



Mission

The mission of the Nisei Veterans Legacy is to preserve and perpetuate the legacy of Americans of Japanese Ancestry (AJA) who served in the U.S. armed forces in World War II: the 100th Infantry Battalion, 442nd Regimental Combat Team, Military Intelligence Service, and 1399th Engineer Construction Battalion. Through education and outreach, the NVL is committed to ensuring that future generations learn Hawaii's story of the Nisei soldier legacy. These stories include the incredible sacrifices made by the AJA during the course of World War II as well as their significant contributions to Hawaii's post war society. It is hoped that a greater sense of civic responsibility will transpire by promoting community awareness of the values of good citizenship, such as loyalty, gratitude and humility, exemplified by the Nisei veterans.

Leadership

Directors:

Wesley Deguchi
Glenn Goya
Warren Yamamoto
Lynn Heirakuji
Phyllis Hironaka
Janice Trubitt
Lawrence Enomoto
Lloyd Kitaoka

Advisors:

Warren Haruki
Irene Hirano
Dr. Fujio Matsuda
Gary Okuda
Barbara Tanabe
Ted Tsukiyama
Barbara Watanabe



Hawaii Nikkei Legacy Exhibit Tours Hawaii and Japan

The Nisei Veterans Legacy (NVL) and the Consulate General of Japan in Honolulu are co-sponsoring a state-wide tour of the Hawaii Nikkei Legacy exhibit in 2018 as part of the "Gannenmono, Celebrating 150 Years" activities.

The exhibit follows the Japanese in Hawaii from initial immigration in 1868, up to the present. It covers the role of World War II Nisei soldiers in shaping of post-war Hawaii and its relationship with Japan, as well as the influence and intermingling of Japanese culture and values with those others in Hawaii. Prominent Hawaii Japanese are featured and grouped by their prefectural roots in Japan.

The exhibit made its Hawaii debut at the Honolulu Festival in March followed by showings at Honolulu Hale, the Queen Kaahumanu Center on Maui, the Association of Nikkei and Japanese Abroad convention at Sheraton Waikiki Hotel, and the Gannenmono Symposium also at the Sheraton. The most recent showing was at Kahala Mall from June 16 to July 1, with over 3,000 views.

Future showings include:

- University of Hawai'i West O'ahu Library, August 20–31
- Kukui Grove Center on Kauai, September 7–23
- Hawaii Community Federal Credit Union in Kona, November 1–28
- Hawaii Japanese Center in Hilo, December 1–21.

A copy of the exhibit continues to tour Japan with the support of Hawai'i Tourism Japan, a marketing arm of the Hawai'i Tourism Authority. The exhibit has already been shown in Nagoya, Hiroshima, and Nagaoka. Future showings include Fukuoka in August; Sapporo in September; Naha, Okinawa in October; and tentatively, Kumamoto in November.

The NVL also presented a four panel display at the Honolulu Festival. This exhibit focused on the military service of Nisei during World War II. Exhibit space was generously donated by the Hawaii Senior Life Enrichment Association.



TOP July 2019, NVL volunteers Byrnes Yamashita, left, and Ryoji Koike, second from Left, escorted the NVL touring exhibit shown here in Nagaoka, Japan.

ABOVE April 2018, left to right, Honolulu Director of Economic Development Ed Hawkins, Consul General of Japan Koichi Ito, NVL President Wes Deguchi, and NVL Board Member Glenn Goya at Honolulu Hale.

BELOW July 2018, NVL exhibit at Kahala Mall in Honolulu.



JCCH Gala Event

The Japanese Cultural Center of Hawaii (JCCH) held its annual fundraising gala event at the Hilton Hawaiian Village on June 16, 2018. Over 900 friends of the JCCH attended and were treated to a delightful program, which included performances by honorees Jake Shimabukuro and *Allegiance* star George Takei. The Nisei Veterans Legacy, along with the GFB National Education Center and Nisei Veterans Memorial Center, were also honored for their roles in promoting the legacy of the Nisei soldiers who were an integral part of the Japanese history in Hawaii.



Honorees of this year's JCCH gala event

Joint Memorial Service

The 13th Annual Joint Memorial Service (JMS), honoring Japanese American Soldiers in World War II, will be held at **9:30 am on Sunday, September 30, 2018 at the National Memorial Cemetery of the Pacific**. The theme for this celebration is: "Remembering their sacrifice by challenging ourselves." Tom Coffman, author of books on the history and political development of Hawai'i, will be our keynote speaker.

Nisei veterans and their personal care attendants who would like to arrange for transportation to attend this ceremony should call 949-7997 (Mon–Thu) by September 14, 2018. We hope that all Nisei veterans who can join us will take advantage of this free service.

For further information about the JMS, please contact Larry Enomoto, (808) 255-8971, JMS Co-Chair.

AJA Unification Effort

A group of Americans of Japanese Ancestry (AJA) veteran organizations on Oahu including the NVL has been meeting over the past several months to discuss how best to honor the WWII Nisei Soldier story as a strong unified group. The number of separate AJA veteran organizations all with a similar mission has created confusion within the community, resulted in competition for scarce resources, and detracted from the telling of the Nisei Soldier story of patriotic service, heroism, and sacrifice. The group is focusing on coming up with a viable structure for a formal overarching entity that would continue to preserve the individual identities of participant organizations; and is also assessing various educational initiatives that might be ripe for strategic organizational collaborations.

New NVL Officers

Phyllis Hironaka, Board Member of the NVL and member of the Sons & Daughters of the 442nd Veterans Club, has been nominated and elected by the Board to serve the 2-year term as Secretary. As Secretary, Phyllis shall record, distribute and maintain the proceedings of meetings; assist with correspondence; and keep an up-to-date membership roster.

Lynn Heirakuji, Board Member of the NVL, and member of the Sons & Daughters of the 442nd Veterans Club, has been nominated and elected by the Board to serve the 2-year term as Vice President. As Vice President, Lynn will assist the President and in his absence, assume his duties.

Currently, NVL's other Officers are Wes Deguchi, President, and Glenn Goya, Treasurer.



ABOVE
Lynn Heirakuji delivering
U.S. Coast Guard District
14 presentation on June
26, 2018

RIGHT
Coast Guardsman
inspecting Eisenhower
jacket of Walter
Heirakuji, 442nd RCT,
late father of Lynn
Heirakuji.



Telling the Nisei Soldier Story

To further the mission of the NVL to preserve and share the WWII Nisei Soldier Story, we have been actively presenting the story to various audiences on Oahu. Because our fathers did not talk much about their wartime experiences, we descendants feel that it is important to share their story on their behalf.

Using the Hawaii Nikkei Legacy Exhibit platform as a basic framework we have given presentations covering the wartime and post war legacy of the Nisei Soldiers to the following groups.

- May 26, 2018 – Scouts of Aloha Council as part of its Memorial Day Good Day event during which Scouts learn about the honor, loyalty, and sacrifices of those who served in the military.
- June 16, 2018 – Society of Military Widows, Hawaii Chapter whose mission is to support the welfare of military surviving spouses and dependent children. Attendees were especially interested in the WWII internment experience of the Japanese Americans.
- June 26, 2018 – U.S. Coast Guard District 14 as part of its leadership and diversity initiative. Most of the attendees were military members and for many the Nisei Soldier story seemed to be unfamiliar. Yuri Higashi, Consul for Foreign Affairs, Japan Consulate, also attended the event.
- July 26, 2018 – 808 Hawaii Update Radio Talk Show live one-hour interview which touched upon what life was like for the Japanese right before the U.S. entered WWII, the origins of the four Nisei military units, and the Soldiers' accomplishments both on the battlefield and when they returned to Hawaii.

Lynn Heirakuji was the presenter at these events. Her co-presenter at the Scouts of Aloha Council and during the 808 Hawaii Update Radio Talk Show was Lloyd Kitaoka, descendant and former President of the 100th Infantry Battalion Veterans.

We are committed to sharing the Nisei Soldier story in as many venues as we can. Please let us know if you see an opportunity for continued sharing or if you would like to be a part of this effort. Contact Lynn Heirakuji at LHeirakuji@gmail.com or Byrnes Yamashita, NVL at bkyamas@gmail.com.

Japan Foreign Minister Kono Meets with Veterans and AJA Veteran Organizations

Japan Foreign Minister Taro Kono participated in two activities with the Nisei Veterans Legacy on August 22, 2018, during his short visit to Hawaii.

In the first event, NVL volunteer Byrnes Yamashita led a viewing of the Hawaii Nikkei Legacy Exhibit at the University of Hawai'i at West O'ahu library. Foreign Minister and Mrs. Kono were accompanied by Consul General and Mrs. Ito of the Consulate General of Japan in Honolulu. The foreign minister expressed his appreciation for the historical overview. Yamashita gave credit to Ambassador and Mrs. Shigeeda who over three years ago presented a request to NVL to create and take such an exhibit to Japan.

At the second event, Nisei veterans and leaders from the various local AJA (Americans of Japanese Ancestry) veterans organizations met with Foreign Minister Kono and Consul General Ito at an informal lunch gathering at the 100th Infantry Battalion

Clubhouse.

Minister Kono warmly addressed the group and talked about the importance of the Nisei soldier story and the Japanese American experience. He emphasized that these stories including ones about the internment of Japanese Americans during WWII need to be shared with the people of Japan. Minister Kono, who graduated from Georgetown University in Washington, D.C., worked for a couple of U.S. politicians, and knew Senator Daniel Inouye, also shared his thoughts about his U.S. experience.

Nisei veterans present at the event included Herbert Yanamura, Robert

Kishinami (and his wife), Fujio Matsuda, Kazuto Shimizu, and George Ariyoshi, who served as spokesperson for the AJA Veterans organizations.

It was an honor to meet Foreign Minister Kono. We hope this is the start of an ongoing relationship with him.



Students from Usa City, Japan, enjoying bento at the 100th Infantry Battalion clubhouse.



Isami Yoshihara (right) providing tour of the 100th Infantry Battalion clubhouse to Usa City representatives.

NVL Hosts Two Groups from Usa City, Japan

Two groups of visitors from Usa City, Oita Prefecture, Japan were hosted by NVL in August.

This was the third year that Usa City students visited Honolulu for educational and cultural experiences. About 25 middle school students and their chaperones were given the history of Hawaii's Japanese Americans and specifically the contributions of the Nisei soldiers during and after World War II.

A second event coordinated by NVL involved Usa City representatives and local Nisei veterans organizations to learn about the city's plan to construct a Peace Museum in October 2020 and to discuss how Nisei groups could be of assistance to them.

Alan Hayashi of the Go For Broke National Education Center explained about their exhibit in Los Angeles and invited the Usa City group to visit the facility. Lynn Heirakuji discussed the ongoing construction of the National Museum of the U.S. Army, also scheduled to be completed in 2020, and their plans to feature the story of the Nisei soldiers.

After the meeting, 100th Infantry Battalion Club member Isami Yoshihara provided a tour of the 100th Infantry Battalion clubhouse, and the Usa City representatives invited Nisei representatives to attend the grand opening of their Museum.

Through these presentations and interactions, the NVL is working to improve relations between Japan and Hawaii, much like the Nisei soldiers did after WWII.

HISLEA, NVL and the Rainbow Kids from Tohoku, Japan

The Nisei Veterans Legacy hosted ten high school students from the Tohoku region of Japan on Saturday, March 24, 2018 at the 100th Infantry Battalion clubhouse. The students, referred to as the Rainbow Kids, are orphans from the 2011 earthquake and tsunami disaster. Each year since the disaster, several students are brought to Hawaii for a week of educational and cultural experiences by the Over the Rainbow Foundation which is headquartered in Tokyo. The students are hosted in Hawaii each year by the Hawaii Senior Life Enrichment Association (HISLEA).

The NVL has partnered with the HISLEA for the past two years to help educate HISLEA members and visitors from Japan about Hawaii's Japanese American history with an emphasis on the Nisei soldiers. This year's presenters included Lloyd Kitaoka (100th IB), Lynn Heirakuji (442nd RCT), Larry Enomoto (MIS) and Byrnes Yamashita (NVL). Visitors were also given a tour of the historic 100th Infantry Battalion clubhouse.

HISLEA has sponsored NVL exhibits at the Honolulu Festival and has also supported the Hawaii Nikkei Legacy Exhibit tour in Japan.





NVL Presentation at Shufu Society of Hawaii Annual Meeting

One hundred twenty members of the Shufu Society of Hawaii and their guests received a lesson in Hawaii Japanese American history during their annual meeting at the Waialae Country Club on Sunday, March 11, 2018.

The Shufu Society of Hawaii is a non-profit organization whose mission is to foster cross-cultural relations between Japan and Hawaii. As part of the Gannenmono 150th anniversary of Japanese immigration to Hawaii the Society requested a presentation from the Nisei Veterans Legacy as the featured event of their annual meeting.

NVL volunteer Byrnes Yamashita, with translation assistance by Ms. Christine Kubota, Board Chairwoman of the Japanese Cultural Center of Hawaii, provided a slide presentation of Japanese American history in Hawaii with a strong emphasis on the role of the Nisei soldiers of World War II.

Honored guests included Mrs. Dawn Amano-Ige, former Governor and Mrs. George Ariyoshi and Mrs. Koichi Ito, wife of the Consul General of Japan.

As part of their annual donation campaign to support organizations that help promote Hawaii and Japan relations, Mrs. Keiko Arikawa, President of the Shufu Society of Hawaii presented a check for \$1,000 to NVL to support the Hawaii Nikkei Legacy exhibit tour of Japan.

The event also marked the first public display of a new NVL travelling exhibit, the Nisei Soldiers Legacy, which focuses on the Nisei post-war contributions to Hawaii.



Mrs. Arikawa, left, and Mrs. Ito with the new Legacy Exhibit



Update on the National Museum of the U.S. Army (NMUSA)

Due to unexpected delays, the NMUSA which will be the official national museum of the U.S. Army will be opening its doors in the first half of 2020 rather than in 2019. The NMUSA will be located near Ft Belvoir which is about 20 miles south of Washington D.C. It will honor the service and sacrifice of U.S. Army Soldiers, Civilians and Families.

Construction is progressing well with the exterior of the 3-level, 185,000 sqft building now visible as shown in the May 2018 photograph above.

The NMUSA will include recognition of the WWII Nisei Soldiers in four gallery areas. It will present their story from the perspective of a two-front war fought on the battlefields overseas and on the home front where Japanese Americans continued to face adversity and discrimination. NMUSA has not yet announced its selections of individual Hawaii Nisei Soldier stories. However, it thanks the many families who have generously donated various Soldier objects such as photographs, medals and patches, jackets, and original documents which are now a permanent part of the U.S. Army's Historical Collection.

For more information on NMUSA, contact Lynn Heirakuji at LHeirakuji@gmail.com or (240)-351-8656.

NVL Website Enhancements

In 2017, activities were initiated to enhance the NVL website. The initial project was development of a timeline of significant events in the history of Americans of Japanese Ancestry of Hawaii. Events from 1778 through 2015 were brought live at the end of Summer 2017. Since then several more events have been added, bringing the current total to 147.

In 2018, a second phase of the timeline was launched to group individual events to tell the 'stories' that are outlined by the events. There will be 29 stories accompanied by photographs and video, so we have titled these as 'multimedia stories.' The first group of stories covering the period 1924 to 1941 were released on the website on 30 April, and the second group addressing the WWII years was released on 30 June. We are currently working on the third and final group of stories about the early years prior to 1924, and the post WWII years. These are targeted for release on 31 August.

We are also working on another website project that tells the story of the 442nd's field artillery battalion, the 522. This project is developing a documentary video that is designed primarily for a school age audience. The first episode will be produced this year and will provide a 35 minute overview, beginning prior to the Pearl Harbor attack and concluding at the end of the war and the unexpected experience of liberating Jewish prisoners from the deathly hands of the Nazis. This introductory overview has been written and recorded, and creation of the video track has now started.

Please visit our website: nvlchawaii.org to view our educational programs and learn about the latest news and events.

NVL news is published by the Nisei Veterans Legacy, P.O. Box 2476, Honolulu, Hawaii 96804, 808-971-1060, inquire@NVLChawaii.org.

Honoring the 100th Infantry Battalion, 442nd Regimental Combat Team, Military Intelligence Service, and 1399th Engineer Construction Battalion.

