



D E N S H Ō

The Japanese American Legacy Project

PRESS RELEASE

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DENSHO AWARDED FEDERAL JAPANESE AMERICAN CONFINEMENT SITES GRANT

SEATTLE, July 24, 2009 – Densho: The Japanese American Legacy Project has been awarded a \$112,500 grant in the first-ever cycle of the Japanese American Confinement Sites program, administered by the National Park Service. From fall 2009 to fall 2010, Densho will conduct 40 video oral histories that will preserve under-documented stories from confinement sites that held Japanese Americans during World War II. Interviews will be conducted primarily in western states and in Hawaii. They will be added to the free online Densho Digital Archive (www.densho.org).

The grant is one of 19 announced by the National Park Service on July 24, totaling \$960,000 to help preserve and interpret many of the historic locations, mostly in the western U.S., where more than 110,000 Japanese Americans were detained during World War II. These first-ever Japanese American Confinement Sites grants will help fund a wide variety of projects in a dozen states.

Densho's "Stories Less Told" interviews will record accounts of the mass wartime detention that are insufficiently collected, representing diverse, sometimes disparate, perspectives. Densho will focus on confinement sites less well documented in its collection, such as the camps in Arkansas and Arizona. Interviewees will include women's stories, underrepresented in national collections, Japanese Americans who protested their detention, and non-Japanese Americans who played a role, such as government employees and individuals who knew or assisted detainees.

Densho's 40 new interviews will be added to the Densho Digital Archive, now containing nearly 370 transcribed and indexed video interviews. The video oral histories are supported by over 10,000 photos and documents, contextual articles and video exhibits, and social studies curricula. The award-winning educational resource serves 100,000 web visitors annually, and is researched by students, teachers, journalists and other writers, oral historians, documentary makers, and the general public.

Congress established the Japanese American Confinement Sites grant program (Public Law 109-441, 16 USC 461) for the preservation and interpretation of U.S. confinement sites where Japanese Americans were detained during World War II. The law authorized up to \$38 million for the entire life of the grant program to identify, research, evaluate, interpret, protect, restore, repair, and acquire historic confinement sites in order that present and future generations may learn and gain inspiration from these sites and that these sites will demonstrate the nation's commitment to equal justice under the law. For Fiscal Year 2009, Congress appropriated \$1 million for the use of this grant program. Grants were awarded in a competitive process, matching \$2 in federal money for every \$1 in non-federal funds and "in-kind" contributions raised by groups working to preserve the sites and their histories.

For more information about the Japanese American Confinement Sites Grants:
<http://www.nps.gov/history/hps/hpg/JACS/index.html>.

For more information about Densho's national interview campaign, or to suggest a potential interviewee, contact Densho: 206-320-0095 or info@densho.org.

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