

November 2017

From Executive Director Tom Ikeda

Dear Friends,

Okage sama de - I am what I am because of you.

I love sharing the video interviews of Japanese Americans at schools, conferences, and community events. When I do this, I get teary-eyed as I think of the hundreds of testimonies I have heard over the years. I have learned so much from the Nisei who shared their funny stories, painful memories, embarrassing moments, and most of all their insights and convictions. Sadly, most of these recorded storytellers have passed away, but I feel close to them again when I watch their videos.

I had the chance to interview Bruce Kaji seven years ago. His jolly manner and vivid storytelling captivated me as he shared the origin story of the Japanese American National Museum. He told me that Japanese Americans had to remember and share what happened to the community during World War II because no one else would care as much, and no one else would do it for us. This vision led the effort to build the Japanese American National Museum in LA. The rich, vibrant community we have today exists because of leaders and visionaries like him. Bruce died earlier this month. He will be missed, but not forgotten.

Sincerely,

Tom Ikeda

p.s. I look forward to seeing many of you this Saturday at the [Densho Dinner](#).

Oral History Spotlight: Bruce Kaji

Bruce T. Kaji grew up in Los Angeles and during World War II he and his family were imprisoned in the Manzanar concentration camp. After leaving camp, he served with the Military Intelligence Service in Japan as an interpreter for the war crimes trials. In this oral history clip he reflects back on the vision he had for the museum decades

before it became a reality. He later worked with others to establish the Japanese American National Museum and became its founding director.

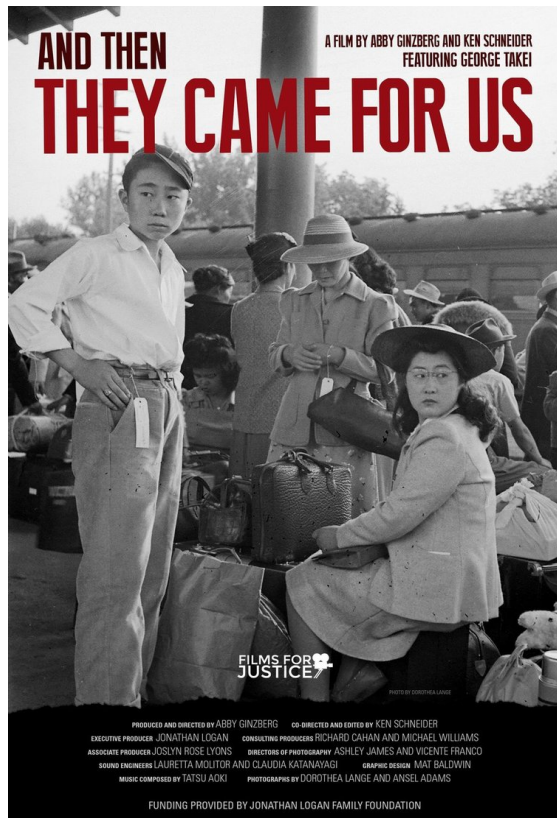
>> [Watch the clip.](#)



Social Justice Film Festival

Seattle friends, mark your calendars for a November 20 film screening of [And Then They Came For Us](#). This new film brings memories of WWII incarceration into the present as the filmmakers follow activists speaking out against the Muslim registry and travel ban.

Post film discussion with Prof. Lorraine Bannai of Seattle University Law School, author of *Enduring Conviction: Fred Korematsu and his Quest for Justice*, and Mako Nakagawa. Mako was incarcerated at Puyallup detention facility, Minidoka concentration camp, and Crystal City internment camp, Texas. In postwar years, she became a teacher, principal, and multicultural specialist for Washington State's Superintendent of the Office of Public Instruction.



Blog Highlight: Twelve Novels by Japanese American Authors Centered on WWII Incarceration

A good number of recent literary works incorporate the wartime incarceration of Japanese Americans, many of which are not as well-known as they should be. Denso Content Director Brian Niiya has put together a list of novels written by Japanese American authors to get you started!



>> [Read more.](#)

Blog Highlight: In the Belly of the Monster: Asian American Opposition to the Vietnam War

The anti-Vietnam War movement is often remembered as an affair led by white college students and white flower children—but the Sansei and other Asian Americans played an integral role in resisting the war against their "cousins" in South East Asia.



>> [Read more.](#)



Thank you, 4Culture!

In 2017, Densho received three grant awards from [4Culture](#), the cultural funding agency for King County, Washington.

The 4Culture grant projects include:

- A Heritage Sustained Support grant that provides vital funding to assist with the day-to-day needs of our general operations.
- A Heritage Projects grant that allowed us to hire and train interns who have been helping us identify, collect, preserve and make web accessible thousands of historic materials from several family collections that document the prewar, wartime, and postwar experiences of Japanese Americans in King County.
- A Heritage Collections grant to hire and train interns who will receive crucial hands-on experience as they help us preserve and share two endangered King County collections containing more than 1,000 historical photographs and documents that help illustrate the story of a thriving pre-war community, the subsequent dismantling of that community during World War II, and how Japanese Americans rebuilt their lives here after the war.

We are grateful for the support provided by 4Culture over the years. We currently have three staff members who began at Densho as 4Culture grant funded interns!

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

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