

December 2015

From Executive Director Tom Ikeda

Dear Friend,

This holiday season started with a sobering series of events. Terrorist attacks in Paris, Beirut, and Mali reminded us of the very real threat of violence from radical groups. The aftermath of those attacks, though, have also left me deeply saddened. It's been nearly impossible to avoid the news of state governor after state governor saying that their doors are no longer open to Syrian refugees, with politicians and pundits chiming in to support these extreme measures. As many of you likely heard, a Virginia mayor even went so far as to suggest that FDR set a positive precedent in his mass incarceration of U.S. citizens and residents of Japanese ancestry.

What's deeply troubling about all of this is that the language used to justify the exclusion of Syrian refugees sounds strikingly familiar to the language used to cast all people of Japanese ancestry as "the enemy" in the aftermath of Pearl Harbor. Yes, the scenarios are quite different: Syrians are seeking to come here after being driven from their homes by war, while the majority of those targeted during WWII were already American citizens. Even so, the similarities should trouble all of us who said we'd never let anything like mass incarceration happen again because here we find ourselves in a climate in which people are being persecuted and profiled based solely on their nationality, religion, and race.

If the events of the past few weeks show us anything, it's that we have a lot more work to make sure the injustices we suffered in the past aren't inflicted upon another group. Now, more than ever, we need your support to make sure that we can continue to document the incarceration experience, share that story widely, extend our educational outreach, and respond to current events quickly with messages that call attention to the pitfalls of resorting to fear and xenophobia in times of crisis.

There is no better time to support our efforts than now. Today is Giving Tuesday and we're in the midst of our Winter Appeal, with some attractive incentives available in exchange for your donation. If you value what we do but haven't yet made a donation, I ask that you please do so now. Thank you, as always, for your support.

I wish you peace and time with those you love this holiday.

Sincerely,

Tom Ikeda

#GivingTuesday: 2015 Winter Appeal

We have a day for giving thanks. We have

two for getting deals. Now, we have [#GivingTuesday](#), a global day dedicated to giving back.

Please take this opportunity to show your support for Densho's mission to keep the story of Japanese American incarceration alive. Make a donation to our winter fundraising drive this #GivingTuesday and we'll send you a gift acknowledging your support.*

[Learn about the incentive gifts we're offering and make a donation.](#)

**Make a donation to Densho before December 31 to take advantage of our incentive offers.*



On the Blog: Responses to Syrian Refugee Backlash

After the Paris bombings, leaders in the U.S. and abroad expressed alarmingly xenophobic attitudes to Syrian refugees. In these two blog posts, we responded to that rhetoric by making historical connections to Japanese American incarceration.

Follow the links below to read and share the posts:

[A Response to Mayor David A. Bowers](#)

[Anti-Refugee Rhetoric and Justifications for WWII-Era Mass Incarceration: Is History Repeating Itself?](#)



Oral History Spotlight

Mae Kanazawa Hara was studying music in Chicago, Illinois, in the 1930s. In this clip, she describes being part of the Japanese pavilion at the 1933 World's Fair.

[View the December Oral History Spotlight](#)

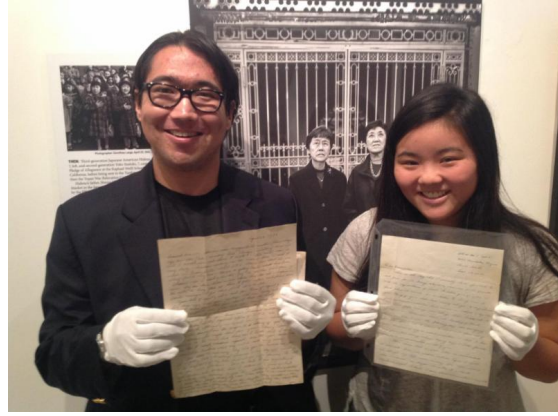
[Read more about Mae's story on the Densho blog](#)



Portland Event

[Collections Up Close: Letters from Beyond the Fence](#)

Join Oregon Nikkei Legacy Center for a FREE and open to the public presentation at the Oregon Buddhist Temple. Museum collections volunteers Taylor Ishida and Weston Nakamura-Koyama will share the moving stories they uncovered from correspondence written by and sent to two Japanese Americans incarcerated during World War II.



Learn about the extraordinary significance these letters hold. Discover how artifacts can give voice to family heartbreak and loss, speak to the power of friendships, and inspire a new generation to carry on. Find out how each of these collections will be made publicly accessible online through the [Densho Digital Archive](#).

Support Densho while Holiday Shopping at Amazon!

When you shop at AmazonSmile this holiday season, Amazon will donate 0.5% of the price of your eligible AmazonSmile purchases to **Densho**. Visit [AmazonSmile](#), sign in using your Amazon.com account, and designate Densho as your nonprofit.

[Visit AmazonSmile](#)



Thank you, Office of Arts & Culture!

Thank you to the City of Seattle Office of Arts & Culture for 2015 Arts Mean Business funding. This funding allowed us to create a new communications staff position and greatly increase the reach of our archival materials through social media, press releases, a redesigned website, and other written and digital communications.



OFFICE OF ARTS & CULTURE
SEATTLE

Thank you, 4Culture!

In 2015, Densho received three 4Culture grant awards for projects totaling \$36,600. 4Culture is the cultural services agency for King County, Washington. The 4Culture grant projects include a Heritage Projects grant to support the hiring of interns to work with our narrators to collect and digitally preserve photos and documents that will enhance their stories; an



Equipment grant to help upgrade digital content processing equipment; and a Heritage Sustained Support grant for general operations.

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