

November 2019

From Executive Director Tom Ikeda

Dear friends,

At our recent Densho Dinner, I talked about history activating activism. This activation was personal to me. Earlier this year I read about the plan to open a new child refugee detention center at Fort Sill, Oklahoma — and I immediately felt called to action because I had witnessed firsthand the pain inflicted by these sites in my interview with the son of an Issei man killed at Fort Sill during WWII. I was compelled to go to the streets to protest because I know our history, and I understand the consequences of staying silent.

Similar awakenings are taking place across the country, thanks to the leadership of [Tsuru For Solidarity](#) and the survivors and descendants of WWII incarceration. Just yesterday they announced a [National Pilgrimage to Close the Camps in Washington, DC on June 5-7, 2020](#) to demand the closure of today's concentration camps. More than ever before, our history calls on us to be the allies that Japanese Americans needed in 1942. I hope you'll join us — and if you're in the Seattle area, please come to the [inaugural meeting of the Seattle chapter of Tsuru For Solidarity this Saturday, November 16th!](#)

In appreciation and solidarity,
Tom

Support Densho's Mission | 2019 Winter Appeal



We need your support in order to document and activate our history. Densho's collections

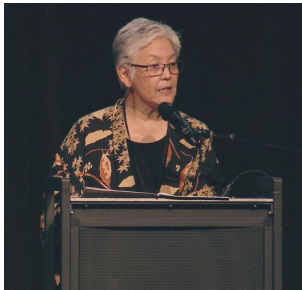
represent the lives of 126,000 Japanese Americans, and thousands more of their ancestors and their offspring. These stories matter today. But in 2018, fewer than 2,000 funders supported our work. Densho is at a critical turning point. We need to grow our community of supporters. If you are already part of that community, we thank you. If you've never made a donation to Densho, we sincerely ask that you consider making a contribution now.

Make a donation of \$125 to Densho before December 31, 2019 and we will send you a thank you gift; donate \$250 or more and we'll send you two!

Premium One: Mitsuye May Yamada is an acclaimed poet, essayist, educator, feminist and human rights activist. At the age of 96, she has released her latest work, *Full Circle: New and Selected Poems* (2019).

Premium Two: Designed exclusively for Densho by artist Kiku Hughes, this custom enamel pin is the first in a series commemorating the ten main WRA concentration camps. It's an homage to the Japanese Americans incarcerated in Tule Lake, who would hand craft intricate corsage pins from shells found around camp.

[Donate
Now](#)



Densho Dinner Keynote Address

Watch **Satsuki Ina's** powerful Densho Dinner speech about incarceration, activism, and Tsuru for Solidarity:

"By lifting up both memory and action through our intergenerational effort, our mixed race identities, intersectional and cross-cultural coalitions, we are discovering a renewed sense of identity and empowerment compelling us to lend our voices and join others on the front line to protest the inhumane criminalization of today's innocent people. And we will continue to demand, 'No more U.S. concentration camps.'"

>> [Watch Satsuki Ina's speech.](#)

2019 Arist-in-Residence Brynn Saito



ALMA TERANISHI SAITO



GREGG SAITO



MITSUHO SAITO



During World War II, Brynn Saito's grandmother and grandfather met, married, and had a child while incarcerated at the Gila River concentration camp. This past summer, Brynn visited the ruins of Gila River with her father. In the time immediately after that personal pilgrimage, she wrote letters to family and friends reflecting on the legacy of the WWII incarceration. Brynn's project, "Dear —", is a living archive of those letters and responses, and she invites readers to write their own letters as well.

>> [Read the letters on the project website.](#)

>> [Save the date for the February 8th launch event in Fresno](#)

Upcoming Seattle Events

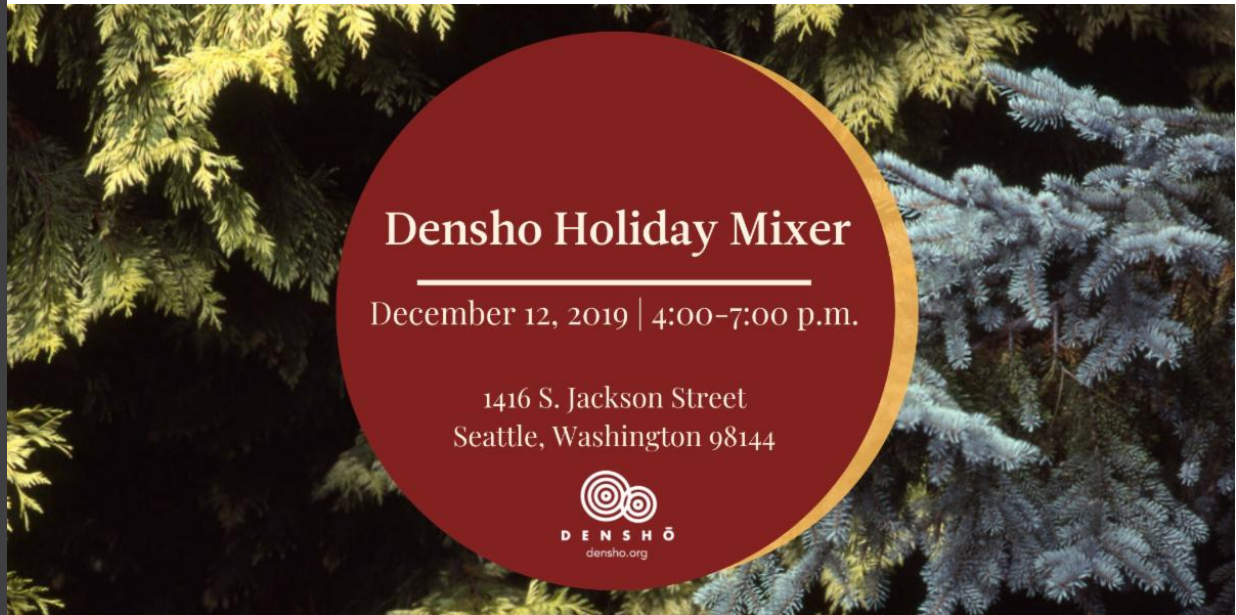


Join us on Saturday, November 16th for the inaugural meeting of the Seattle chapter of Tsuru for Solidarity, a nonviolent, direct action project of Japanese American social justice advocates and their allies working to end detention sites and support front-line immigrant and refugee communities that are being targeted by racist, inhumane immigration policies.

At this meeting, we will give an overview of Tsuru for Solidarity's objectives, hear from targeted members of our community, and create working groups for local and national actions.

If you're interested in participating but aren't able to attend the event on the 16th, please email us at tsuruseattle@gmail.com.

We also encourage you to sign up for emails from the national Tsuru for Solidarity group so that you can hear the latest about national actions: www.tsuruforsolidarity.org



Come by the newly renovated Densho office on Thursday, December 12 for sake, sushi, and other light snacks! This event is free and open to the public, but we ask that you please *RSVP by Friday, December 6th*.

We look forward to seeing you here!

[RSVP](#)

Thank you to our 2019 Densho Dinner Sponsors

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Thank you, 4 Culture!

In 2019, Densho received four grant awards from [4Culture](#), the cultural funding agency for King County, Washington. The 4Culture projects include both operational and collections support as we upgrade our public space and train heritage interns who help us preserve the rich local history of the Japanese American experience:

- A Heritage Sustained Support grant that provides vital funding to assist with the day-to-day needs of our general operations.
- A Heritage Collections grant to preserve the Seattle Betsuin Buddhist Temple Archives, allowing 1,000 items to be digitized and made available online in the Densho Digital Repository.
- A Heritage Projects grant to support interns who are helping us preserve and share six King County collections that document compelling facets of Japanese Americans of King County, from influential leaders to pre-war baseball teams to post-war activism.
- A Facilities grant to create a new accessible community space as we strive to maintain a presence in a neighborhood that is seeing accelerated development and gentrification.

We are grateful for the support provided by 4Culture over the years. Many of our current collections team members originally came to us via 4Culture support!

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