

December 2016

## From Executive Director Tom Ikeda

Dear Friends,

Today, as we honor as a nation the lives lost 75 years ago during the attack on Pearl Harbor, we also need to remind ourselves of the vulnerability of the U.S. Constitution during a time of fear and hate. In times of peace and stability we proudly recite the principles of this 229 year old document as the beacon of a more perfect union. However, during times of fear and hate, when we need its guidance the most, we too easily look away from the Constitution and find comfort in the words of fear mongers promising a false safety.

During World War II, people in influential positions – politicians, newspaper columnists, and army officers – imagined spies and terrorists in the faces of loyal Japanese Americans. This unfounded fear, combined with racism, led to the drastic step of suspending the Constitutional principle of “equal protection of the laws” for 110,000 Japanese Americans on the West Coast who were rounded up and placed in concentration camps without trial or hearing.

Once again, fear and hate are on the rise and threaten our Constitutional principles and democratic ideals. For example, I see the same “guilty by association” thinking that drove WWII-era incarceration being applied to practitioners of the Muslim faith. Densho is committed to preserving and sharing the World War II Japanese American experience to examine and promote equal justice for all - especially during the most difficult times. These are the times that define the character of who we are.

Sincerely,

Tom Ikeda

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### Last Chance to Contribute to our 20th Anniversary Fund

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

D E N S H Ō



today.

*And a huge thank you to all who have contributed so far this year!*

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

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## 75 Years Ago, the Pearl Harbor Attack Sent Shock Waves Through the Japanese American Community

On [December 7, 1941](#), the Japanese navy launched a surprise military attack against the United States naval base at Pearl Harbor located on the island of O'ahu. The attack not only brought America into World War II, but raised suspicions of citizens and immigrants of Japanese descent. The full repercussions of the attack would not be known for months to come, but the immediate aftermath brought catastrophic changes for Japanese Americans who had built lives in Hawai'i and on the West Coast.



>>[Read more.](#)

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## DENSHO in the News

# Muslim registry 'alarming' says descendant of Japanese internment

By BILL RADKE & AMINA AL-SADI - NOV 17, 2016

PROGRAM  
The Record

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Minidoka Japanese internment camp in Idaho.

FLICKR PHOTO/SAMANTHA SMITH | CC BY 2.0 | <https://flickr.com/photos/979116470/>

In the wake of Carl Higbie's comments about the Japanese American "precedent" for the

Muslim registry, Densho staff took advantage of many opportunities to respond:

[Muslim Registry "Alarming" Says Descendent of Japanese Internment/](#) Interview with Tom Ikeda, KUOW, Nov. 17

[This is What it Means to Imprison a Whole Category of People/](#) Interview with Nina Wallace, The Huffington Post, Nov. 18

[His Japanese American Parents Were Held in Camps; Now Historian Sees 'Same Patterns' Emerging /](#) Interview with Tom Ikeda, The Seattle Times, Nov. 19

[Concerns Grow after Trump Ally Cites Japanese American Internment as Precedent for Muslim Registry /](#) Interview with Brian Niiya, The Japan Times, Nov. 21

[World War II-Era Internment Camps for Japanese Japanese Americans Cited as Legal Precedent for Muslim Registry](#) Interview with Tom Ikeda, Truthout, Nov. 21

See also Brian Niiya's blog post, [Japanese American WWII Incarceration: Not a Precedent for Proposed Muslim Registry](#)

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## Let Your Voice Be Heard!

Would you be interested in speaking publicly about your WWII incarceration experience?

Densho has been receiving a lot of speaker requests and inquiries from media outlets looking to interview people who lived through World War II incarceration. We want to put together a list of potential interviewees and speakers that we can call on when these requests come through. If you're interested, please send your name, age, current location, and some topics you would feel comfortable talking about (i.e. your personal story, current events, etc.) to [info@densho.org](mailto:info@densho.org) or call 206-320-0095 if you have any questions.

Thank you and we look forward to working with you to keep the story of WWII incarceration alive!

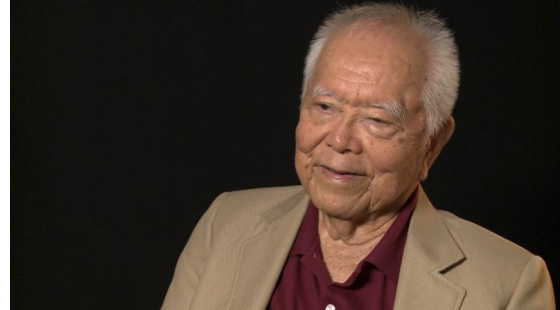
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## Oral History Spotlight

Like many Japanese Americans, Akira Otani's life was forever changed on December 7, 1941. As a resident of Hawai'i, he witnessed the bombing of

Pearl Harbor and then, just a few hours later, his father's arrest by the FBI. Even so, he volunteered to join the [Hawai'i Territorial Guard](#) to defend his country, but was soon dismissed due to his Japanese ancestry. He would go on to join the [Varsity Victory Volunteers](#) before enlisting in the U.S. Army.



- >> [Watch an interview clip.](#)
- >> [See Otani's complete interview.](#)

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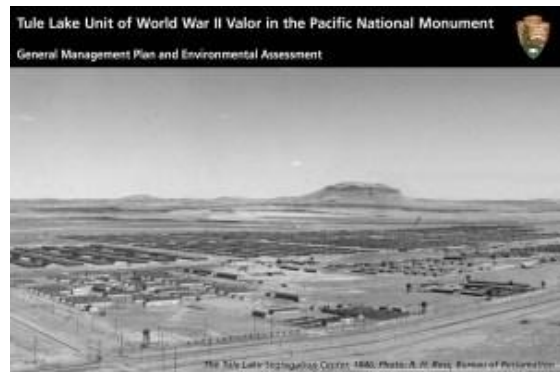
## NPS Wants Your Input on the Tule Lake Management Plan

National Park Service is currently inviting review and comment on the Tule Lake Unit of WWII Valor in the Pacific National Monument General Management Plan.

Densho seconds [Frank Abe's call for community members to support Alternative C](#), which will provide for stabilization of structures at the CCC isolation camp, reconstruction of the notorious Tule Lake Stockade and a replica guard tower, and open the site for year-round visitation.

In order to create that site preservation and public access, the staff at NPS needs a public record that shows public support for it. Please attend a public meeting or voice your support online.

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



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## Thank you, 4Culture!

In 2016, Densho received four grant awards from [4Culture](#), the cultural services agency for King County, Washington.

The 4Culture grant projects include:

- A Heritage Collections grant to support the hiring of interns who will help digitally preserve WWII Japanese American materials

- A Heritage Projects grant to work with the



Seattle Times to create an educational supplement focusing on WWII Japanese American incarceration, historic perceptions, and media literacy

-An Equipment grant to help support the addition of computer network and storage equipment as we continue to add rich primary source materials to the online collections

-A Heritage Sustained Support grant for general operations

*Thank you, 4Culture, our work wouldn't be possible without your support!*

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## SAVE THE DATE: 2017 DAY OF REMEMBRANCE

**Sunday, February 19** marks the 75th anniversary of the signing of Executive Order 9066 and we invite you to **join us at Seattle Public Library at 2 p.m.** that day to mark this historic Day of Remembrance.

Densho will partner with the Washington branch of the [Council on American-Islamic Relations](#) (CAIR) to host a panel discussion on the connections between WWII incarceration of Japanese Americans and the targeting of American Muslims today, as well as other related topics. *More details forthcoming in our January eNews.*

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