

Nisei Diploma Project

NewsCenter: news



This 1941 yearbook photo of Nu Alpha Chi, a student organization, is one of the only records available. It is unknown if the students pictured were relocated.

Wednesday, October 7, 2009

CSU Seeks to Honor World War II Internees

The CSU will confer honorary degrees to students of Japanese descent whose forced relocation interrupted their studies.

Story Highlights

- Honorary degrees
- SDSU records lost
- Contact information

Page Tools

Text Sizes Print SHARE RSS

enrolled 1941-42 and eligible to complete degree but were not able to

Bachelor of Humane Letters

The CSU Board of Trustees seeks to identify students who attended San Diego State, Fresno State, San Francisco State and San Jose State during 1941 and 1942, and whose studies were interrupted when they were relocated to internment camps during World War II, per President Franklin D. Roosevelt's Executive Order 9066.

"Hundreds of students were removed from colleges and universities, forced to delay or abandon their dreams based solely on their ancestry," said CSU Chancellor Charles B. Reed.

"The internment of Japanese Americans and Japanese immigrants during WWII represents the worst of a nation driven by fear and prejudice. By issuing honorary degrees, we hope to achieve a small right in the face of such grave wrongs."

Honorary degrees

By some historical accounts, nearly 250 Americans of Japanese descent were students attending CSU campuses when an order for removal was issued by President Roosevelt. Campuses established by 1942 include Chico, Fresno, Humboldt, Pomona, San Diego, San Francisco, San Luis Obispo, San José and the California Maritime Academy. While records show some students went on to receive a university degree, many did not.

The CSU effort is inspired by legislation—AB 37—that has just become law. The trustees wish to confer an honorary degree to each living person who was forced to leave his or her studies under those circumstances, or to award the degree posthumously to surviving family members.

The first of these degrees was awarded posthumously to Aiko Nishi Uwate, a Japanese-American woman who was removed from San Francisco State University and sent to Gila River relocation camp in Arizona. The degree was accepted by Uwate's daughter, Vivian Uwate Nelson.

SDSU records lost

Unfortunately, SDSU has no records available of Japanese and Japanese-American students who attended prior to the forced relocation. At that time, the university lost a large number of its staff members and its student body, and, as a result, has no known enrollment records from the World War II era.

According to Robert Ray, head of Special Collections and the University Archives in the SDSU Library, there are no other known records of Japanese and Japanese-American students outside of 1941 yearbook photos.

MULTIMEDIA

*June 1939 grad HS
1939-40 SDSU
July 1941 return to US
Dec 1941 Pearl Harbor*

SDSU Month: Aztec for Life Monday, February 15, 2010

When we talk about being an Aztec, we're not talking about how you were back in the day. Or who you thought you might become. Or a face you put on for game day. Once you're an Aztec, you're an Aztec every day. San Diego State University. Aztec for life.

This video requires Adobe Flash Player.

also inside NewsCenter

360 MAGAZINE
From Mind to Market
Tech transfer turns research into reality

SDSUNIVERSE
Singh Named College of Business Administration Associate Dean
Singh, a management professor, will replace Jim Lackritz, who is retiring this year.

NEWS
Students to Benefit Most from Health Care Reform
What students, faculty and staff can expect from the new legislation.

more headlines

Aztecs for Life Video Contest Winners Announced

Students to Benefit Most from Health Care Reform

In Memoriam: Midge Costanza

A Wonderful Gesture

Students 'Quest for the Best'

Students Sequence California Sea Lion Genome



Contact information

Anyone with information regarding CSU students who may have been relocated to camps during World War II are asked to contact (562) 951-4723, or e-mail nisei@calstate.edu.

Story Keywords: Library, President's Office, Alumni, Community, Asia, California, Diversity, History, International, Political Science, Politics, San Diego, sdut, News, Take Part

Page Tools Text Sizes Print SHARE RSS

Add New Comment

DISQUS COMMENTS

You are commenting as a Guest. Optional: Login below.

DISQUS Connect Twitter OpenID Yahoo!

Warning: A browser setting is preventing you from logging in. Fix this setting to log in

Type your comment here.

Name Website (optional)

Email Subscribe to all comments by email

Post as Guest

Showing 0 comments

Sort by Newest first Subscribe by email Subscribe by RSS

blog comments powered by DISQUS

University Relations & Development

- Give Online
Alumni Association
Marketing & Communications
The Campanile Foundation
Media Relations

News & Publications

- SDSU NewsCenter
SDSUniverse
360 Magazine
Alumni e-News
State In Touch

Information for:

- Alumni & Friends
Community
Faculty and Staff
Media
Current Students
Prospective Students
Diversity

SDSU Resources

- Departments & Offices
Directory
Events Calendar
Campus Maps
Parking
Academics
Athletics
Jobs
KPBS
Library



Copyright 2008 San Diego State University
Back to SDSU Homepage | Back to NewsCenter