

November 2018

## From Executive Director Tom Ikeda

Dear Friends,

Three years ago, we were alarmed when we saw negative rhetoric being used by candidate Trump to promote fear and distrust towards Mexicans, Muslims, and other groups. The words and images he and his supporters used — inflaming fears of an immigrant “invasion” and painting refugees as a national security threat — hearkened back to the “enemy alien” rhetoric we saw used against Japanese Americans during World War II. We worried that fear, racism, and hatred would increase; imaginary enemies would be created to divide our country; and innocent people would be harmed with violence and discriminatory policies.

Today, as I see those fears become reality, I recognize we are in dangerous times. For many of us when faced with such negative energy, our pattern is to withdraw and perhaps become numb to it. But history shows that if we do this, we all lose.

**“We must always take sides. Neutrality helps the oppressor, never the victim. Silence encourages the tormentor, never the tormented.”**

**-Eli Wiesel, Writer and Holocaust Survivor**

Now is the time to be powerful and take a side. It is a time to be courageous and renew our fight against racism and oppression. It is also a time to love and be compassionate to the vulnerable. In other words, now is the time to be our best in the face of fear and hate.

Peace and love,  
Tom

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**Densho’s work is more relevant and important than ever.  
Donate to Densho by December 31st and receive wearable  
reminders that “Never Again” is Now.**



News from this past year reads like a playbook from our own painful past: families indefinitely held in remote detention facilities, civil liberties infringements predicated on the basis of identity, and leaders who carelessly criminalize and scapegoat immigrants. As keepers of this history, we cannot just sit back and watch. Our promise of “Never Again” has taken on an all new urgency as we’ve been repeatedly reminded that “Never Again” is NOW.

On the funding front, Densho is at a critical juncture. For the past nine years, grants from the National Park Service made up about 40% of our operating budget, but we have reached the maximum amount of grant money we are eligible to receive from that program. During our transition to other sustainable sources of revenue, we need to rely more heavily on donations from our community to continue our work.

**Donate \$125 or more by December 31st and select one premium gift; donate \$250 or more and we'll send you both!**

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**Thank You, Densho Dinner Attendees!**



Thank you to all who came out and supported us at the second annual Densho Dinner! The event set attendance records (650 attendees), including guests from across the U.S. and Canada. One family used the occasion to host a reunion — with 19 family members traveling from multiple cities to see each other, participate in the Densho Dinner, and also share memories, documents, and photos with Densho archivists.

We hope that you and your family consider attending the Densho Dinner next year (date to be announced soon!). The dinner, speakers, and program of events provide a wonderful opportunity for community building across generations and intersections between historical and current events.

>> [See more event photos.](#)



### Densho in the News: "This Isn't the First Time White Supremacists Have Tried to Cancel Birthright Citizenship"

Writing for *Yes! Magazine*, Densho's Nina Wallace argues that Trump's threat to end birthright citizenship isn't the first attempt to restrict the rights of citizenship along racial lines. In a little known episode from World War II, nativist agitators attempted to strip U.S.-born Nisei of citizenship, claiming their "racial characteristics" made them "unfit for American citizenship." The legal fight that ensued is both a reminder that we've been here before and an example of our long history of resisting attacks on our right to call this place home.

>> [Read more.](#)

### Oral History Spotlight: Remembering the First Day of Remembrance



Henry Miyatake was born in Seattle, and was incarcerated at the Puyallup Assembly Center and Minidoka concentration camp during World War II. Years later, he was one of the earliest proponents of redress, researching and organizing the "Seattle plan," the first highly developed plan to obtain redress from the government for the WWII incarceration of the Japanese American community. In this clip he recalls coordinating the very first Day of Remembrance, held in

Seattle on November 25, 1978, with the help of a small team of dedicated activists.

>> [Watch now.](#)

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## December 1: Erika Lee at Seattle Public Library



"A History of American Xenophobia from Japanese American Incarceration to the Muslim Ban"

As central as immigration is to U.S. history, Erika Lee posits that the U.S. continues to be a nation of xenophobia. Lee argues that our fear and hatred of foreigners has been an American tradition since the colonial era and has continually compromised and even irreparably damaged our values and our democracy. An award-winning historian, Lee traces the evolution of contemporary xenophobia from the World War Two incarceration of Japanese Americans to the current administration's travel ban in this incredibly timely and relevant event. After her lecture, Lee will appear in conversation with Densho's Tom Ikeda.

\*Note this Seattle Public Library event will be held at Seattle First Baptist Church.

>> [Learn more.](#)

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## Free Screenings of "The Apology"



**Free Film & Discussion**

Portland 11/13

Los Angeles 11/15

Seattle 12/8

[www.fendnow.org](http://www.fendnow.org)



Join us on December 8 at Northwest Film Forum for a free screening of the award-winning documentary "The Apology," which follows the stories of three surviving "comfort women" as they seek justice and healing. Our friends at [Japan-U.S. Feminist Network for Decolonization](#) (FeND) have organized an expert panel to discuss revisionist attempts to erase the 50,000 to 200,000 women forced to provide sexual services to Japanese soldiers between 1932 and 1945, and obstruct survivors' efforts to hold the Japanese government accountable – often by appropriating Japanese American history. As an organization dedicated to preserving neglected histories and reclaiming stolen narratives, Densho is proud to co-sponsor this event.

*Not in Seattle? FeND is also hosting screenings in Portland and Los Angeles this week.*

>> [Learn more.](#)

## Thank you, City of Seattle!

The Seattle Office of Arts & Culture generously provided support for Densho's monthly eNews and other core programs this year. We were also the recipients of a grant that helped support our 2018 outreach efforts, including the addition of an artists-in-residence program.

**Thank you, Seattle Office of Arts & Culture, for always challenging us to meet our goals in creative and engaging ways!**

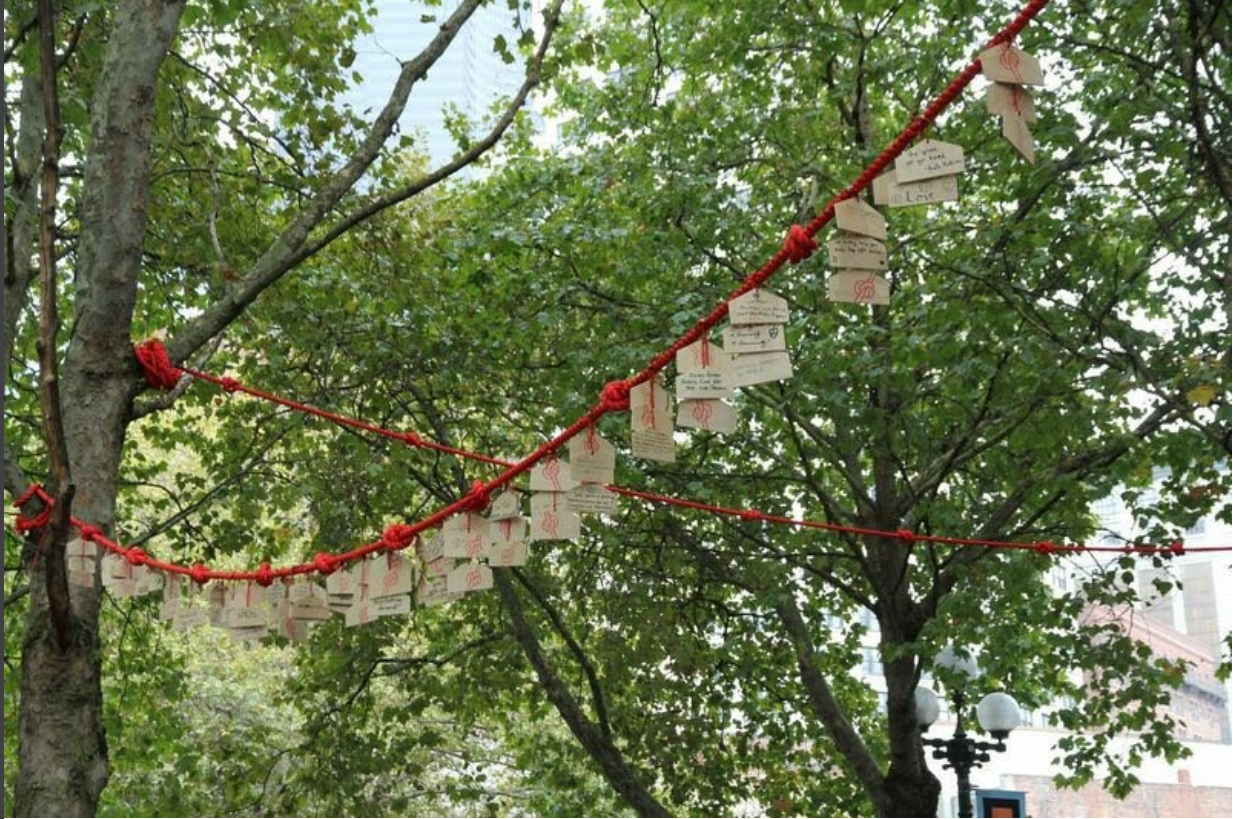
>> [Learn more about the Seattle Office of Arts & Culture](#)

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### Densho's First Artist-in-Residence Program

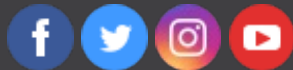
Densho is first and foremost a history organization, but as we have gotten more vocal about today's political climate we have become more acutely aware of the fact that art can help us get our messages out to a wider audience. That's why we were thrilled to launch a new Artists-in-Residence program in 2018.

>> [Take a look at some of the incredible work our artists have done, and what the residencies have meant to them in their own creative journeys.](#)



*"Senninbari Shrine" by Erin Shigaki, photo by Eugene Tagawa*

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