beach (CSULB); the University of California, Los Angeles (UCLA); the University of California, Riverside (UCR); and the University of California, San Diego (UCSD).

“Manzanar At Dusk is a collaborative effort between the Manzanar Committee and Japanese American college students to continue educating others about the significance of the Japanese American Incarceration experience,” said **Wendi Yamashita**, Ph.D., Assistant Professor, Center for the Study of Culture, Race, and Ethnicity, Ithaca College, who serves as Co-Coordinator, Manzanar At Dusk. “These students attend a two-day, intensive training and work on this program throughout the school year, despite their busy schedules as college students and organizers. It means a lot to me to be a part of this team and to see our students learn and grow.”

“I have always loved Manzanar At Dusk because it allows for meaningful conversations and connections to emerge as we all process together how Japanese American Incarceration has impacted the lives of all Americans, not just Japanese Americans,” added Yamashita. “All of our communities are more connected in our struggles than we realize. Understanding that is so powerful.”

Through a panel and small group discussions, participants will have the opportunity to interact with each other to share personal stories. Participants will also be able to share their own experiences and discuss the relevance of the Japanese American Incarceration experience to present-day issues.

“CSUF NSU decided to help organize Manzanar At Dusk because we know that learning about Japanese American Incarceration can help our members realize how our history can be related to the many problems that other POC communities face today,” said **Megan Matsumoto**, President, CSUF NSU. “Manzanar At Dusk is important for people

of all ages to participate in because it really shows that the history of Japanese American Incarceration isn't just history; it's happening now. Families are still being held in camps, and people are being separated from their families.”

“We believe that it is important for UCLA's Nikkei Student Union to be a part of Manzanar At Dusk and the Manzanar At Dusk Organizing Committee, as it is so important to continue to remember the history of Japanese American World War II Incarceration, and to connect the past to the current moment,” UCLA's Nikkei Student Union wrote, in a statement. “It allows us to reconnect with the legacy of the Japanese American draft resisters and other organizers in the Japanese American and Asian American communities, and it gives us the blueprint to continue their work of solidarity and community organizing.”

“This year, the *Katari* program gave us a chance to reflect on our identities and experiences as Japanese Americans, and as people of color, in general,” the NSU at UCLA statement continued. “We hope that this year's Manzanar At Dusk program will allow those who attend to do the same and remember their histories so that we can all develop more connections and take action to be a part of the movements that are happening today.”

Both the daytime Pilgrimage program and the Manzanar At Dusk event are free and open to the public. Prior registration was required for the Virtual Manzanar At Dusk program.

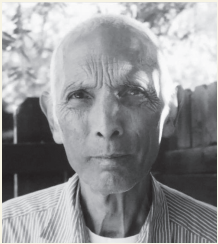


Picture from previous Manzanar At Dusk – small discussion groups

## In Memoriam

### THOMAS CULBERT YONEDA

January 10, 1939 – January 28, 2021



In Japanese, the word “poet” is made up of the characters 詩 and 人, which literally translate to “poem person.” Tom Yoneda was a poem person. He contained a multitude of verses. They twist and weave their way from his birth in 1939 to his imprisonment at the age of three in the Japanese-

American concentration camp Manzanar.

His parents were Karl and Elaine Yoneda who were civil rights activists, union organizers and long-time members of the Manzanar Committee. From his parents, Tom learned that there is no simile for justice like action. His parents were his idols and he spent much of his life living up to their legacy. He volunteered to rebuild churches bombed by White Supremacists in Mississippi during the Civil Rights Movement and acted as a medic in anti-war protests in San Francisco. In the late 1960s he taught Aikido at the Mission Rebels in the Mission District. A passion for world peace and philanthropy were defining characteristics of Tom’s life.

### GIICHI MATSUMURA

December 20, 1898 – September 7, 1945



On July 29, 1945, two-and-a-half months before his family would be released from Manzanar War Relocation Center, 46-year-old Giichi Matsumura joined a group of fishermen setting out for the high mountain lakes of the nearby Sierra Nevada. Several days later, Mr. Matsumura separated from

the group of fishermen so he could paint and sketch. A storm suddenly moved into the area and after it subsided, the fishing group was unable to locate Mr. Matsumura. They hiked back down to the camp, hoping that he had already descended. Unfortunately, he had not returned to Manzanar. Although his body was found a few months later, due to the high elevation, they were unable to bring him down the mountain.

Seventy-four years later in 2019, his remains were uncovered by hikers. In December 2020, Giichi Matsumura was able to

reunite with his family including his wife and daughter in his final resting place in Santa Monica.

### MISAO (OKA) CHOMORI

February 6, 1925 – May 23, 2020



When her father was quickly picked up by the FBI and sent to the Tuna Canyon Detention Station, and then onto Santa Fe, New Mexico DOJ camp, Misao had to take charge of the family as her mother only spoke a little bit of English. The rest of the family was sent from Santa Anita to Jerome,

Arkansas, and then to Gila River, Arizona. The effects of the Camp experience left a lasting mark on her as she shared stories of the hardships she endured with her family.

“Many of us got to know her and grew quite fond of her over the last few years. She was a real trooper, always thinking of others, patiently listening to the deliberations at our Manzanar Committee meetings, the DOR coalition, ABCUSD DOR presentations or the many other endeavors Jenny took on,” said Manzanar Committee Co-Chair, Bruce Embrey. Misao traveled and participated in all the Manzanar Committee events and activities. She is missed.

### GRACE MARUKI WERTZ

July 6, 1921 – December 9, 2020



Incarcerated as a young adult with her family in the Manzanar, Grace and her family suffered all of the hardships of those years in camp. Her older sister Ruby died in childbirth, along with the twin girls she was delivering, in the Manzanar Hospital in August 1942.

She graciously donated her Manzanar photos to the Manzanar National Historic Site, which are available online through Densho’s Digital Repository as the “Grace Maruki Wertz Collection.” Grace helped to organize annual Manzanar Reunions and was a dedicated friend and supporter of the National Park Service staff at Manzanar National Historic Site.



## In Memoriam

### Arnold Maeda, 94; Leader of Venice JA Memorial Effort

The Venice Japanese American Memorial Monument Committee mourns the loss of charter member Arnold Maeda, who passed away on Sept. 10.

“One day shy of ten years ago, Arnold gave an informed and impassioned presentation at the first VJAMM community meeting, held at the Venice Hongwanji Buddhist Temple on Sept. 11, 2010, in favor of permanently memorializing the northwest corner of Venice and Lincoln boulevards,” the committee said. “The memorial would honor the 1,000 persons of Japanese ancestry from Venice, Santa Monica, and Malibu who assembled on the sidewalk in April 1942 with only what they could carry. This included 15-year-old Arnold and his parents, Norman Toyoshige Maeda and Sasami Takeda Maeda.

“Arnold’s quote on the Venice Japanese American Memorial Monument reads, ‘Instead of being worried about where we were going, I was obsessed with the fact that I had parted with my constant companion, my pet dog, Boy. For a 15-year old, that was unforgettably traumatic.’

“Arnold and his family were forcibly removed from Santa Monica by Executive Order 9066, which followed the attack on the U.S. naval base at Pearl Harbor, Hawaii on Dec. 7, 1942. The Maedas left behind their home and their gardening and nursery business. Dogs were not permitted at the American concentration camp at Manzanar.

“The VJAMM Committee extends sympathy and condolences to Arnold’s family, including Arnold’s brother, Brian Maeda, also a VJAMM Committee charter member, who was born in Manzanar.”

On July 17 this year, the VJAMM Committee sent Arnold Maeda greetings on the occasion of his 94th birthday, which read, in part: “We are so happy to have met you, and so grateful for your moral support and outspokenness. You truly inspired us all, and congratulations! We did it! We dedicated the VJAMM on April 27, 2017, and we couldn’t have done it without you!”



Brian Tadashi Maeda, Mae Kageyama Kakehashi, Arnold Tadao Maeda, and the late Amy Takahashi Ioki at the April 27, 2017 dedication of the VJAMM.

Los Angeles City Councilmember Mike Bonin of District 11, which includes Venice, said in a Facebook post, “Mar Vista mourns the loss of Manzanar internee and long-time Westside resident Arnold Maeda ... Born July 17, 1926, in Santa Monica ... Arnold grew up in the West L.A. area, where his parents ran a nursery business. During World War II, Arnold and his family were sent to the Manzanar concentration camp in California. After leaving camp, Arnold worked as a chick-sexer, a technical illustrator in the aerospace industry, and a life insurance salesman.

“He returned to California and became involved in community organizations including the Venice Japanese American Memorial Monument Committee, where he helped create the monument that stands in Venice to memorialize the tragic chapter in American history ... Arnold gave selflessly to his community and he will be dearly missed. Rest in peace.”

Norman Toyoshige Maeda, Sasami Takeda Maeda, Arnold Tadao Maeda, and Boy.

A proclamation presented by Bonin to Maeda for his 90th birthday included other details of his life: “Arnold Tadao

## Arnold Maeda obituary continued

Maeda ... has provided inspiration and purpose to the Venice Japanese American Memorial Monument Committee, representing the spirit which speaks to the best of our instincts; the willingness to have a clear understanding of our present, a deep and abiding respect for our past, a full recognition of the bonds which connect us all as one community and the determination to forge ahead into the future ...

“Growing up in an era which produced severe issues of change and challenge; concerns of hope and fear; and questions of fact and uncertainty, [he] always demonstrated nothing but a positive sense of self-awareness; enhancing the lives of all he came to touch; sharing with them the precious gift of his infectious enthusiasm ...

“Devoted husband to Kim Okanishi of Delano, Calif., whom he married on Aug. 2, 1953 in the West Los Angeles Methodist Church; dedicated father to his daughter, Susan Maeda Nakashima, and to his son, Richard Maeda; loving grandfather to Jason and Spencer Nakashima, [he] radiates a family culture of self-expression, self-determination, and self-reliance; all within a household which recognizes the necessity and value of promoting individual commitment to group efforts ...



Norman Toyoshige Maeda, Sasami Takeda Maeda, Arnold Tadao Maeda, and Boy.

“President of the Class of 1944 and graduate of Manzanar High School while behind barbed wire of the American concentration camp in Inyo County, Calif., [he] demonstrated the principles which teach how hard work, sacrifice, loyalty, self-confidence, creative mind-play, a sense of humor, selflessness, and respect for others serve as an enduring source of personal fulfillment as well as an arc to bridge the gap between the wonderment of childhood and accountability of adult life ...

“Arnold Maeda has enriched the lives of all hearts he has touched, through his work in the U.S. Army as an M-1 rifle instructor at Fort Lewis in Washington state; at the Military Language School at the Presidio in Monterey, Calif., where he honed his skills in Nihongo; as a chick-sexer for seven seasons with the American Chick Sexing Association in Lansdale, Pa.; as a technical illustrator with Litton Systems, an aerospace company in Beverly Hills, Calif., where he earned a Certificate in Engineering Math; as a life insurance agent with American General with the designation of chartered life underwriter; as a regular attendee of all of the ‘final reunions’ of Manzanar High School in Las Vegas; and of course, as an active charter member of and articulate speaker for the Venice Japanese American Memorial Monument Committee ...

“The Los Angeles City Council does hereby express sincere appreciation to Arnold Tadao Maeda for his unwavering commitment to the moral fiber, strength and character of the City of Angels, and, as we pause to celebrate him on his 90th birthday, pays tribute to Arnold for his role as a true treasure of the Venice community.”

Plans for a memorial tribute are pending.

For more information on the VJAMM, visit [www.venicejamm.org](http://www.venicejamm.org).

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## In Memoriam

### Lawson Sakai, 442nd Vet, Founder of Friends and Family of Nisei Veterans

It is with great sadness that the Japanese American National Museum acknowledges the passing of Lawson Ichiro Sakai, 96. He was a decorated member of the famed 442nd Regimental Combat Team and the founder of the Friends and Family of Nisei Veterans (FFNV) group, which organized annual get-togethers in Las Vegas and trips abroad for Japanese American World War II veterans and their families.

Lawson, who grew up in Montebello, volunteered for the U.S. Army during World War II and trained with the 442nd at Camp Shelby with individuals such as Sen. Daniel Inouye. He participated in the 442nd's most famous battle, the rescue of the "Lost Battalion" in France in 1944. Wounded more than once, Lawson was almost killed in this crucial battle. He eventually recovered and returned to America, where he married Mineko Hirasaki and started his family.

Outwardly outgoing and fun-loving, Lawson acknowledged that he suffered from post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) from his war experiences. But he remained active with his veterans' gatherings, rode in this year's Rose Parade, and was often a spokesperson for the 442nd. He did numerous interviews over the years, some of which were shared by JANM's Discover Nikkei website.

In 2019, JANM, with the generous support of Japanese American Stories, collaborated with StoryFile and recorded 25 hours of interviews with Lawson in which he answered 800 questions. In the fall, through the use of StoryFile's artificial intelligence technology, visitors to JANM will be able to engage with an avatar of Lawson and hear his stories in his own voice. Thanks to individuals like Lawson, JANM and the United States have a greater understanding of the experiences of the Japanese American soldiers during World War II.

The leadership, staff and volunteers of JANM wish to convey our deepest condolences to the family of Lawson Sakai and to thank him for his courage and heroism that inspired generations and enriched our community.



#### Memorial Tributes

- In announcing Sakai's passing, the **USS Hornet Sea, Air & Space Museum** in Alameda called him "a friend to the ship and her crew and an important figure in the story of the 442nd Regimental Combat Team during WWII. Fair winds and following seas—you will be missed."
- **Etienne Pourcher**, former mayor of Bruyeres, a French town that was liberated from the Nazis by the 442nd, said, "We have only few chances to meet a hero in our lives. Lawson Ichiro Sakai is one of them. He's my hero. I had the chance to meet him. American, Japanese Americans, his family, all can be very proud of what he did, with other veterans, specifically in Vosges region.  
"What they did, what he did for us, for our liberty, for the peace is unforgettable. They are heroes. He is a hero. Forever. And like real heroes, so modest, so warm ... His soul will live in our forests forever. I miss him so much ... Go For Broke."
- **Mitchell Maki**, president and CEO of the Go For Broke National Education Center, said, "Lawson was a giant in my eyes. Not only because he was a Nisei veteran of World War II, but because of all his efforts to tell the Nisei veteran story and keep the legacy alive. He didn't pull punches or sugarcoat reality—he openly talked about the horrors of war and the physical and psychological scars

## Lawson Sakai obituary continued

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which he carried with him. And yet, he would do it all over again in a heartbeat because he knew what their service meant for the Japanese American community and for our nation.

“He was a role model, a hero, and most of all, a dear friend.”

- Historian and author **Michael G Malaghan** (“Picture Bride,” “A Question of Loyalty”) said, “Felt so privileged to part of the Vosges tour last summer. Lawson was the sparkplug, the face of valor, and man with the never-ending smile. One of the special people in life who cannot be replaced ... but live in the hearts of those who knew him.”
- ABC7 Eyewitness News anchor **David Ono**, who has produced documentaries about Nisei veterans and Japanese American history, posted on Facebook: “I’m torn to bits. Throughout my life I’ve met many wonderful impressive people. And at the top of that list is this man, Lawson Sakai. We lost him this week, finally allowing to rest a man who refused to stop as long as there was a chance to do the greater good.

“In World War II he fought in one of the greatest fighting units in American military history — the 100th/442nd. A segregated unit of Japanese Americans from Hawaii and the mainland. Many of whom were fighting for the very country that locked up their innocent families in concentration camps. Yet they fought bravely, gallantly, with incredible results. This graduate of Montebello High was wounded four times but refused to return home.

“Each time he would heal and rejoin his comrades in battle. Later in life he was one of the few that would talk about what he experienced. Shining a light on the brutality, the prejudice, the real details we don’t teach enough of in our history books. I went to France with him this past summer and visited the storied battlefields where he fought, and the cemetery where his fallen comrades remain.

“In the future I will devote some of my work to Lawson and the incredible lessons he taught me and all of us. He is my hero.”

- *East Bay Times* columnist **Martin Snapp** this week wrote about his decades-long friendship with Bay Area Nisei veterans, including Sakai. He concluded:

“For the last three decades the Friends and Family have held a memorial service at Oakland’s Roberts Park underneath a redwood sapling they planted 30 years ago that has grown to a towering tree, and Lawson has always been front and center.

“The service was cancelled this year because of the coronavirus pandemic, but we’ll be back next year. But Lawson won’t. He died on June 16 at age 96. Somehow—I can’t tell you why—I always knew in my bones that he would be the last to go.

“I miss them all: John Togashi, Tad Masaoka, Shig Futagaki, and Tsune Takemoto, the bravest man I ever met. But I think I’m going to miss Lawson most of all. I know he had a full life, but I can’t stop wishing he could have lived forever.

“The motto of the 442 was Go For Broke. And they did. God bless their memories. Thank you, Lawson, for everything. Happy July Fourth.”

Sakai is survived by his children Kenneth (Lynda) Sakai, Joanne Sakai (Dallas Foster), Janet (Noriaki) Ito, and Dennis Sakai (Linda Durrin), grandchildren, Kelly (Francesca) Sakai, Nicholas Sakai, Mika Ito (Byron Yamada), Gaku Ito (Aya Ino), Kisa Ito (Erik Fujinami), Stephen Sakai, Kimberlee Sakai (Morad Alvarez), great-granddaughter Mie Yamada, and many other relatives. He is predeceased by his wife Mineko Hirasaki Sakai and by sisters Misako (Perry) Sumida and Mieko Sakai.

Private funeral services were held on June 27 at Gavilan Hills Memorial Park in Gilroy. Pending COVID-19 restrictions, a memorial service will be scheduled later this year.

An online memorial can be found at [www.lastingmemories.com](http://www.lastingmemories.com).

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## In Memoriam

### A Tribute to Lane Ryo Hirabayashi *by Brian Niiya*

Lane Ryo Hirabayashi, anthropologist and college professor, most recently as the George & Sakaye Professor of the Japanese American Incarceration, Redress and Community at UCLA.

Lane Ryo Hirabayashi was one of the most important scholars of the Japanese American incarceration over the last forty years, while also working to support many community organizations, including the Manzanar Committee.

He was born on October 17, 1952 and grew up mostly in Mill Valley (just north of San Francisco) with his younger sister Jan and his parents James and Joanne, after Jim took a faculty position at San Francisco State University. As a teenager, young Lane became caught up the 1960s music scene in the San Francisco Bay Area and became almost famous as a guitar player for the Muskadine Blues Band (<http://www.bay-area-bands.com/bab00026.htm>) before his life and career took a different path. After graduating from Cal State Sonoma in 1974, he entered a graduate program in anthropology at UC Berkeley, no doubt influenced by the academic career of his father as well as his uncle, Gordon Hirabayashi.

As with Jim (who was a pioneering figure in the fight for ethnic studies at S.F. State) and Gordon (yes, he was that Gordon Hirabayashi), Lane mixed his studies with activism. He was a member of the San Francisco-based Committee Against Nihonmachi Evictions, which fought to preserve housing for Issei elders during the redevelopment process of San Francisco's Japantown. In the early 1980s, while based in Southern California, he did participant observation research on the formation and early years of the National Coalition for Redress/Reparations and also did research on the history of the Japanese American community in Gardena, California. In the meantime, he did his anthropological fieldwork in Mexico and completed his doctoral dissertation at Berkeley in 1981 (titled "Migration, Mutual Aid, and Association: Mountain Zapotec in Mexico City"), taking a series of lectureships in California upon his graduation before landing a tenure track position at San Francisco State in 1984. From there, he moved on to the University of Colorado at Boulder in 1991, UC Riverside in 2003, then to UCLA in 2006,



Portrait of Lane Ryo Hirabayashi by Jake Fabricius, courtesy of Zócalo Public Square.

where in addition to taking the Aratani Chair, he also served as chair of the Asian American Studies Department. He retired to emeritus status in 2017.

Over the past forty years, he has been one of the most prolific and significant scholars of the Japanese American incarceration experience as well as someone who has engaged with community based organizations to make that experience better known. His work on the incarceration falls into several different areas. One major thread has been his exploration of the Japanese American Evacuation and Resettlement (JERS) Study, a multi-disciplinary research project based at the University of California Berkeley that placed dozens of fieldworkers in the concentration camps in an attempt to study the events as they took place. Controversial then and now, Lane wrote/edited two books and various articles on key Nikkei figures in JERS, Richard S. Nishimoto and Tamie Tsuchiyama, that, among other things, show us the value of JERS-generated research and how, given the right context, they remain useful bodies of data for studying the incarceration.

Another thread of research focused government photography of the incarceration and on "resettlement" era, the story of those Japanese Americans who left the concentration camps for areas outside of the West Coast restricted area.

## Lane Hirabayashi obituary continued

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His 2009 collaboration with Kenichiro Shimada titled *Japanese American Resettlement Through the Lens: Hikaru Carl Iwasaki and the WRA's Photographic Section, 1943–1945* (Boulder: University Press of Colorado, 2009), a collection of Nisei WRA photographer Iwasaki's cheerful images of Japanese American resettlers and an assessment of what such photographs attempted to do at the time and how they might still be useful today. He contributed biographies of Iwasaki and other (white) WRA photographers to the Densho Encyclopedia, that will help future users of these widely available images properly contextualize them. He engaged in additional research on the resettlement in Colorado during his decade plus at the University of Colorado and was working on writing that material up at the time of his passing.

Other threads included one on activism and redress movement, a topic he wrote about throughout his career, but that culminated the publication of NCRR: The Grassroots Struggle for Japanese American Redress and Reparations (Los Angeles: UCLA Asian American Studies Center Press 2018), which he co-edited with leaders of Nikkei for Civil Rights & Redress.

He explored the family legacy in various articles as well as well as a volume on Gordon that he co-edited with Jim, *A Principled Stand: The Story of Gordon Hirabayashi v. United States* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 2013). It was one of several collaborations between Jim and Lane, something that both cherished.

He also wrote a number of pieces on education (including on one on education in the concentration camps) and teaching Asian American Studies, some of which focus on teaching specifically about the incarceration. In one such article, he wrote about using the film *Emi*, by Michael Toshiyuki Uno about former Manzanar inmate Emi Tonooka and her return to the site, as a teaching tool. It was one of a number he pieces he wrote on using specific films or short stories in his teaching.

A perusal of his other publications on his website (<http://www.laneryohirabayashi.com/publications.html>, though it is not up to date) reveals more: writings on literature including on seminal Filipino American writer Carlos Bulosan, done in collaboration with Lane's life partner, Marilyn Alquizola);

reviews of many of the major works in Japanese Americans studies over the past four decades; essays on mixed race Japanese Americans that draw on his own experiences; as well as a whole body of scholarship based on his Latin American anthropological work.

He also taught and mentored a couple of generations of students at his various university posts and remained active in various community organizations, including the Center for Japanese American Studies, the Japanese American National Museum, and Densho, among many others.

If there is a common thread in his work, it is one of advancing the study and teaching of Asian American Studies and of the wartime incarceration and its aftermath in particular. A lot of his writing, for instance, is about how to use various types of resources to advance research and teaching. This also comes into play in his general editorship of the "George and Sakaye Aratani Nikkei in the Americas Series" (<https://upcolorado.com/nikkei-in-the-americas>) book series at the University of Colorado Press that has produced a wide variety of works in various disciplines and has greatly added to our knowledge on the Nikkei experience. I think this emphasis that so strongly encourages the work of others is evidence of a generosity of spirit that I was one of many to benefit from.

It is sad that he is gone so young, with so much more that he had hoped to do left undone. It is a great loss to the Japanese American community that we will never see what he had planned for us over the next couple of decades. But the tremendous amount he did do in his forty years of writing and teaching will insure that his contributions to our knowledge of the incarceration and its aftermath will never be forgotten.

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Brian Niiya is the content director for Densho and editor of the Densho Encyclopedia. He edited two print editions of the *Encyclopedia of Japanese American History* (1993 and 2001). A native of Los Angeles, he lives and works in Honolulu, Hawai'i.

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## Historicizing the Model Minority: Antiblack Racism and the Politics of Disavowal *by Wendi Yamashita*

The model minority is more than a problematic stereotype and myth, it is a dangerous and lethal narrative that has material consequences. It is a narrative that racializes Asian Americans and mobilizes them to unknowingly and sometimes knowingly participate in the maintenance of racial hierarchies in a white supremacist America. As a Japanese American, I believe it is vital to understand how the model minority came to be through a comparative racial lens. To understand the model minority only in relation to Asian Americans is to miss how the state operates and thrives on divisions. To understand the origins of the model minority in relation to blackness is to expose how the state mobilizes on difference to legitimate structural racial violence. As a Japanese American, I have the responsibility to understand how I experience privilege and oppression in order to dismantle white supremacy in my day-to-day life, in my organizing, and in my teaching.

A defining feature of the model minority is that Asian Americans are inherently and innately prone to academic and economic successes within a capitalist system of production. **But if Asian Americans are the model minority, then who are the failures?** Going back to the mid 1960's, an era of civil unrest, protest, and mass movement building to dismantle Jim Crow segregation, imperialism abroad, and colonialism at home. All of these movements made visible that structural racism denied people of color, globally, the right to self-determination and access to life-affirming resources. However, at the same time there were a set of studies emerging to dismantle the gains of both the Civil Rights and Power movements, in order to flip the script.

In 1966, the *New York Times Magazine* published an article by UC Berkeley sociologist, William Peterson, "Success Story, Japanese. American Style." In his study of Nisei students at Berkeley, Peterson finds and therefore argues that Japanese Americans are actually the example that challenges the argument that racial prejudice leads to social problems such as poor health, poor education, low-income, high crime rates, unstable family patterns etc. He proves his argument by narrating a history of Japanese immigrants and Japanese

Americans and their experiences of racial prejudice. He claims that

"barely more than 20 years after the end of the wartime camps, this is a minority that has risen above even prejudiced criticism. By any criterion of good citizenship that we choose, the Japanese Americans are better than any other group in our society, including native-born whites. They have established this remarkable record, moreover, by their own almost totally *unaided* effort. Every attempt to hamper their progress resulted only in enhancing their determination to succeed."

By reviewing a history of Japanese and Japanese Americans, Peterson comes to the conclusion that despite experiencing of some of the worst racial discrimination, Japanese Americans still manage to succeed.

One year prior to the Peterson article, another sociologist by the name of Daniel Patrick Moynihan published his now infamous report known colloquially as the "Moynihan Report." In this report Moynihan asks the question: Why is the gap between African Americans and most other groups in society widening? And his answer, problematically, is that it's actually a result of Black family structures. He believed that as long as this problem persisted, the cycle of poverty and disadvantage will continue to repeat itself. Interestingly, Moynihan does not deny that generations of discrimination and exploitation are a result of "the consequences of the historic injustices done to African Americans" but he argues that "the role of the family in shaping character and ability is so pervasive" that we cannot overlook how it has impacted African American poverty. Moynihan argues that white patriarchal nuclear families are what create stability. And he takes this further conclude that the breakdown of the African American family, characterized by broken homes, fatherless families, matriarchies, and illegitimate children leads to a startling increase in welfare dependency. In contrast, Japanese Americans could succeed without the help of government intervention (welfare) as Peterson finds.

## Model Minority continued

These studies are actually sociological investigations of race as it pertains to welfare dependency and the state finding ways to deny people of color, in particular Black people, access to life affirming institutions like welfare. These two reports argue that while racial discrimination does indeed exist, it is actually distinct cultural factors of both groups that make them successes or failures. It is not about systems of oppression but is in fact about how you (individually and as a group) are falling behind because of your cultural and familial values.

What this does is it sees people of color as responsible for their poverty. It is this belief that we are all subjects of our own destiny and the choices we make, rather than thinking how our destinies are shaped by our structural or social positions. The notion of choice is central because it is predicated on the assumption that we are what we make ourselves to be. From this logic Black people then choose to be poor or they make bad choices that lead to their own poverty.

Out of this genre of publications and studies are ideas about choice, success, and failure that ultimately affect welfare policies to this day. For example, “welfare queens” are a racialized image of women of color (often Black and immigrant women) who have too many children and who apply for welfare to “steal” taxpayer money from good, hard working people. We see a characterization of the poor as undeserving, their poverty criminalized which very much relied on the image of the successful Asian American. The model minority is in fact what made these state policies that more legitimate and seen as not racist.

In this way, the state could enact racist policies while simultaneously disavowing racism (making claims that racism was a thing of the past). And it very much relied on these two false constructions: the successful Asian American and the Black failure.

Deconstructing the myth of the model minority is essential to understanding contemporary race relations, how the state relies on these divisions, and what we can do to acknowledge

these narratives that result in harmful policies in order to create meaningful and ethical solidarity.

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Wendi Yamashita is an Assistant Professor and Minor Coordinator of Asian American Studies at Ithaca College. She also serves as Co-Director of Manzanar at Dusk and Katari: Keeping Japanese American Stories Alive.

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## 2021 Banner Carriers

Artistic banners have become a tradition at the Manzanar Pilgrimages. Born out of the mind of Sue Kunitomi Embrey, they represent all 10 of the War Relocation Authority camps as well as other prominent groups.

People have been asked to carry a banner if they have a personal connection and they willingly participate with pride to honor relatives or to identify where they themselves were incarcerated during WWII.

We honor them and the memory of all who were affected by EO 9066 in 1942.

– Colleen Teeny Miyano



I proudly carry this banner in memory of many Japanese Americans. I feel the pain and the pride of my ancestors. We stand tall and proud. I am Japanese American.

– Melany Lucia

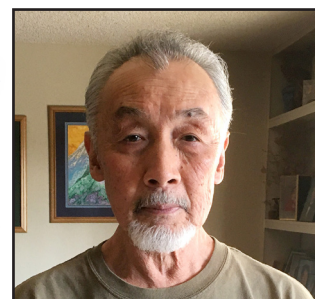
**AMACHE – 7,318**



I am so honored to carry the banner of the Crystal City camp, which was unique as the main prison for Japanese and German Latin Americans. Japanese Latin Americans, denied redress and reparations from the U.S. government, fought a campaign to win redress, which resulted in a bittersweet victory—they received only \$5,000 per person imprisoned, whereas Japanese Americans received \$20,000 per person.

– Richard Katsuda

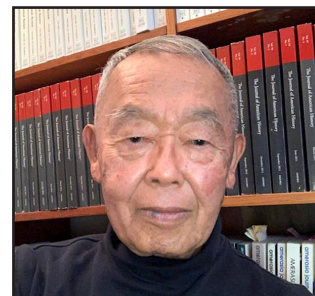
**CRYSTAL CITY – 4,000**



Xenophobes, racists, nativists, and other tyrants beware: we survived, and we remember. Do this to others and you will pay.

– Don Hata

**GILA RIVER – 13,348**



## #No More Concentration Camps



I carry the banner to honor my Uncle Ted Fujioka. He paid the ultimate sacrifice so that his family and future generations could live in a “better America.”

– David Fujioka

**HEART MOUNTAIN – 10,767**



Jerome was located in a forest which was new to somebody from Los Angeles.

– Kanji Sahara

**JEROME – 8,497**



We honor the young men and women who voluntarily left Manzanar to fight for justice at home and abroad, the souls who died in Manzanar and everyone who survived Manzanar and then painstakingly rebuilt their life. The legacies of the Okamura and Matsumoto families who were in Manzanar endure to this day.

– Michael Okamura

**MANZANAR – 10,046**



Born there, I proudly carry the banner for Camp Minidoka, Idaho to honor the many people there incarcerated, most for whom came from the U.S. Pacific Northwest. They included my late father, Reverend Gikan Nishinaga, my late mother, Masa Nishinaga, the family of Katsumi Fujita, and countless others. Their legacies of faith, compassion, struggle, and perseverance—ala Gassho and Ireito—shall live forever!

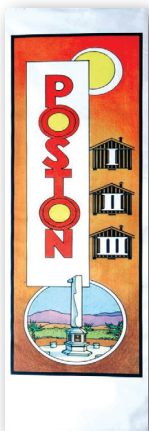
– Linden Takuma Nishinaga

**MINIDOKA – 9,397**





## # STOP ASIAN HATE



As I raise this banner, I feel the weight and burden of my family and others who were incarcerated at Poston. Be strong!

– Mary Higuchi

**POSTON – 17,814**



Our parents, Reverends Gi ichi and Yukiko Miyano and children endured 3 years imprisonment in Lordsburg, New Mexico and Rohwer, Arkansas. Other inmates were Rose Matsui Ochi, June Aochi Berk, and George Takei who grew up to make positive and significant contributions to further the Nisei cause in the Los Angeles community.

– Ruth Beadles

**ROHWER – 8,475**



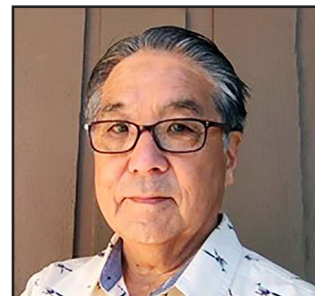
I am honored to be carrying this banner for my parents, James M. Goto, M.D. and Masako Kusayanagi Miura M.D., who were incarcerated first in Manzanar, then in Topaz, Utah. My father was the chief medical officer and coroner in Manzanar from the beginning, until his transfer to Topaz. This transfer was abrupt and ordered by the military.

– Denise M. Goto Kodani, Pharm.D.

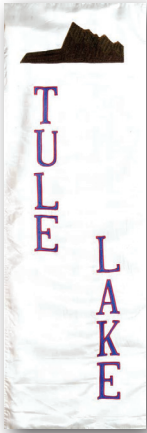
I am proud of him for standing up to the military interrogation and refusing to change the autopsy report that the prisoners in the Manzanar riots who were shot were shot from the front, which would have meant that the soldiers shot at the rioters in self defense. Dr. Goto's report as coroner stated they were shot in the back and sides, indicating they were running from the soldiers.

– Hans Goto

**TOPAZ – 8,130**



## #No More Concentration Camps



My Grandmother was at Tule Lake and two of her siblings renounced their citizenship. The reason why I want to be a banner carrier is the same reason I joined the Manzanar Committee. I want to represent my family along with all of the people that were incarcerated at the camps. I want to be able to carry on the history and their stories so that the future generations can learn and remember what happened to the Japanese Americans during World War II.

– Jason Fujii



**TULE LAKE – 18,789**



Our goal is to build a meaningful historic cultural monument.

– Nancy Oda



**TUNA CANYON – 2,000**



I am honored to be asked to represent the 442nd RCT. Although originally denied the right to serve because they were considered “enemy aliens” they distinguished themselves by becoming the most decorated unit in the history of the United States military, for their size & length of service. They fought, died & killed while their families languished in concentration camps, incarcerated by their own country!

– Keith Kawamoto



**GO FOR BROKE – 442 RCT, 100th Bn, MIS – 33,000**



## Leslie Aguilar Named Inaugural Recipient of the Arnold Maeda Manzanar Pilgrimage Grant

In December 2020, the Manzanar Committee, and the Venice Japanese American Memorial Monument (VJAMM) Committee announced Leslie Aguilar of Los Angeles, a recent graduate of UCLA, as the inaugural recipient of the Arnold Maeda Manzanar Pilgrimage Grant. The grant will provide a stipend for Leslie, who will be working with the Manzanar Committee to help organize the 52nd Annual Manzanar Pilgrimage, to be held virtually on Saturday, April 24, 2021.

“I feel honored and excited to be given the opportunity to work alongside passionate individuals for this amazing event,” said Leslie, when the Manzanar Committee contacted her with the news.

The Arnold Maeda Manzanar Pilgrimage Grant commemorates and pays tribute to the late Arnold Maeda, who at 15 years of age, found himself and his parents forcibly removed from Santa Monica, by Executive Order 9066 signed by President Franklin D. Roosevelt on February 19, 1942. The Maeda family spent over three years in what would become the War Relocation Authority Camp at Manzanar, incarcerated without due process in violation of their Constitutional rights. Maeda became a founding and inspiring member of the Venice Japanese American Memorial Monument Committee in 2010, along with other former Manzanar internees, and the Venice artists and activists who had been lobbying for a permanent memorial to the Japanese American experience since after September 11, 2001. On April 27, 2017, the VJAMM Committee dedicated the nine-and-a-half-foot tall obelisk of solid black granite before a crowd of over 200 people on the northwest corner of Venice and Lincoln Boulevards. At this intersection, some 1,000 persons of Japanese ancestry from Venice, Santa Monica, and Malibu had gathered in April 1942 with only what they could carry, for the bumpy bus ride to Owens Valley in Inyo County where they would find their assigned barracks at Manzanar.

Leslie grew up in Los Angeles, where she had lived until her family moved two years ago to Bakersfield, California. Her parents, originally from Guatemala and Mexico, met in Los Angeles where they raised Leslie, and her sister, Leonela. Leslie attended Los Angeles Academy Middle School and Hollywood High School, where she enjoyed her history



classes the most. According to her winning essay, Leslie was thirteen years old when she participated in a field trip to Manzanar National Historic Site with middle school teacher, Darrell Warren.

“I remember the long bus ride and the mountain range in the background,” she said. “I remember seeing all the family pictures. I especially remember seeing children my age at the time and thinking about how they felt. I remember seeing the inside of the barracks as well and thinking how crowded it must have been to hold multiple families inside one barrack.”

“I think that, for the first time, history felt so real, and not simply an event that I read in a book. It was also the first time that I learned something new about World War II and the impact it had on minority communities in the United States.”

In Leslie’s application essay, she wrote, “Ten years later, I am reading about Arnold Maeda’s life, and his story resembles one of the many stories I read about, that day I went to Manzanar [for the first time]. Arnold’s efforts to memorialize an intersection [at] Venice and Lincoln Boulevards, where many Japanese American families were awaiting the unknown, is a reminder to many of us that it has not been just a long time since that tragic time period. Arnold’s “commitment to social justice” has inspired Leslie to work with the Manzanar Committee on the Manzanar Pilgrimage. His “involvement with the Venice Japanese

### Leslie Aguilar continued

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American Memorial Monument feels like a call to action to me as a future educator to be more involved in preserving history and ensuring the impact of Executive Order 9066 is not forgotten.”

At UCLA, Leslie majored in Chicana/o Studies and minored in Digital Humanities. She researched and analyzed “the life, history, and culture of Mexican-origin people within the U. S., as well as of other Latina/Latino and indigenous populations in the Americas.” One of her most significant experiences involved “expanding Central American Studies at UCLA. Los Angeles is home to some of the largest Central American communities in the United States, so it was important to advocate for more scholarship and courses.” Along with “many dynamic students, professors, and community members,” Leslie “put together a Central American Studies Symposium at UCLA. I also created and taught my very own class on Central Americans during my time there.” Thanks to everyone’s efforts, “the Chicana/o Studies Department at UCLA was renamed as the Department of Chicana/o Studies and Central American Studies.”

Leslie says she looks “forward to getting my teaching credential and an MA [in Education] soon. She envisions herself “teaching social studies courses such as U. S. History and/or Ethnic Studies at the high school level, because she thinks “that history is so important to understand our present. Especially in this time of uncertainty, we have seen so much about how race, class, gender, etc. impact our daily lives. I think that students are also trying to understand and navigate so many of the recent events that have [just] happened.”

Leslie will be bringing her impressive technical skills to the Manzanar Committee, which include “data visualization, such as presentations, creating websites, and of course any research that has to be done.” With her event planning skills, Leslie can also “do things like scheduling and figuring out logistics in regard to contacting speakers for the [Manzanar Pilgrimage] event.”

In Leslie’s essay, she ends with this: “Having the opportunity to work with the Manzanar Committee...will allow me to engage more with Arnold Maeda’s vision, [that everyone remembers, and no one forgets what happened to persons of Japanese ancestry during World War II]. I believe that the first-hand experiences of researching various materials and

working alongside other committee individuals would give me a more in-depth understanding of what Arnold Maeda’s family went through. I also believe I can apply the lessons I learn from this unique learning experience in my future... curriculum. Most importantly, I would be able to assist in creating a space, such as the Virtual Manzanar Pilgrimage, where stories like Arnold’s will be highlighted and made accessible for the general public.”

In her interview, Leslie closes with: “From pandemics to racial inequality, we can definitely look back in time and understand our present, and hopefully create solutions. That is why it is important to preserve and conserve history for future generations.” The VJAMM Committee looks forward with great anticipation to Leslie’s speaking at the Virtual VJAMM Commemoration scheduled for Thursday, April 15, 2021.

The VJAMM Committee congratulates Leslie Aguilar’s selection as the inaugural Arnold Maeda Manzanar Pilgrimage Grant recipient, which speaks to the inclusiveness of different nationalities in the U.S. who have studied the Japanese Americans’ forced removal from the West Coast, and their unjust incarceration in the ten War Relocation Authority Camps throughout the desolate interiors of the western United States. This history is United States history, says Phyllis Hayashibara, a VJAMM Committee member. This history is U. S. Constitutional history, adds Phyllis, quoting from the third paragraph on the front of the VJAMM obelisk: “May this Venice Japanese American Memorial Monument remind us to be forever vigilant about defending our Constitutional rights. The powers of government must never again perpetrate an injustice against any group based solely on ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, race, or religion.”

For more information about the VJAMM Committee, please visit <http://www.venicejamm.org>.

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Article written by Phyllis Hayashibara of the Venice Japanese American Memorial Monument (VJAMM) Committee

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# eBay halts sale of Manzanar drawings, says it will work to stop selling camp artifacts

by Nancy Ukai, Project Director, 50 Objects

On the morning of April 5, Lori Matsumura got a call from National Park Service archaeologist Jeff Burton. She learned that 20 nature drawings made at Manzanar and signed “Matsumura” were going to be sold on eBay the next day. Might there be a family connection?

Lori studied the drawings online and wondered if they were the work of her grandfather, Giichi, or her father, Masaru, both of whom were artists and incarcerated at Manzanar. On the night before the auction was to end, she compared the signature on her father’s high school reports with those on the drawings and believed there was a match.

“My father passed away recently. So the writing haunts me,” she said. Lori opposes buying artifacts from sellers who seek to profit from Japanese American camp history, but she put in a bid. “I don’t want my father’s drawings to not be in the family,” she said.



Unbeknownst to her, a letter had already been drafted to eBay. It called on the world’s largest online auction platform to stop commodifying and profiting off Japanese American camp artifacts. It also asked the firm to delist the

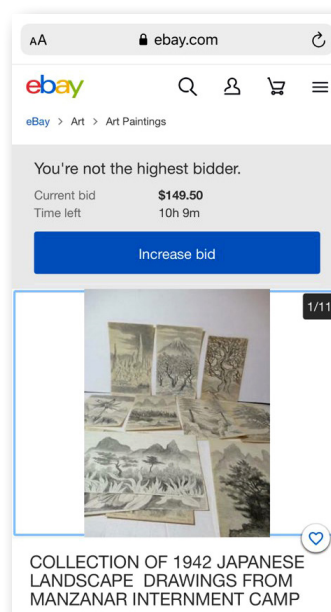
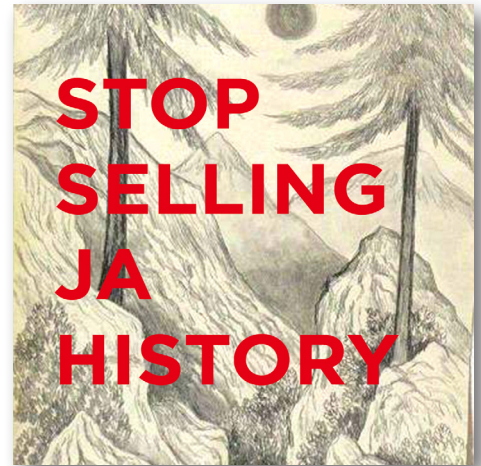
Manzanar drawings. Selling camp artifacts to the highest bidder, the letter said, helps “turn a history of race hatred into a sale.”

The letter was written by a small group of activists, including Bruce Embrey of the Manzanar Committee, Nancy Ukai, Bif Brigman and Barbara Takei. The Japanese American National Museum immediately signed on and the Japanese American Confinement Sites Consortium (JACSC) shared the letter to its listserv. Within one day, 59 organizations and 29 individuals signed, according to Mia Russell of

JACSC. Kimiko Marr, founder of Japanese American Memorial Pilgrimages, originally flagged the sale of the drawings.

With the clock ticking down, David Inoue, executive director of JACL, arranged for an online meeting with eBay officials on April 6, the day of the auction. Less than four hours before the auction was to end, and with the price of the drawings having risen to \$482, the officials said they would take down the listing.

The firm cited its Artifacts Policy, which regulates the sale of objects made and used on federal lands—which is where most of the WRA camps were located. eBay said it would work toward using this policy to flag incarceration artifacts of questionable provenance and to withdraw them from sale. Future work is needed to clarify details.



In 2015, community activism and Heart Mountain’s legal action stopped the Rago auction of the Eaton collection. Six years later, almost to the day, the sale of the Manzanar drawings were similarly stopped.

Although the delisting of the drawings was a positive step, Lori awaits a decision on their disposition. A CNN news report said the seller, who has not clarified how they received the works,

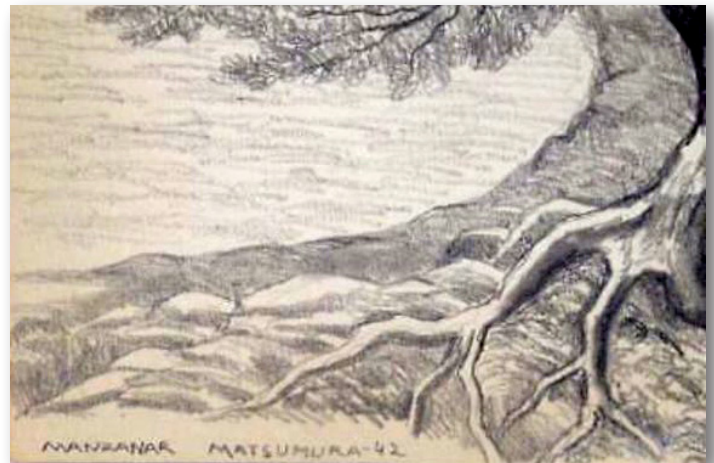
## eBay sale continued

expressed “a willingness to send the items to their rightful owner.”

The sketches are an example of how artifacts may conceal deeper stories of family loss and suffering. The black-and-white drawings of trees and moonlit skies hauntingly recall the death of Lori’s grandfather, Giichi Matsumura, who was climbing the mountains near Manzanar to sketch in 1945 and died in a freak snowstorm. In 2019, his bones were discovered by hikers and the family finally was able to hold a proper burial. Giichi will be honored at the “In Memoriam” of this year’s pilgrimage.

Lori expressed gratitude to the Manzanar community for their support during the period before the auction. The response of eBay was heartening, especially during a period of rising anti-Asian hatred. The protest letter to the firm said that selling camp artifacts to the highest bidder “is especially hurtful now, when we hear cries to ‘go back to your country,’ exactly what we were told during World War II.”

Nancy Ukai helped lead a social media protest to stop the Rago auction of Japanese American concentration camp artifacts in 2015 and is a consultant to the Japanese American National Museum on the rescued Eaton objects. She is project director of 50 Objects, a history website ([www.50objects.org](http://www.50objects.org)) supported by a National Park Service JACS grant that explores the incarceration history through 50 artifacts. She lived in Japan for 14 years.



This 1945 photo provided by the Matsumura family shows the burial party for Giichi Matsumura after he died on Mount Williamson during his incarceration at Manzanar. Lori’s father, Masaru, is shown at left and his younger brother, Tsutomu, at far right. Giichi’s bones were found in 2019 by hikers and a re-burial was held in southern California by the family.





# Acknowledgments

## Manzanar Committee

Bruce Embrey, <i>Co-chair</i>	Martha Porter
Jenny Chomori, <i>Co-chair</i>	Kanji Sahara
Vicky Perez, <i>Historian</i>	Pat Sakamoto
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Glen Kitayama	Milly Yamada
Jonathan Lee	Wendi Yamashita
Gann Matsuda	Leslie Aguilar, <i>Arnold Maeda</i>
Colleen Miyano	<i>Manzanar Pilgrimage Grant</i>
Brian Niiya	<i>Recipient Intern</i>

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Evan Kodani, *Virtual Program*  
Nobuko Miyamoto, *Bambutsu no Tsunagari Odori Video*

## Manzanar At Dusk Student Organizers

**UCLA** – Yuki Torrey and Ashley Matsumoto  
**CPP** – Richenny Bovannak and Kirsten Wong  
**CSULB** – Seia Watanabe, Clayton Takamiyashiro, and Maya Shimizu  
**CSUF** – Megan Matsumoto and Sara Kubo  
**UCR** – Ethan Gan and Keita Ichii  
**UCSD** – Hayley Yamamoto and Kip Stopa

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[www.sierraforever.org](http://www.sierraforever.org)

---

The Manzanar Committee, which has sponsored the Pilgrimage for 52 years, is an all-volunteer organization, incorporated under the laws of the State of California as a 501(c)3 non-profit educational organization. Your generous gift will help us continue to work toward public education awareness.

If you'd like to help continue the legacy, please visit our website at:  
[www.manzanarcommittee.org](http://www.manzanarcommittee.org) and donate to the Manzanar Committee.

Thank you.

---

## THE MANZANAR COMMITTEE

**MISSION STATEMENT:** *The Manzanar Committee is dedicated to educating and raising public awareness about the incarceration and violation of civil rights of persons of Japanese ancestry during WWII, and to the continuing struggle of all peoples when Constitutional rights are in danger.*

The Manzanar Committee, a 501(c)3 non-profit organization, can be reached at: 1566 Curran Street, Los Angeles, CA 90026.

Tel: (323) 662-5102 • Web site: [www.manzanarcommittee.org](http://www.manzanarcommittee.org) • Blog: [blog.manzanarcommittee.org](http://blog.manzanarcommittee.org) • Twitter: @manzanarcomm

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## The December 1942 Incident at Manzanar

My father, Dr. James M. Goto did not directly witness the riots, but he was very much aware of what he needed to do to prepare for the results of the gunfire, tear gas, from the noise occurring outside the hospital facilities. He was the surgeon, coroner and chief medical officer in Manzanar from starting up the hospital in March to December 6, 1942.

There was an instant death of one of the incarcerated men, severe wounding of another that ended up in complications and death, ten others were wounded from military gunfire.

The Ninth Service Command ordered a military inquiry. Each one of the medical personnel, Dr. Goto especially, was interviewed and told to say that these young men were shot in the front. Because my father was the surgeon and coroner, he refused to lie. He told them they were all shot in the back or side, indicating they were fleeing the military gunshots.

My father spoke to Frank Chuman, Manzanar Hospital Administrator, right after the interrogation from the military and related the above information. My father was quite adamant about the fact that all the bullets entered from the back or side.

In a few hours after this interrogation occurred, he was ordered to “get out”. Both my father and mother, who was 7 months pregnant with me, were immediately transferred to Topaz, Utah.

Regarding treatment of personnel working under him: Knowing my father, he would only be upset at any person who did not act in or have the best interest of the patient in mind. Patients came first, my father was the consummate professional in the practice of medicine.

DENISE M. (GOTO) KODANI, Pharm.D. (Daughter of James M. Goto, M.D.)

&

MASAKO (KUSAYANAGI) MIURA, M.D.



Pictured: Inmates being administered the typhoid shots, required upon entry into Manzanar by Dr. Masako Kusayanagi and Dr. Jams Goto.

Note: Dr. Goto stayed in Topaz along with his wife and daughter, Denise, who was born in Salt Lake City, until the camps closed to take care of patients who were still incarcerated, being paid \$19 a month, rather than leave for the Midwest or East to work for a higher salary.



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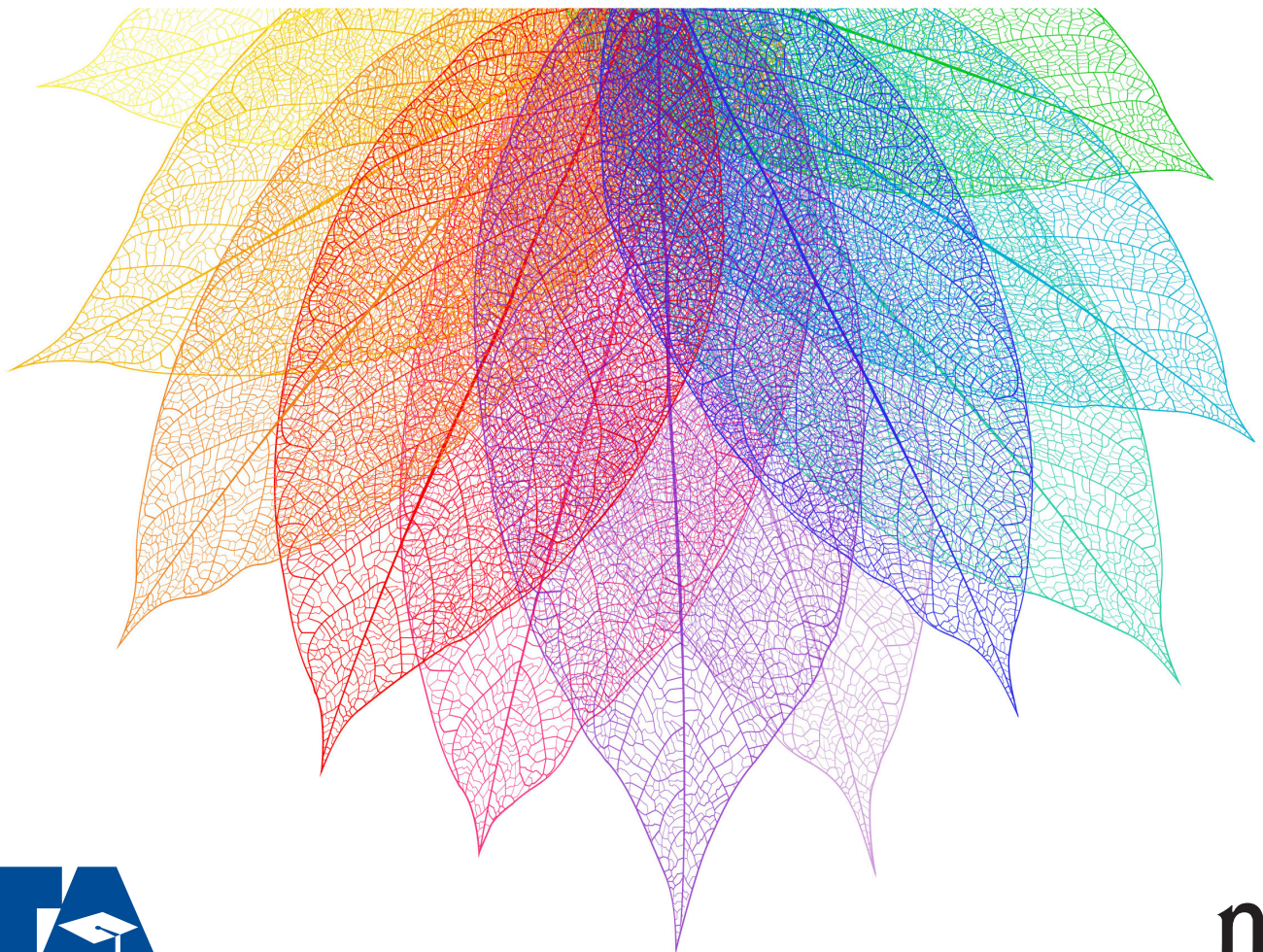
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# FACING THE MOUNTAIN

VIRTUAL BOOK LAUNCH EVENT WITH  
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Tuesday, May 11, 5:00pm PDT

Join Densho and community partners for the official launch of *Facing the Mountain*, a new book about WWII incarceration and the 442nd RCT by Daniel James Brown. The book is a gripping story about four Japanese American families and their sons: Gordon Hirabayashi, Kats Miho, Rudy Tokiwa, and Fred Shiosaki. Their stories challenge us to think about what it means to be an American and the many different forms that patriotism can take, from military service to civil disobedience.

[DENSHO.ORG/MOUNTAIN](https://densho.org/mountain)



## ABOUT DENSHO

Our mission: To preserve and share history of the WWII incarceration of Japanese Americans to promote equity and justice today.





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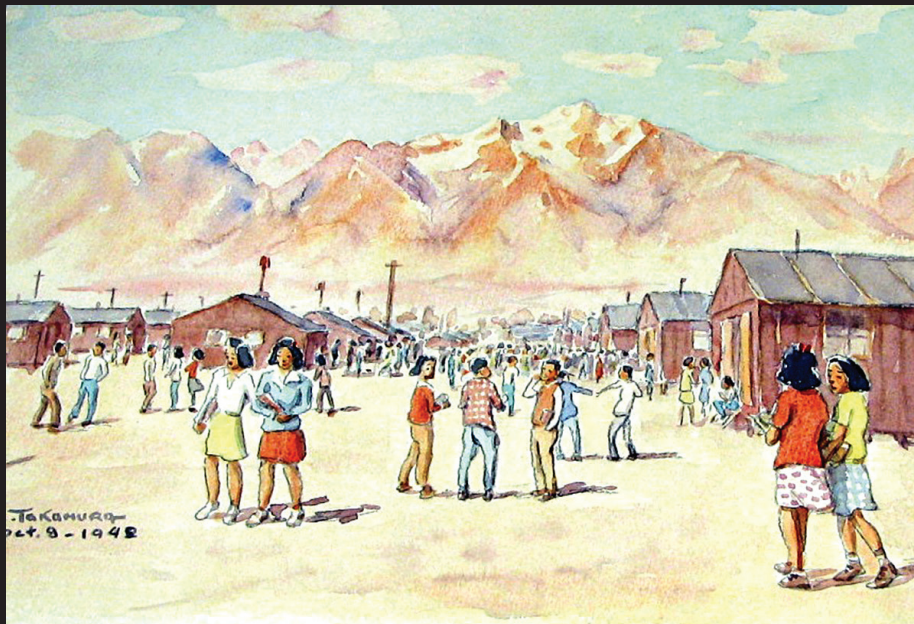
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**We support and  
congratulate the  
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on their  
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Painting by Kango Takamura.

## Welcome to the 52nd Manzanar Pilgrimage from the Eastern California Museum

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VJAMM Committee members and former Manzanar incarcerated, Brian Maeda and the late Arnold Maeda, April 18, 2019

# CONGRATULATIONS TO THE MANZANAR COMMITTEE ON THE 52<sup>ND</sup> ANNUAL MANZANAR PILGRIMAGE

The Venice Japanese American Memorial Monument Committee & the Manzanar Committee are pleased to announce the inaugural recipient of the co-sponsored Arnold Maeda Manzanar Pilgrimage Grant for 2021:  
**Leslie Aguilar!**

For more information about the 2022 grant, please visit

**[www.venicejamm.org](http://www.venicejamm.org)**

*Only the Oaks Remain*

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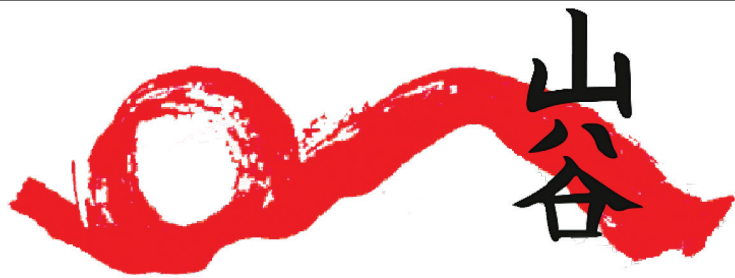
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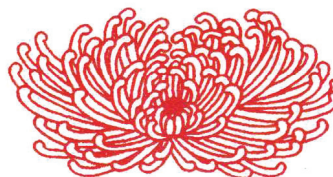
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# On this 52nd Manzanar Pilgrimage, JANM is honored to join you on this journey of history and remembrance.

Tour the Japanese American National Museum from your home, classroom, or anywhere with our new Virtual Visits—interactive virtual tours for grades 1-12, college, and adults.

For information or reservations visit [janm.org/visit/virtual](http://janm.org/visit/virtual)  
For educational resources: [janm.org/education/resources](http://janm.org/education/resources)



# Hearings a Catharsis

By JUDITH MICHAELSON, *Times Staff Writer*

He was a mild-mannered middle-aged man, spare, with thinning brown hair and thick-framed glasses, so when he suddenly banged his fist on the table and said he would not be silenced or hurried, it came as something of a shock.

Jim Matsuoka of Monterey Park, student counselor at California State University, Long Beach, was the 100th or so witness at hearings here this past week of the national Commission on Wartime Relocation and Internment of Civilians. The commission is charged with investigating the evacuation of 120,000 West Coast Japanese-Americans during World War II.

Because the hearings were already two hours behind schedule, the request from acting Chairman William M. Marutani, a Philadelphia jurist, to speed things along had seemed like standard procedure.

But Matsuoka held his ground. What you're looking at, he told the judge, who also is of Japanese ancestry, is "a product of the camps."

Matsuoka testified he was 7 when he spent the first of three Christmases at the Manzanar internment camp in the Owens Valley.

He told how he got "this old repainted toy as a gift from the out-

side" and that the man who presented it to him was "clearly embarrassed" because the toy was broken. So when the man walked away, "I threw it in the trash can. To me, that toy symbolizes how we as a minority are treated—second-class, all the promises are broken. . ."

The hearings witnessed an emo-

*Some spoke for dead parents, others for their young children.*

tional outpouring from Matsuoka and others of a community that for years lived by, and outwardly seemed to thrive on, the title "Quiet Americans." As former Sen. Hugh B. Mitchell (D-Wash.) allowed at the end, "In some way the Japanese people have broken away from that earlier feeling in regard to words. Now they have the whole nation talking."

For three days they bore witness, some of them speaking out for the first time in their lives. Altogether about 160 people from the Los An-



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# MANZANAR, DIVERTED:

## WHEN WATER BECOMES DUST

*A film directed and produced by Ann Kaneko*

InterSection Films is proud to announce three upcoming screenings of **MANZANAR, DIVERTED: WHEN WATER BECOMES DUST**, directed and produced by Ann Kaneko and produced by Jin Yoo-Kim, in the month of May.

An inspired and poetic portrait of a place and its people, **MANZANAR, DIVERTED: WHEN WATER BECOMES DUST** follows intergenerational women from three communities who defend their land, their history and their culture from the insatiable thirst of Los Angeles. In this fresh retelling of the LA water story, Native Americans, Japanese-American WWII incarcerated and environmentalists form an unexpected alliance to preserve Payahuunadü (Owens Valley), “the land of flowing water.”

Featuring breathtaking photography and immersive soundscapes, the film recounts more than 150 years of history, showing how this distant valley is tied to the city of Los Angeles. It reveals the forced removals of two peoples--the Nüümü (Paiute) and the Newe (Shoshone) who were marched out of the Valley in the 1860s and the Japanese Americans who were brought here from their West Coast homes and incarcerated in a World War II concentration camp.

Manzanar is the name of the former concentration camp which has become a national historic site. Its annual pilgrimage unifies descendants of those incarcerated and activists who strive for social justice. The film offers a hopeful message of how communities can come together to overcome histories of oppression and halt further development and monetization of a land.



### CAAMFEST INFORMATION:

MANZANAR, DIVERTED: WHEN WATER BECOMES DUST will screen on **Sunday, May 16, 6 pm PDT** on Filmbot. Tickets can be purchased at: [LINK](#)

For more information about CAAMFest go to:  
<https://caamfest.com/forward/>

### MILWAUKEE FILM FESTIVAL INFORMATION:

MANZANAR, DIVERTED will screen on **May 6-20, 2021**. Tickets\* can be purchased at: <https://mkefilm.org/festival>

For more information about Milwaukee Film Festival go to:  
<https://mkefilm.org/festival>

### DOXA DOCUMENTARY FILM FESTIVAL INFORMATION:

MANZANAR, DIVERTED will screen on **May 6-16, 2021**. Tickets\* can be purchased at: <https://watch.eventive.org/doxa2021/play/606e6869576f0c004562a5ef>

\*Please note that films are geo-blocked to Canada

For more information about DOXA go to:  
<https://www.doxafestival.ca/>

Inquiries may be sent to [manzanardiverted@gmail.com](mailto:manzanardiverted@gmail.com)