

September 2020

From Executive Director Tom Ikeda

Dear friends,

Like all of you, we've been forced to make a lot of changes over the past several months. One of the biggest — and scariest — changes has been to cancel our annual fundraising dinner and figure out how to recreate this community gathering from a safe social distance. I'll admit I was worried at first, but the Densho team has brought together some incredible speakers, musicians, artists, and community stories to create a virtual event that I am really excited about: the Densho Dinner @ Home.

Earlier this month I had a Zoom meeting with our two keynote speakers, Valarie Kaur, a lawyer, filmmaker, and civil rights activist, and Brynn Saito, a college professor, poet, and community activist. They told me about their long connection as close friends and activists, and how this relationship goes back through generations of their ancestors and friends all the way back to WWII. These two young women, with their knowledge of the history of oppression and the importance of allyship and activism, will talk about how, in Valarie's words, "the darkness we feel today isn't the darkness of the tomb, but the darkness of the womb," and how we can meet this moment not with more darkness but with rebirth and possibility. Something I think we all need.

So please **join us online on October 24th at 5pm PDT** for this year's Densho Dinner @ Home. Registration is free, and you do not want to miss this exciting and inspiring program!

With gratitude and in solidarity,
Tom

p.s. Registration for the dinner has barely been open for a week and I just learned that we already have participants from 24 states signed up to attend — help us get to all 50 by [spreading the word](#) to your friends and family!

Join us for the Densho Dinner @ Home on October 24th!



You're invited

October 24, 2020

5:00-6:30 PDT

#TogetherWeCan

Our history shows that in moments of turmoil, our connections to one another matter more than ever. While we can't come together in person, we can still be in community with each other to collectively remember our past and affirm our commitment to action. Join Densho for an inspiring evening of community, remembrance and solidarity. Together we can transform this challenging time into a moment for powerful social change.

Head over to the event page to register and read more about our keynote speakers, **Valarie Kaur and Brynn Saito**. And stay tuned — we'll be announcing more program highlights soon!

[Register Today](#)



In Memoriam: A Tribute to Lane Ryo Hirabayashi

Lane Ryo Hirabayashi was an innovator in the field of Asian American Studies, a historian and storyteller who dedicated his life to deepening public knowledge of Japanese American WWII incarceration, and a mentor to generations of students. In this tribute, his longtime friend Brian Niiya writes that "it is a great loss to the

Japanese American community that we will never see what he had planned for us over the next couple of decades. But the tremendous amount he did accomplish in his forty years of writing and teaching will ensure that his contributions to our knowledge of the incarceration and its aftermath will never be forgotten."

>> [Read more.](#)



Oral History Spotlight: Lily C. Hioki

During World War II, Lily C. Hioki's family moved from San Jose, California, to Ogden, Utah, to avoid the mass removal and incarceration. In this clip, Lily remembers visiting friends at Heart Mountain, and seeing the "works of art" that people created out of rocks and other items found around the camp.

>> [Watch the clip.](#)

Pssst...Lily's recollections, as well as those of some 60 other Densho oral history

narrators, are featured in an exciting new project that we'll be unveiling later this month. Stay tuned to our eNews, or follow us on [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#), or [Instagram](#) to be sure you don't miss the announcement!



Blog Highlight: Pets in Camp

The wrenching decisions families had to make about beloved pets as they were being forced to leave their homes is one of the most poignant (and often told) stories of the Japanese American incarceration. But there is also a lesser known, and no less poignant, story of pets within the concentration camps—and how it illustrates the agency that Japanese Americans sought over their lived experience while incarcerated.

>> [Read more.](#)

Due to the overwhelming popularity of our new Xenophobia teach-in, we have added two more opportunities to take it this fall.



Densho's Xenophobia teach-in will deepen your understanding of American xenophobia and racism, using Japanese American WWII incarceration and the current crisis of immigrant detention as case studies. It's designed for educators and community members alike, and employs a combination of short films and oral histories, as well as creative learning routines and dialogue to create a powerful virtual space for learning. [Read more about it.](#) Space is limited and registration fills up quickly, so sign up today!

October 7, 4-6pm PT (almost full!): [register here](#)

November 12, 4-6pm PT: [register here](#)

Of related interest: *"Other": A Brief History of American Xenophobia* the film Densho created for this teach-in, is being featured in the Northwest Film Forum's Local Sightings film festival! [Tune in on September 26th at 6pm PDT](#) as Densho Communications and Public Engagement Director Natasha Varner joins a panel to discuss the creation of the

film and how it's being used to promote dialogue and understanding through the teach-in and beyond.

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