

November 2016

## From Executive Director Tom Ikeda

Dear Friends,

In the past week I have heard from many in the Densho community who are feeling frightened and concerned about what the next four years might bring. I, too, have concerns and am grappling with what Trump's presidency might mean for American civil liberties as well as for the safety and rights of people of color, Muslims, immigrants, members of the LGBTQ community, and other vulnerable populations.

But as George Takei wisely reminded us this week, "Fear is the favored weapon of bullies and thugs. Fear can make us turn away from our hopes and give in to mistrust and cynicism. Let us instead take each moment of fear as a challenge to stand up ever taller."

And so we must commit to standing even taller for the issues that have always been core to our mission: using the Japanese American past as a platform for social justice today. We will continue our work to develop curriculum to combat racism and discrimination in schools. We will strengthen our ties to like-minded organizations in Seattle and beyond. We will continue to encourage members of our community to be upstanders when they witness injustice. We will continue to be critical of rhetoric, policy, and actions reminiscent of the injustices of our Japanese American past. And we will continue to do all we can to bridge divides with those who see things differently than us.

We take comfort in knowing you all will be right there with us. And we leave you with the [sage words of Grace Lee Boggs](#):

"The time has come for us to reimagine everything. We have to reimagine work and go away from labor. We have to reimagine revolution and get beyond protest. We have to think not only about change in our institutions, but changes in ourselves...It's up to us to reimagine the alternatives and not just protest against them and expect them to do better."

Sincerely,

Tom Ikeda

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### In the wake of the Presidential Election, Let's be Upstanders not Bystanders

In the aftermath of the presidential election, there has been a spike in hate

crimes against people of color, Muslim Americans, women, and other vulnerable groups. The stories posted by [Shaun King](#) and tracked by the [Southern Poverty Law Center](#) are painful reminders that America's racist past is very much a part of our present. We hurt to know how many are feeling afraid and threatened.



>> [Read more and take action.](#)

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### Oral History Spotlight: The Importance of Speaking Up

During World War II, Gene Akutsu was incarcerated in Idaho's Minidoka concentration camp. In 1944 he was arrested for resisting the draft and imprisoned at McNeil Island Penitentiary. In this clip, Gene talks about why he thinks it's important to speak up for what you believe.

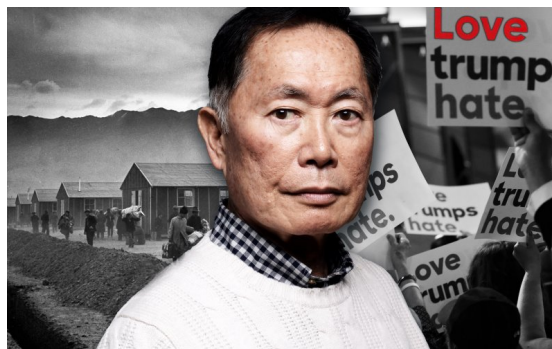


>> [Watch now.](#)

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### A Message from George Takei: Denounce Hate Crimes

We understand that people had a variety of reasons for supporting Trump in this election. We call on Trump's supporters now to hold the president-elect accountable for stopping the flood of hate crimes that have been committed in his name. As George Takei put it:



"If they wish to see their candidate succeed, they can and should decry neo-Nazis, white supremacists, and other terror groups who hope to capitalize on fear and division and are a real impediment to their candidate's legitimacy. And they can urge Mr. Trump to denounce these groups and to distance himself and his presidency from them."

>> [Read more.](#)

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## What do you need from us right now?

This election has been hard on many in our community, so we want to know what you need from us right now. Is it space for community dialogue? Suggestions on how to take action? Reading recommendations? Let us know--we want our community to feel strong, supported, and engaged so that we are ready for the challenges ahead.

>>[Email us.](#)



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## 2016 Winter Appeal: The lessons of WWII incarceration are needed now more than ever.

Throughout this year of 20th anniversary celebrations, we have been invigorated by the accolades and warmth we felt from our community. But we know we have a lot of work to do. Your donation will help us carry on the important work of using Japanese American history to stand for social justice today.

>>[Learn about premium gifts and make a donation.](#)



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