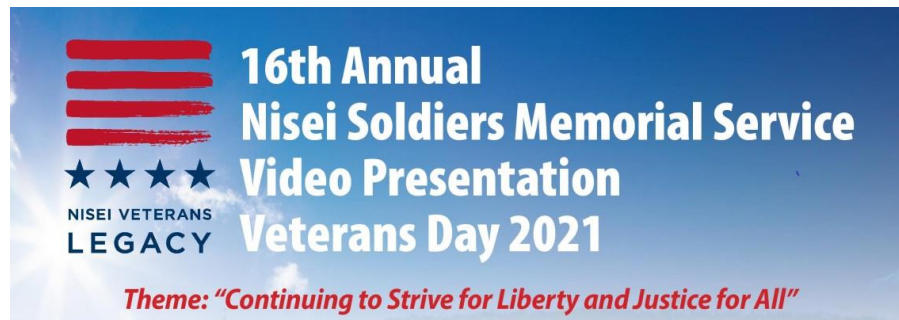




16th Annual Nisei Soldiers Memorial Service



The Nisei Veterans Legacy is honoring all Nisei Soldiers in the 16th Annual Nisei Soldiers Memorial Service with a video tribute since the ongoing pandemic prohibited in-person gatherings at the National Memorial Cemetery of the Pacific at Punchbowl. The 30-minute program is available for viewing on the NVL website.

The theme of this year's memorial service is "*Continuing to Strive for Liberty and Justice for All*," which reflects the ongoing reminder to advocate for equity for all who call America home. The WWII Nisei Soldiers, who bravely fought abroad for liberty and continued the quest when they returned home to Hawai'i, serve as inspiring examples for us to emulate.

The video includes messages from **Lynn Heirakuji**, President of the Nisei Veterans Legacy; retired Army **General David Bramlett**; retired **Pastor Calvin Takara** of Kaimuki Christian Church; and **Bishop Eric Matsumoto** of the Honpa Hongwanji Mission of Hawaii.

These messages are mixed with a ukulele performance by local entertainer **Jake Shimabukuro**, the Presentation, Posting and Retiring of the Colors by the **Roosevelt High School JROTC**; and a personal message from **Caitlin Shishido**, granddaughter of a Nisei Soldier.

Ganbari
November 2021

Many mahalos to NVL committee members **Byrnes Yamashita**, the video lead; **Jeanne Omaye**; and **Lynn Heirakuji**; and also **Mae Isonaga** of the Sons & Daughters of the 442nd RCT, for working tirelessly to produce this tribute. **Kyle Hayama** was the videographer and funding was provided by the Central Pacific Bank Foundation.

[To watch this video, visit the NVL website](#)

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## Hidden Heroes: The Nisei Soldiers of WWII

The HISTORY Channel will broadcast a 1-hour documentary entitled, “*Hidden Heroes: The Nisei Soldiers of WWII*” on Veterans Day, November 11, 2021, at 6 p.m. Hawaii time. Confirm your TV listings for this and any future showings. The show tells the inspiring story of the Nisei Soldiers who served in the 100th/442nd RCT and the Military Intelligence Service during WWII.

[View more information here](#)

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New Youth Journalism Program Perpetuates the Nisei Soldier Legacy



NVL is partnering with the Honolulu Star-Advertiser and Report for America to provide a free three-month pilot program for high school students interested in learning about journalism basics and the stories of Hawai'i's Nisei Soldiers of WWII.

“The NVL is always seeking to forge new partnerships with youth to promote our organization’s mission of perpetuating the legacy of Hawai`i’s Nisei Soldiers,” said **Lynn Heirakuji**, NVL President. “This new program creates win-win opportunities for so many in our community.”

Jayna Omaye, the Honolulu Star-Advertiser’s ethnic and cultural affairs reporter will be the leader and teacher for this program, which begins in early December.

[Read about this fantastic new program and learn how to complete an application.](#)

Applications are due by November 15, 2021 and the program is limited to only six students to maximize personalized attention.

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## Hawaii Herald Veterans Day

14 THE HAWAII HERALD Friday, November 5, 2021

### VETERANS DAY

## NISEI SOLDIERS: REKINDLING THE SOUL OF FIRE

Lynn Heirakuji  
*Special to The Hawai'i Herald*

**W**e all have moments in our lives when we have a flash of insight that sets our lives on an unplanned path. A switch is turned on inside of us, a lightbulb goes on and there is an awakening. It could be something someone says or does that connects us back to our core values and gives us new direction.

Several years ago, during my swearing in ceremony as Deputy Assistant Secretary of the Personnel Oversight, Manpower & Reserve Affairs, for the U.S. Army Secretariat at the Pentagon in Washington, D.C., I shared remarks with my awaiting staff and other senior Army officials. It was the first time I had been called upon to speak publicly and formally about my personal history and career. And it seemed fitting that, as I was about to join the Army civilian ranks, I would reflect upon my father's service as a Nisei soldier in the 442nd Regimental Combat Team. I was able to cobble together a suitable narrative and went on to talk about how my father was 19 when he volunteered to serve, was seriously injured in battle in Italy, and was everlastingly proud of his Go for Broke patch. However, in preparing my remarks, it became embarrassingly apparent to me that I knew very little about his war experience and next to nothing



Walter Itaki Heirakuji, 442nd Regimental Combat Team, K Company.

strapped to the front fender of a military jeep with a Red Cross sign and after a harrowing journey during which the vehicle was fired upon, was able to make it to a big medic tent. While lying in the tent, he asked the medic if he could please try to save his arm. My father spent the next two and a half years in Italy and the states undergoing a total of 16 operations many requiring skin grafts from other parts of his body. The war injury permanently and seriously compromised his ability to use his right arm and he lived the rest of his life as a disabled veteran though I never heard him complain once about his loss.

He told my sister and me a story about going to a bar in California with two Caucasian Army friends while he was recovering from his wounds. My father was in his Army uniform and his arm was in a sling. Clearly, he was an American soldier with an injury. Even though the bar had no other patrons, no one waited on them. His friends were angry at the thought that they were being refused service due to my father being Japanese and were ready to throw punches, but then upon reflection, they decided to just leave. They had already fought enough for a lifetime.

After my father returned to Hawai'i from the war, he met and married my mother, Sally Hisami Kawamura in Honolulu. They had two girls: my sister Lei and me. My father was a regular guy with average ambitions and his post-war jobs included selling insurance and later liquor. I think he preferred calling himself always proud at telling

[Read the Veterans Day article](#) in The Hawaii Herald's November 5, 2021 edition written by Lynn Heirakuji on the impact her father's 442nd soldier experience had on her life.



## A Lasting Connection with the 442nd RCT



**Carmine Iosue**, adult son of World War II veteran **Nicholas Iosue**, has touching memories of his dad who formed a strong bond of friendship with some members in the 442nd Regimental

**Ganbari**  
**November 2021**

Combat Team. While in a truck that was struck by an artillery shell on the battlefield in Italy, the senior Iosue was severely wounded.

A medic who looked at his dog tag mistakenly assumed his Italian last name was Japanese, and Iosue was placed in a 442nd RCT field hospital with Japanese Americans. Given the option to be placed in a Caucasian field hospital, he chose to stay with his Japanese American comrades and formed lasting relationships with them.

After the war, Nicholas visited Hawai`i to attend an American Legion convention. While on Oahu, he reconnected with his Japanese American friends, who treated him like a hero, even though he felt they were the heroes.

**Carmine** and his wife **Tina** recently visited Hawai`i and met with NVL President **Lynn Heirakuji** and NVL Vice President and Education Committee Chair **Byrnes Yamashita** along with **Ann Kabasawa**, President of the 100th Infantry Battalion Veterans, and **Shinye Gima**, President of the MIS Education Society of Hawaii.

Carmine said his father, as with many other World War II Veterans, rarely spoke about his war experiences, and those wounded in battle never complained. He said most were just grateful to be with their families. [Watch a video of Carmine's visit to Hawai`i](#), his recollections of his dad, and the lasting bond the senior Iosue developed with the 442nd veterans.