

Join us in Celebrating our 20th Anniversary

September 24, 2016
Sheraton Seattle Hotel



September 2016

From Executive Director Tom Ikeda

Dear Friends,

Doing oral history interviews with Japanese American elders is a favorite part of my work. An interview gives me the opportunity to go back in time as narrators share their stories, thoughts, and feelings when they were children, teenagers, and young adults. Not only do I get to hear great stories, but I learn so much from their wisdom of living a life into their eighties or nineties.

Last month, **Lillian Horita** welcomed a Densho camera crew into her home and shared memories of being incarcerated at the age of twelve. Stories and emotions that she had guarded and kept to herself for decades emerged. It was a difficult, but powerful interview and I commend Lillian for her courage in opening up to us. I also celebrate Lillian's interview because it marked the 900th one that Densho has collected. Thanks to these 900 brave souls, we've created a [collection of powerful testimonies](#) that will be used for generations to come.

In the past month, I've also seen some very concrete ways that these interviews are making a difference in the world today. In preparing for the gala, we solicited testimonies from the grandchildren and great-grandchildren of our interviewees. The responses we received were incredibly moving--and showed that the stories we recorded teach important lessons about racial justice and equity. Take this one, for example:

“With the racial profiling that occurred in WWII and what my grandparents have told me, I am more aware of racial profiling today. In high school I had a lot of friends that are Muslim and with the racial profiling that was going on, I was more aware of the situation and more sensitive about it.” - Carly Yamaichi, 24, granddaughter of Densho interviewee Jimi Yamaichi

We've made similar discoveries in our efforts to create curriculum for students. In that work, we have collaborated with other Seattle-area heritage organizations and through a series of intensive workshops have come to the clear conclusion that personal stories and narratives need to be at the heart of anti-racist curriculum. Why? Because hearing first-person stories from victims of discrimination and racism is simply the most effective way to help children understand the impacts of racism.

900 powerful community stories available from our website to anyone in the world is a wonderful testament to our work over the past 20 years. We hope you agree.

Sincerely,

Tom Ikeda

900th Oral History Interview: Lillian Horita

Lillian Horita was twelve years old during World War II when she was sent to the Portland Assembly Center, Oregon, and the Tule Lake and Minidoka concentration camps in California and Idaho. In this clip, she discusses her feelings about being put in camp as a young person.



>>[Watch a clip from the interview.](#)

September 24 is Densho Day!

In a proclamation issued by the City of Seattle, September 24 has officially been named **Densho Day** in recognition of our enduring contributions to the city's history, our innovative use of technology, and work to link the WWII Japanese American incarceration story to social justice issues of today. And we are honored to announce that **Mayor Ed Murray** will deliver this proclamation in person at our [Gala](#) on September 24th!



Densho 20th Anniversary Gala *New Guest Appearance!*

We are also pleased to share another exciting Gala update: [G Yamazawa](#), one of the top young spoken word artists in the country will perform an original piece about Densho and other related work. "G" is a National Poetry Slam Champion and Individual World Poetry Slam Finalist who has toured across the U.S. and Europe.



Don't have Gala tickets yet? It's not too late! Visit www.densho.org/gala.

Blog Highlight

Densho Content Director Brian Niiya curated a list of some of the finest Japanese American history documentaries the Internet has to offer. They're all online, and all free.

>> [Read more.](#)



Thank you, 4Culture and Digitization Project Interns

A sincere thanks to Sara Beckman, Alaria Sacco, and Odette Allen for their participation in the Digitizing Photos for Japanese American Oral Histories Project. Thanks to their diligent work, we will add a dozen new collections to the Densho Digital Repository. These collections will link to existing Densho oral histories, allowing viewers to explore historical photographs and documents related to the lives of each narrator.

This project was supported, in part, by an award from the [4Culture Heritage Projects Program](#).



Densho | info@densho.org | www.densho.org

STAY CONNECTED:

