

November 2020

From Executive Director Tom Ikeda

We are wading deeper into uncertainty as our country battles a new wave of the COVID-19 pandemic and the President continues to challenge the election results. But during these difficult times, I take a deep breath and remind myself of the bigger picture.

From my work at Densho, and the testimonies of hundreds of Japanese American incarceration survivors, I have learned how the “paper protection” of the Constitution can disappear during times of fear, leading to the abuse of government power and oppression of vulnerable communities. But I have also learned that it is in these challenging moments that we find strength in our community and in ourselves.

At the Densho Dinner @ Home, keynote speaker Valarie Kaur shared a powerful reminder that, “If there is such a thing as intergenerational trauma... there must be such a thing as intergenerational resilience, intergenerational wisdom. And our grandparents taught us that the way that we survive a history of white supremacy and tyranny on the soil is through linking arms and seeing each other as sisters and brothers and siblings in the struggle. That's revolutionary.”

The coming months will test our compassion, generosity, and sense of fairness. I believe that together, as sisters and brothers and siblings in the struggle, we can meet that challenge.

With gratitude and in solidarity,

Tom



BECU PEOPLE helping PEOPLE 2020 AWARDS

Help Densho win \$40,000!

Densho has been nominated for a BECU People Helping People Award. What does that mean? We have the chance to receive a minimum of \$40,000 to reinvest in the community. As a finalist in this annual event, we couldn't be more excited. We're reaching out to ask for your help: Please take a moment to select us as your choice to win the "People's Choice Award." You do not have to be a BECU member to participate, only a valid email address.

>>[Vote for Densho here by midnight on November 29](#)

[Vote for
Densho](#)



Seen & Unseen: Queering Japanese American History before 1945

Densho is proud to be a community partner of J-Sei's "[Seen and Unseen: Queering Japanese American History before 1945](#)"—the first ever exhibit on the often-erased history of LGBTQ Nikkei in the early 20th century. Check out the online exhibit and register for two upcoming events: "[We Were Here and Queer Before the Issei](#)" with literary scholar

[View Exhibit](#)



Blog Highlight: Japanese American Military Service during WWII

Japanese Americans served in the military during WWII in disproportionate numbers—even as many of their families were stuck in government-run concentration camps. Most served in the segregated 442nd Regimental Combat Team and its predecessor, the 100th Infantry Battalion, but many others served as translators and interpreters in the Military Intelligence Service, and nearly 500 Nisei women served as nurses, Women's Auxiliary Corps members, and MIS translators and teachers. This Veteran's Day, we honor those who served by sharing some gems recently added to the Densho archives.

>> [Read more](#)



Video Spotlight: Kai Naima Williams

We are so honored that the brilliant Kai Naima Williams joined us at the Densho Dinner @ Home to perform a new poem. Kai is a poet, spoken word performer, fiction writer, and co-founder and Executive Director of Eat At The Table Theatre Company. Watch her perform "radical imagiNation" and reflect on the revolutionary legacy of her great-grandmother, Yuri Kochiyama, for a much needed reminder of the power of connection and imagination to call forth a better future.

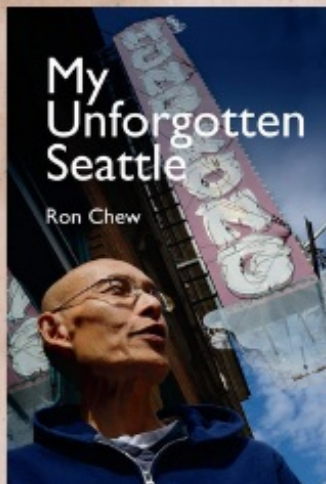
>> [Watch the clip](#)



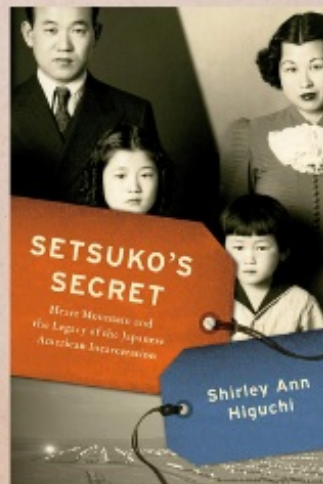
Blog Highlight: How We Remember the Rescue of the Lost Battalion

The Rescue of the Lost Battalion by the 442nd in October 1944 has taken on a near-mythical place in Japanese American history—and it is a remarkable story of courage and survival. But it also illustrates the unequal sacrifices demanded of Japanese Americans during WWII. As we mark this anniversary, we can hold space for both gratitude for what these men gave, and an interrogation of why they were asked to give up so much.

>> [Read more](#)



November 17



November 22

Join Densho Executive Director Tom Ikeda in virtual conversation with two authors this month. On November 17, he will be moderating an event with [Ron Chew](#), whose new memoir *My Unforgotten Seattle* documents the tight-knit Asian American community in Seattle, describing small family shops, chop suey restaurants, and sewing factories that were the backdrop of social justice activism.

On November 22, hear from [Shirley Ann Higuchi, J.D.](#) as she presents her new book, *Setsuko's Secret: Heart Mountain and the Legacy of the Japanese American Incarceration*. Shirley will share episodes from her family's past as well as from her own transformational journey as she learned about the Japanese American incarceration.

[See
Calendar](#)



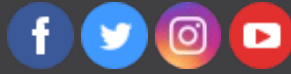
Thank you for joining us at the Densho Dinner @ Home!

Together, we raised over \$813,000, exceeding our goal of \$800,000. In addition, hundreds of people watched live from all 50 states and four countries. If you weren't able to attend the Densho Dinner @ Home, your gift can still help us preserve the stories of the past to inform the next generation. [Click here to give!](#) We deeply appreciate your support and

generosity that allows us to continue to preserve, educate, and share the story of the Japanese American incarceration. [You can re-watch the full event here with closed captions.](#)

[Watch Event](#)

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