

From the Director: Tom Ikeda

A couple of weeks ago I was in Tokyo meeting with various Japanese government and political leaders when I received the good news that Densho has been awarded two large grants from the National Park Service for the Japanese American Confinement Sites program (see below). This followed on the heels of the good news that the California Civil Liberties Public Education Program is giving Densho a grant to conduct interviews in the Bay Area (also below). As I flew back to Seattle I spent a few moments feeling heartened by these votes of confidence in our work and by how far Densho had come over the years. But this moment was short-lived as I started getting anxious about all of the work in front of us! I used the rest of the time on the trans-Pacific flight to plan and jot down action items to prepare for these projects.

One of the opportunities from these grants is that we have the resources to fill two full-time positions to join the Densho staff. Please help us by reviewing the job descriptions listed below and forwarding to people who might be interested. The most critical factor in the success and fun of working at Densho is getting great people to join our team.

>> [Read my blog about the Tokyo trip](#)



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From the Archive

International Internees: The Family Camp at Crystal City

*"The bitterness of the incarceration was there, but they were able to circumvent it somehow and live a pretty decent...community family life."
-- Mako Nakagawa*



Days after the Texas Board of Education voted to amend the state's social studies curriculum in order to correct a perceived liberal bias, a Texas chapter in Japanese American history comes to mind. According to press accounts, among the changes the school board made to the curriculum is "an amendment stressing that Germans and Italians as well as Japanese were interned in the United States during World War II, to counter the idea that the internment of Japanese was motivated by racism." An internment camp in the south Texas town of Crystal City did hold German and Japanese internees, as well as prisoners deported from Latin America and a half-dozen Italians. Other internment camps across the country held a mix of foreign nationals. But the fact that the U.S. government interned European immigrants in no way negates the racism that led to the mass incarceration of Japanese Americans.

>> [Read more of this article](#)

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Densho News

Japanese American Confinement Sites



Awards

Densho has been awarded two 2-year Japanese American Confinement Sites grants in a competitive process overseen by the National Park Service. In the second year of this grant program, Congress appropriated \$3 million to preserve, document, and educate about the many sites around the country that held Japanese American men, women, and children during World War II (not just the 10 War Relocation Authority camps best known to people). For every \$1 raised by organizations, the federal government matches with \$2.

For one grant of \$210,000, Densho will conduct 80 new video interviews with Nisei around the country, and digitally process 60 video interviews conducted by others. With the second grant of \$166,145 we will create a completely new educational website to provide a fundamental reference and resource on Japanese American history. Guest articles will be written by leading Asian American studies scholars. By offering new primary sources and educational resources to students and the general public, Densho hopes to counter assertions, from the Texas school board and others, that the World War II incarceration of Japanese Americans was not founded in racism.

>> [Read a press release about the grants awarded](#)



California Civil Liberties Public Education Program: Grants for Interviews

Densho is grateful to receive grants from the state-funded California Civil Liberties Public Education Program, managed by the California State Library. The CCLPEP provides competitive grants for public educational activities and for the development of educational materials to ensure that the events surrounding the exclusion, forced removal, and incarceration of civilians and permanent resident aliens of Japanese ancestry will be remembered and so that causes and circumstances of this and similar events may be illuminated and understood. Densho is completing a 2009-10 grant to produce a dozen oral histories of women living in California (see the Archive Spotlight below). In recent weeks, we have received a new CCLPEP grant to gather 20 more life histories of Bay Area Nisei before their stories are lost forever.

>> [Learn more about the California Civil Liberties Public Education Program](#)



Job Openings

To apply for a job opening listed below, please send your resume (Word, PDF, or Plain Text) and a cover letter describing your interest to jobs@densho.org by Monday, July 12. Please put the title of the position to which you are applying in the Subject field. All applications will be held in confidence. *All submissions and questions should be sent via email - please no phone inquiries.*

Editor, Online Encyclopedia

We are seeking a full-time tech-savvy individual with deep content knowledge in Japanese American history to help create the content for a brand new online encyclopedia about the World War II Japanese American experience. This person will coordinate and oversee the work of writers, proofers, photo editors, and scholars of Japanese American history. The ideal candidate will be an excellent writer and editor, have a strong background in Japanese American history, understand web technology, and possess excellent communication and project management skills. Health, dental, and vision benefits are available. Budgeted starting annual salary is \$50,000.

Web Developer



We are seeking a full-time web developer to help create the next-generation of Densho websites. The initial project of the web developer will be to design and create a brand new online encyclopedia about the World War II Japanese American experience. This person will incorporate the work of content specialists and graphic designers into a scalable, database-driven website that is easy to update and maintain. Other projects for the web developer include updating Densho's SQL Server database and the web applications running off of this database. The ideal candidate will have strong project management skills and experience programming in C#, ASP.NET, and SQL or equivalent programming languages. Health, dental, and vision benefits are available. Budgeted starting annual salary is \$50,000.

WORKING AT DENSHO

Because big dreams take many minds and hands to complete, we work in teams. At Densho, teams are custom built for each project. For example, I may be leading a team of technologists for a month to design a website upgrade and the next day I might be asked to drive a truck and unload supplies for the fundraising team. Roles are dynamic and fluid at Densho, and each person contributes the best he or she can.

Densho is a non-hierarchical organization with many opportunities for flexibility and autonomy, but with the risk of ambiguity and misunderstandings. For this reason, regardless of what position you have at Densho, it is important that you communicate well and are able and willing to work with others in a generous manner. Everyone at Densho goes the extra step to make sure everything flows.

For me as executive director, the rewards of working this way is that once we agree on what we are going to do, I can either move on to another project or take on a role as a team member. In other words, people at Densho figure out and communicate how they are going to get something done without being told by me. I recognize that this style of management is difficult for people who are used to a stricter structure, but for others it becomes a creative and nurturing environment with lots of opportunities to grow.

Finally, at the heart of Densho, we care deeply about social justice issues and the Japanese American community, especially Nisei elders. More than just collecting stories or photos or letters to preserve, we feel we are being entrusted and honored with gifts to share for many generations to come. It becomes natural and assumed that we will do our best to create world-class systems to preserve and share these historically valuable materials for hundreds of years. This is what drives us at Densho. Money is not the motivation because unfortunately we can't pay a lot or give big bonuses. And yet, without strong financial incentives, people still work so hard. I am often the first to leave the office at 6:30 after a ten-hour day. And when we are crunching on a big project, I have to ask people to go home and rest. All the staff take great pride in what Densho offers to our growing audiences.

I hope this gives you a clear, more personal glimpse at what it is like to work at Densho. If this is the work environment for you, please consider applying for one of the open positions. There is plenty of good work to go around and we could use help from energetic, fresh thinkers!

>> For more information about Densho visit our website

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Archive Spotlight

Redress Activist: Lillian Nakano

With a grant from the California Civil Liberties Public Education Program, Densho interviewed a dozen California women in the past year. Among them is Lillian Nakano, originally from Hawaii.



After the attack on Pearl Harbor, her father was picked up by the FBI and sent to Sand Island internment camp. Lillian moved with the rest of the family to the Jerome, Arkansas, incarceration camp to be reunited with her father. When Jerome closed, they lived for a short time at the Heart Mountain incarceration camp in Wyoming before returning to Hawaii. She married and settled in Los Angeles. Along with her husband, Bert Nakano, Lillian became active in the redress movement, helping to establish the National Coalition for Redress and Reparations. In an excerpt from her interview with Densho, Lillian describes the effort it required to convince the Nisei that they should demand redress.

>> See the featured sample from the Densho Digital Archive
>> Register for the free Densho Digital Archive



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National News and Events

Manzanar Launches Virtual Museum

In honor of Asian Pacific American Heritage month, the National Park Service (NPS) has launched a Virtual Museum highlighting more than 200 items from Manzanar National Historic Site's museum collection. Superintendent Les Inafuku says, "This is the 41st Virtual Museum that the National Park Service has created, and we're honored to be launching it close to the 41st Annual Manzanar Pilgrimage. From any internet-connected computer, anytime, any person can explore artifacts, photos, archives, and videos to discover the many stories of Manzanar." The Virtual Museum showcases items highlighting Manzanar's past from centuries of Owens Valley Paiute life to the ranching and farming era, from the World War II confinement of 11,070 Japanese Americans to later Pilgrimages and the eventual establishment of Manzanar National Historic Site. Most of the items featured online have never been seen by the public. The Virtual Museum also includes a virtual tour, oral history interview clips, photo slideshows, and "Teaching with Museum Collections" lesson plans. The project was made possible through the generosity of former internees, camp staff, local residents, their families, and others who have donated items to Manzanar.

>> [View Manzanar's Virtual Museum](#)
>> [Learn more about the Manzanar National Historic Site](#)



Tule Lake Pilgrimage: July 2-5, 2010

Limited space remains for the 18th pilgrimage to the former incarceration camp in northern California. For registration information, contact the Tule Lake Committee, an all-volunteer group composed of former concentration camp prisoners, community activists, and citizens who are committed to honoring the history and legacy of Japanese American families incarcerated at Tule Lake. With a peak population of 18,700, Tule Lake was the largest of the camps, and the most controversial. It was the only camp turned into a high-security segregation center after the loyalty registration, ruled under martial law, and occupied by the Army. Pilgrimages to Tule Lake serve as an opportunity for healing, as former detainees have been stigmatized by assumptions of disloyalty.

>> [Inquire about the Tule Lake pilgrimage](#)



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Recommended Resources

National Archives: War Relocation

THE

Authority Records

In recent months, the National Archives streamlined the search function for the online database of War Relocation Authority records detailing individual Japanese Americans. See the "Records about Japanese Americans Relocated During World War II, created, 1988 - 1989, documenting the period 1942 - 1946" (Record Group 210), described by the National Archives as follows:



The WRA collected personal descriptive information on all individuals who were evacuated from their homes and relocated to one of 10 relocation centers during World War II. They used this information to support their management of the evacuees and the relocation centers. Each record represents an individual and includes the name; relocation project and assembly center to which assigned; previous address; birthplace of parents; occupation of father; education; foreign residence; indication of military service, public assistance, pensions, and physical defects; sex and marital status; race of evacuee and spouse; year of birth; age; birthplace; indication of the holding of an alien registration number and/or Social Security number, and whether the evacuee attended Japanese language school; highest grade completed; language proficiency; occupations; and religion.

Once you locate the record for a family member, you may order the paper file by filling out an online form and gathering family members' signatures. Note that the database was digitized from punch cards, so records for families may be incomplete if cards were damaged or lost before or during the conversion.

>> [Search the WRA records in the National Archives](#)

Online Documentary about Bainbridge Islander Fumiko Hayashida

Fumiko Hayashida: The Woman Behind the Symbol is a short documentary about the oldest surviving Japanese American who during World War II was forced off Bainbridge Island, Washington, and into the Manzanar and Minidoka incarceration camps. The documentary is a historical portrait of Fumiko Hayashida, whose photograph as a young mother became a symbol of the entire historic event. The film also conveys the contemporary story of how the emblematic photo impelled Fumiko to publicly lobby against the injustices of the past. The documentary can be viewed in its entirety online at the Bainbridge Island Japanese American Community's website.



One 7th grade teacher in Boise shared a message about the impact of this documentary in the classroom:

Thank you for your work on the video. Even my "reluctant" students' eyes were glued to the video, and more than one class called it "extremely informative." My favorite part about watching the kids watching the video was seeing them realize that it was all real. They struggled with the concept of the internment camps at first, and asked me more than once if it had really happened. This opened their eyes to the reality even more, and many of them were surprised that they had unknowingly driven right by the ruins of the camp. I'd be really surprised, the next time some of these kids head to Twin Falls, if they don't make a stop at Minidoka and check it out.

>> [View the documentary](#)

To subscribe, go to www.densho.org/about/eneews/subscribe.asp

Densho: The Japanese American Legacy Project - 1416 S. Jackson Street - Seattle, WA 98144

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