

*The Medal of Honor  
is not something soldiers seek.  
No one can train for it. In fact,  
no one expects people to make  
the kinds of sacrifices required  
in order to receive it.*

*Excerpted from remarks made at the ceremony inducting recent  
Medal of Honor recipients into the Hall of Heroes at the  
Pentagon, June 22, 2000, by General Eric K. Shinseki,  
Chief of Staff, U.S. Army*

## THE MEDAL OF HONOR

### **Fewer Than 3,500 American War Heroes Have Received This Honor**

The Medal of Honor is the highest award for valor in action against an enemy force that can be bestowed upon an individual serving in the Armed Forces of the United States. Generally presented to its recipient by the President of the United States in the name of Congress, it is often called the Congressional Medal of Honor.

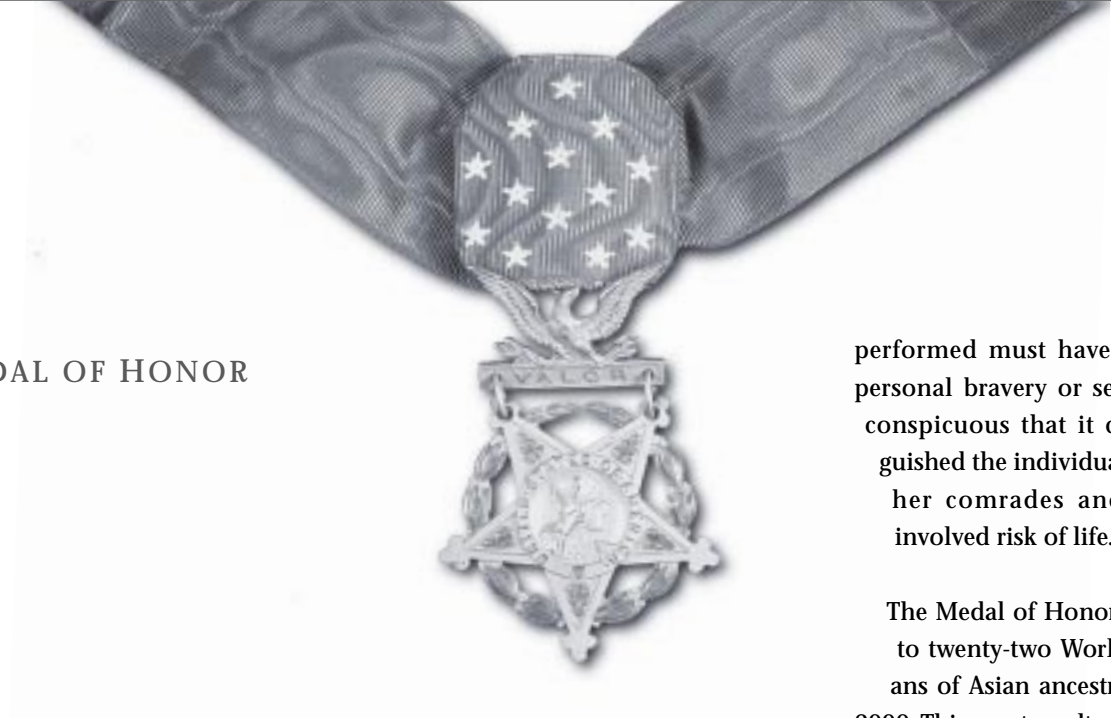
The roots of the award date back to December 9, 1861, when Senator James W. Grimes of Iowa introduced a bill that authorized distribution of "medals of honor" to be bestowed upon sailors and marines who distinguished themselves by their gallantry in action during the Civil War. Two months later, on February 17, 1862, Massachusetts Senator Henry Wilson introduced a similar bill, authorizing the distribution of medals to soldiers in the Army. When President Abraham Lincoln signed both of these bills, the Medal of Honor was born. With this simple and rather obscure act, Congress created an award that would achieve unique prominence in American history.

The Medal of Honor is not awarded frequently. Since it was established in 1862, fewer than 3,500 soldiers, sailors, marines, airmen, and coastguardsmen have been awarded the Medal of Honor, and fewer than 600 of them received the award posthumously. It is reserved for those individuals who, while a member of the Armed Forces engaged in combat, distinguished themselves by gallantry and intrepidity at the risk of their own lives above and beyond the call of duty. The deed

performed must have been one of personal bravery or self-sacrifice so conspicuous that it clearly distinguished the individual above his or her comrades and must have involved risk of life.

The Medal of Honor was awarded to twenty-two World War II veterans of Asian ancestry on June 21, 2000. This event resulted from a review of military records requested by Congress in 1996. The Secretary of the Army was instructed to review the service records of all Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders who were awarded the Distinguished Service Cross in World War II to determine if any should be upgraded to the Medal of Honor. Of the 104 names submitted, 22 were upgraded, including 20 Japanese Americans, one Hawaiian/Chinese American, and one Filipino American.

Considering the millions of Americans who have served in our nation's armed forces since 1862, the fact that fewer than 3,500 individuals have received the Medal of Honor clearly demonstrates that it is reserved only for those individuals whose heroism is beyond question.



## WASHINGTONIANS WHO HAVE RECEIVED THE MEDAL OF HONOR

### PRIOR TO WORLD WAR I

Coxswain Harry Fadden U.S. Navy  
Pvt. Edward Lyon U.S. Army, Amboy

### WORLD WAR I

Capt. Edward C. Allworth U.S. Army, Crawford  
1st Lt. Deming Bronson U.S. Army, Seattle

### WORLD WAR II

PFC Richard Beatty Anderson U.S. Marine Corps, Tacoma ★  
1st Lt. Arnold L. Bjorklund U.S. Army, Clinton  
HAFC Robert Eugene Bush U.S. Navy, Tacoma  
S.Sgt. Jesse R. Drowley U.S. Army, Spokane  
Maj. Robert Edward Galer U.S. Marine Corps, Seattle  
Sgt. John D. Hawk U.S. Army, Bremerton  
1st Lt. Victor L. Kandle U.S. Army, Roy ★  
BM1 Reinhardt John Keppler U.S. Navy, Ralston ★  
PFC Dexter J. Kerstetter U.S. Army, Centralia  
PFC Joe E. Mann U.S. Army, Rearden ★  
Pvt. Lloyd G. McCarter U.S. Army, Tacoma  
Lt. Richard Miles McCool U.S. Navy, Bainbridge Island  
SM1 Douglas Albert Munro U.S. Coast Guard, Cle Elum ★  
S.Sgt. Jack J. Pendleton U.S. Army, Yakima  
Capt. Albert Harold Rooks U.S. Navy, Colton ★  
Pvt. Wilburn K. Ross U.S. Army, Dupont  
1st Lt. James Elms Swett U.S. Marine Corps, Seattle  
Lt. Cmdr. Bruce Avery Van Voorhis U.S. Navy, Aberdeen ★  
Gen. Jonathan M. Wainwright U.S. Army, Walla Walla

### KOREA WAR

PFC Walter C. Monegan, Jr. U.S. Marine Corps, Seattle  
S.Sgt. Archie Van Winkle U.S. Marine Corps, Arlington  
1st Lt. Benjamin F. Wilson U.S. Army, Vashon

### VIETNAM WAR

PFC Lewis Albanese U.S. Army, Seattle ★  
Maj. Patrick Henry Brady U.S. Army, Sumner  
Capt. James P. Fleming U.S. Air Force, Kent  
Sgt. Bruce Alan Grandstaff U.S. Army, Spokane ★  
Lt. Col. Joe M. Jackson U.S. Air Force, Kent  
S/4 Thomas James Kinsman U.S. Army, Renton  
2nd Lt. Robert Ronald Leisy U.S. Army, Seattle ★  
1st Lt. Frank S. Reasoner U.S. Marine Corps, Spokane  
CM3 Marvin G. Shields U.S. Navy, Port Townsend ★  
★ Killed in action

IN THE DEADLY CHAOS OF BATTLE, SOLDIERS  
HOLD TO TRUST, AND WHEN THEY FIGHT,  
THEY FIGHT FOR EACH OTHER BECAUSE  
OF THAT TRUST RESIDENT IN ONE ANOTHER.  
IT IS A BOND THAT DEFIES INTELLECTUAL  
UNDERSTANDING. YOU CAN'T QUANTIFY IT,  
AND YOU CAN'T EXPLAIN IT, BUT THE MEN  
WE HONOR TODAY [WITH THE MOH]

ARE PROOF THAT IT EXISTS.

General Eric K. Shinseki  
Chief of Staff, U.S. Army



Medal of Honor recipients and the families of those receiving the award posthumously gathered in Washington, DC, on June 21, 2000 to accept their awards. June Oshima (back row, second from left) accepted the award for her brother, William Nakamura. Nobuyo Okubo (second row, far right) accepted the award for her husband, James Okubo.

In addition to William Nakamura and James Okubo, there have been thirty-five other Medal of Honor recipients who either were born in or lived in Washington State.

## WASHINGTONIANS NAKAMURA AND OKUBO HONORED ALONG WITH 20 OTHERS OF ASIAN ANCESTRY

Along with William Nakamura and James Okubo, twenty other Asian American veterans, mostly Nisei (second generation Japanese Americans), were awarded the Medal of Honor on June 21, 2000, for their service in World War II.

In addition to these men, two other Nisei soldiers have received the Medal of Honor: PFC Sadao S. Munemori, U.S. Army, of Los Angeles, California, received the award in 1946 for his service in World War II; and Cpl. Hiroshi H. Miyamura, U.S. Army, of Gallup, New Mexico, was honored for his service in the Korean War.

2nd Lt. Rudolph B. Davila U.S. Army, El Paso, Texas  
Pvt. Barney F. Hajiro U.S. Army, Punene, Hawaii  
Pvt. Mikio Hasemoto U.S. Army, Honolulu, Hawaii  
Pvt. Joe Hayashi U.S. Army, Salinas, California ★  
Pvt. Shizuya Hayashi U.S. Army, Waiialua, Hawaii  
1st Lt. Daniel K. Inouye U.S. Army, Honolulu, Hawaii  
T.Sgt. Yeiki Kobashigawa U.S. Army, Hilo, Hawaii  
S.Sgt. Robert T. Kuroda U.S. Army, Aiea, Hawaii ★  
PFC Kaoru Moto U.S. Army, Hawaii  
PFC Kiyoshi K. Muranaga U.S. Army, Los Angeles, California ★  
Pvt. Masato Nakae U.S. Army, Lihue, Hawaii  
Pvt. Shinyei Nakamine U.S. Army, Waianae, Hawaii ★  
PFC Joe M. Nishimoto U.S. Army, Fresno, California  
S.Sgt. Allan M. Ohata U.S. Army, Honolulu, Hawaii  
T.Sgt. Yukio Okutsu U.S. Army, Koloa, Hawaii  
PFC Frank H. Ono U.S. Army, North Judson, Indiana  
S.Sgt. Kazuo Otani U.S. Army, Visalia, California ★  
Pvt. George T. Sakato U.S. Army, Colton, California  
T.Sgt. Ted T. Tanouye U.S. Army, Torrance, California  
Capt. Francis B. Wai U.S. Army, Honolulu, Hawaii ★

★ Killed in action

If you would like to read more about the Medal of Honor, please visit the following Web sites:

- ★ [www.army.mil/cmh-pg/moh1.htm](http://www.army.mil/cmh-pg/moh1.htm)
- ★ [www.cmohs.org/](http://www.cmohs.org/)
- ★ [www.homeofheroes.com](http://www.homeofheroes.com)

## INTERNMENT OF JAPANESE AMERICANS DURING THE WAR

### *Loyalty Despite Injustice*

The valiant service of Japanese American soldiers in World War II must be viewed in the context of one of the most disgraceful events in the history of our country—the imprisonment of Japanese Americans, most of whom were U.S. citizens, living on the West Coast during the war. Even after being forced into concentration camps, even while their loved ones remained in the camps, these men served the United States—the country they loved.



The internment was the culmination of an atmosphere of escalating suspi-

cion and prejudice. In the fall of 1941, prior to the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor, war with Japan seemed inevitable. That prompted the U.S. State Department, the FBI, and Naval Intelligence to conduct secret, independent investigations to evaluate the loyalty of Japanese Americans living on the West Coast and in Hawaii. They concluded that Japanese Americans were extremely loyal to the United States, and Japanese immigrants were no threat to national security.

Despite the loyalty of Japanese Americans, war hysteria turned public opinion against them in the weeks following the attack on Pearl Harbor. Elected officials, city councils, and civic organizations in California, Oregon, and Washington demanded their ouster and incarceration. In response to these pressures and against objections from Attorney General Francis Biddle and FBI Director J. Edgar Hoover that it was unnecessary and unconstitutional, President Franklin D. Roosevelt signed Executive Order 9066 on February 19, 1942.

Using the authority granted by the Order and under the guise of “military necessity,” General John L. DeWitt, commander of the Western Defense Command, first instructed all persons of Japanese ancestry to voluntarily leave the West Coast and the southern half of Arizona. That instruction soon became an order. In March 1942, Japanese Americans in California, parts of Arizona, Oregon, and Washington (Japanese Americans in Hawaii were not included) were ordered to report to temporary detention camps near their homes—a move they were told was “for their own protection.” From there, detainees were moved to ten concentration camps located in desolate and remote areas of Arizona,



Arkansas, California, Colorado, Idaho, Utah, and Wyoming. These camps were surrounded by barbed wire fences, guard towers, and searchlights and were guarded by fellow Americans armed with machine guns and ordered to shoot anyone who attempted to escape.

To comply with General DeWitt’s order, Japanese Americans had to leave their homes with only a few days’ notice, with only the possessions they could carry with them. Their property was hurriedly sold, abandoned, or given away. With their bank accounts frozen and no way to meet tax and mortgage payments, many lost their homes, businesses, and farmlands.

Life in the camps was harsh and demoralizing. People lived in rows of black tarpaper barracks. Large families or sometimes groups of unrelated individuals were stripped of their privacy and squeezed into

tiny, partitioned 20 by 25 foot units. The barracks had no insulation and offered little protection from cold winter weather, desert heat, or incessant dust storms.

Most mainland Japanese Americans—roughly 120,000 people—remained in these concentration camps until January 1945.

Ironically, it is from these camps that many of the young Japanese American soldiers who fought so hard in World War II volunteered or were drafted.

To learn more about the internment of Japanese Americans, please visit:

- ★ The San Francisco Museum, World War II exhibit, at [www.sfmuseum.org](http://www.sfmuseum.org)
- ★ The University of Washington Libraries, Japanese American Exhibit and Access Project, at [www.lib.washington.edu](http://www.lib.washington.edu)
- ★ A collection of information about Japanese Americans during World War II at [www.geocities.com/Athens/8420/main.html](http://www.geocities.com/Athens/8420/main.html)



ONE OF THE PROUDEST MOMENTS OF MY PRESIDENCY CAME ON FEBRUARY 19, 1976, WHEN I ISSUED A PROCLAMATION OFFICIALLY TERMINATING EXECUTIVE ORDER 9066. WE NOW KNOW WHAT WE SHOULD HAVE KNOWN THEN – NOT ONLY WAS THE EVACUATION WRONG, BUT JAPANESE AMERICANS WERE LOYAL AMERICANS. ON THE BATTLEFIELDS AND AT HOME, JAPANESE AMERICANS HAVE BEEN AND CONTINUE TO BE WRITTEN IN OUR HISTORY FOR THE SACRIFICES AND CONTRIBUTIONS THEY HAVE MADE TO THE WELL-BEING AND SECURITY OF THIS, OUR COMMON NATION.

*Former President Gerald R. Ford  
February 2001*

#### ABOUT THE ARTIST

*Henry Sugimoto painted the images on this page while imprisoned at the Jerome Relocation Camp in Arkansas during World War II. The paintings illustrate the conflicting emotions of those imprisoned in concentration camps in America while their sons, husbands, and family members went to war to fight for their country. The paintings shown here, along with other painting by Mr. Sugimoto, are gifts of Madeleine Sugimoto and Naomi Tagawa to the Japanese American National Museum. Used with permission.*



IF A MAN MAY BE DEPRIVED OF HIS LIBERTY...SIMPLY BECAUSE MEN NOW LIVING IN THE COUNTRY WHERE HIS GRANDFATHER WAS BORN HAVE BECOME THE ACTIVE ENEMIES OF THE UNITED STATES, THEN WE ARE DISREGARDING THE VERY PRINCIPLES FOR WHICH THIS WAR IS BEING WAGED AGAINST THE AXIS NATIONS.

*Colorado Governor  
Ralph L. Carr, 1942*

## THE LEGENDARY 100TH BATTALION/442ND REGIMENTAL COMBAT TEAM

### *Honor Triumphs in Battle and Against Prejudice*

The history of Japanese Americans who fought in World War II against Hitler's Third Reich is remarkable in that it rises from the ashes of hysteria and suspicion to its present day position of honor and respect. The 100th Battalion/442nd Regimental Combat Team (RCT), the segregated regiment of Nisei soldiers, is the most decorated unit for its size and length of service in the history of the U.S. Army. The unit received a total of 18,143 individual decorations for valor and was the only unit to be personally received by the President of the United States upon its return home after the war. President Harry S Truman presented the 100th/442nd with its seventh Presidential Unit Citation on July 16, 1946.

The 100th/442nd RCT suffered the highest combat casualties of any American fighting unit—a casualty rate of 314%. In spite of it all, they spearheaded major campaigns, turned the tide of battle, never complained, and never took one step backwards. These Americans' love of country, family, and community, and their willingness to risk everything, justified their regimental motto, "Go For Broke."

It all began in Hawaii when the 100th Infantry Battalion was formed in June 1942, with men who had been members of the Hawaii National Guard.

After extensive training – training that broke records for excellence – the 100th landed on the shores of Salerno, Italy, attached to the "Red Bull" 34th Infantry Division on September 22, 1943.



*President Harry S Truman salutes the 100th Battalion/442nd RCT at a ceremony welcoming the unit home after the War.*

AS FIGHTING MEN, AS REAL  
AMERICAN SOLDIERS, THEY [THE 100TH]  
ARE TOPS – ABSOLUTELY TOPS.

*Private Joseph E. Palmer,  
Beach Head News*

In February 1943, the War Department activated the all-Japanese American 442nd Regimental Combat Team (RCT). When the Army called for volunteers, surprisingly, more than 2,500 men from Hawaii and 1,300 men from the mainland joined. Most of the mainland volunteers—determined to win back their rights as American citizens by spilling their blood if necessary to prove their loyalty—came from the concentration camps that still held their wives, parents, and siblings. Ironically, these Nisei had been classified as 4C (enemy aliens, unavailable for draft). The newly formed 442nd RCT began training at Camp Shelby, Mississippi, in May 1943.

Meanwhile, in Italy, the 100th Battalion established a reputation as an elite fighting unit, beating back the German forces, making difficult river crossings, joining in the breakout from the Anzio beachhead, and opening the road into Rome. The battalion fought so hard and suffered such high casualties that it became known as the "Purple Heart Battalion."

With the 100th Battalion's extraordinary combat record and the 442nd RCT's excellent training record, the units were combined in Italy in June 1944 and named the 100th Battalion/442nd Regimental Combat Team (100th/442nd). One of its most famous assignments was with the 36th Infantry Division from Texas, fighting in the vicinity of Epinal, France. Its first task in October 1944 was to liberate the town of Bruyeres. In three days of bitter fighting through heavy forest, the unit suffered 1,200 casualties while securing Bruyeres and Belmont.

*Soldiers from the 100th/442nd evacuate captured German soldiers.*



*Photos in this section courtesy of The National Japanese American Historical Society.*



EISENHOWER'S STAFF

DECLINED THEM [THE

JAPANESE AMERICAN

100TH BATTALION].

GENERAL CLARK

TOOK THEM. THEY

WERE SUPERB! THEY

TOOK TERRIFIC

CASUALTIES. THEY

SHOWED RARE

COURAGE AND

TREMENDOUS FIGHTING

SPIRIT...EVERYBODY

WANTED THEM.

*General of the Army  
George C. Marshall*

With only two days' rest, the 100th/442nd was called upon to rescue the so-called "Lost Battalion" of the 36th Infantry Division, which had been cut off by German forces. After two rescue attempts by the 36th Division, the Lost Battalion had been isolated almost a week, was low on food and ammunition, and was in very grave danger. Although the 100th/442nd was at only half strength, the unit fought four of the bloodiest and fiercest days of the war, which resulted in more than 800 casualties, and successfully rescued the 211 men of the Lost Battalion. In gratitude, several years after the war, Texas Governor John Connolly officially proclaimed all former members of the 100th/442nd "Honorary Texans."

In early March 1945, General Mark Clark personally requested the return of the 100th/442nd to Italy to create a diversionary attack on the western end of the German Gothic Line, which had withstood six months of Allied Army efforts. In the predawn hours of April 5, 1945, three battalions of the 100th/442nd silently climbed the sheer faces of steep mountain cliffs in total darkness. At 5:00 a.m., after an artillery barrage, they successfully overtook the surprised German defenders, and in just 32 minutes broke the unbreakable Gothic Line. Their advance continued from the mountains just north of Azzano, past Massa, Carrara, the shore guns at La Spezia, Genoa and into Aulla and the Po Valley. This diversionary attack became the key, final offensive that ended the war in Italy in May 1945.

In an ironic twist of fate, Nisei soldiers from the 522nd Field Artillery Battalion of the 442nd – soldiers whose families were still imprisoned by their own government in concentration camps back home in America – liberated survivors from Hitler's notorious Dachau death camp near Munich, Germany.



*Soldiers in the 100th Battalion/442nd RCT advanced through rugged terrain, against overwhelming odds, to help win the war in Europe.*

In less than two years, the 100th Infantry Battalion and the 100th Battalion/442nd RCT fought in eight major campaigns. The service record speaks for itself:

- ★ 7 Presidential Unit Citations
- ★ 21 Medals of Honor
- ★ 33 Distinguished Service Crosses
- ★ 1 Distinguished Service Medal
- ★ 559 Silver Stars, plus 28 Oak Leaf Clusters
- ★ 22 Legions of Merit
- ★ 15 Soldier's Medals
- ★ 4,000 Bronze Stars, plus 1,200 Oak Leaf Clusters
- ★ 9,486 Purple Hearts
- ★ 2 Meritorious Unit Service Plaques
- ★ 36 Army Commendations
- ★ 87 Division Commendations
- ★ 19 decorations from the Allied nations
- ★ A special plaque of appreciation from the Texans of the Lost Battalion.

President Harry S Truman summed it up best when he pinned the seventh Presidential Unit Citation on the 100th/442nd colors during a ceremony on the White House lawn in July 1946, "I can't tell you how much I appreciate the privilege of being able to show you just how much the United States thinks of what you have done. You fought not only the enemy but you fought prejudice –and you won. Keep up that fight and we will continue to win – to make this great Republic stand for what the Constitution says it stands for..."

To read the full story of the 100th Battalion/442nd RCT, please visit the e-books section of [www.homeofheroes.com](http://www.homeofheroes.com) to download the e-book: *Go For Broke*. Also, please visit [www.katonk.com](http://www.katonk.com) for additional history and links.



THERE HAS NEVER BEEN A CASE OF DESERTION OR ABSENCE WITHOUT LEAVE IN THE 100TH. ALTHOUGH THERE WERE TWO REPORTED CASES OF "REVERSE AWOL." BEFORE THEIR BATTLE WOUNDS WERE COMPLETELY HEALED IN A FIELD HOSPITAL BEHIND THE LINES, TWO SOLDIERS LEFT THE HOSPITAL AND HITCHHIKED BACK TO THEIR COMPANIES ON THE BATTLEFIELD.

*Army-Navy Register  
August 12, 1944*

## PRIVATE FIRST CLASS WILLIAM KENZO NAKAMURA

William Kenzo Nakamura was born in Seattle, attended Washington Elementary School, and graduated from Garfield High School in 1939. At school, he was called Bill, but in the neighborhood, he was known as Kenzo. After high school, he enrolled in the University of Washington, where he was planning to study medicine. Bill worked in an Alaskan salmon cannery during three summers and also helped supplement his family's income by picking berries in the countryside near Renton.

His father, George, formerly a sword maker in Japan, worked as a barber in Seattle. His mother, Asa, was a picture bride who also worked cutting hair, in addition to tending the family garden and caring for her four children. Bill had three siblings: George, the oldest, and sisters Mary and June.

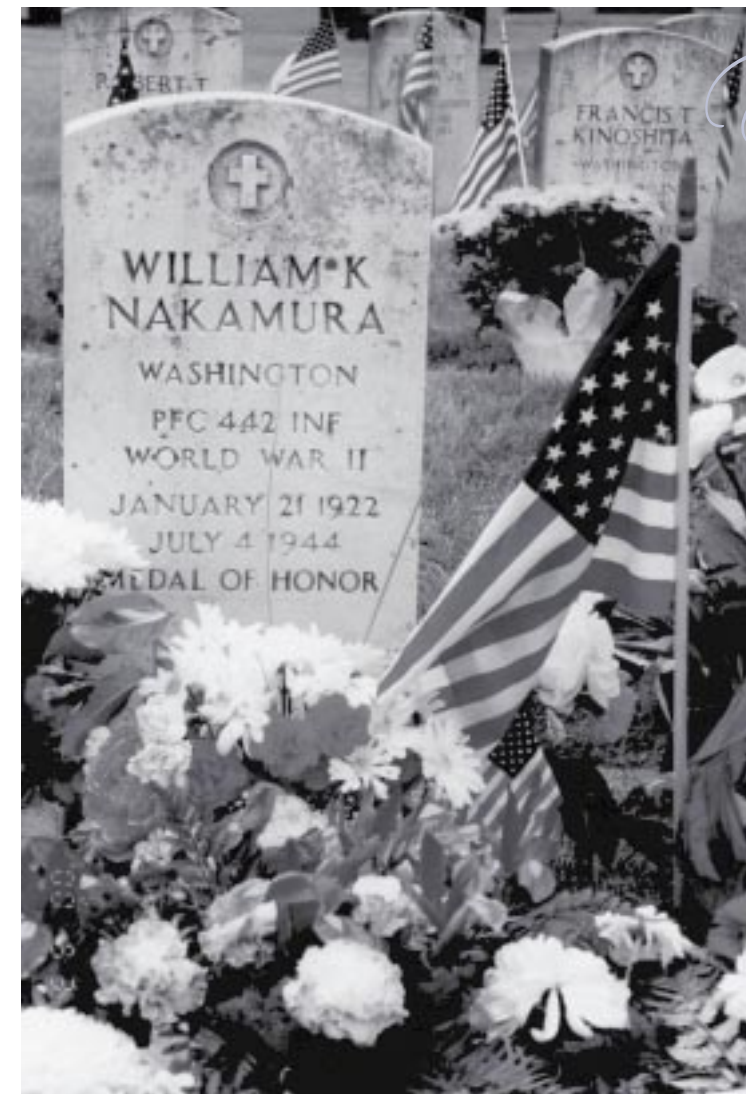
Bill's mother died in January 1942, a month after the bombing of Pearl Harbor and two months before the Nakamuras were moved to the Minidoka concentration camp near Hunt, Idaho. While at Minidoka, Bill's brother George volunteered for the Army, and Bill followed soon afterward. Shortly before Bill shipped out overseas, he married Hisako Deguchi.

On July 4, 1944, PFC Bill Nakamura saved the lives of his entire platoon twice in one day before he was fatally shot by an enemy sniper. His body is buried at Evergreen-Washelli Cemetery in Seattle.



Bill's father died in 1965, followed by his sister Mary, in 1985, and his brother George, in 1998. Within Bill's immediate family, only his sister, June Oshima, and his wife, Hisako, who remarried after his death, survive him.

In honor of Bill's service and his sacrifice on behalf of his country, the United States Courthouse in Seattle was renamed for William Kenzo Nakamura on November 9, 2000.



ALTHOUGH HE FACED PREJUDICE AT HOME, WILLIAM NAKAMURA FACED EVEN GREATER DANGER ON BATTLEFIELDS FAR AWAY. BECAUSE OF HIS EFFORTS, MEN WHO WOULD HAVE DIED ON A FOREIGN BATTLEFIELD INSTEAD RETURNED HOME TO THEIR LOVED ONES. IN SEATTLE, NAKAMURA'S HOMETOWN, THIS GENERATION AND GENERATIONS TO COME WILL REMEMBER HIS GALLANTRY WHEN PASSING THE UNITED STATES COURTHOUSE NOW NAMED FOR HIM.

*Washington State Attorney General  
Christine Gregoire*

THIS CEREMONY HONORS A TRUE AMERICAN HERO, WILLIAM NAKAMURA, WHO FOR FIFTY-SIX YEARS WAS DENIED THE RECOGNITION HE SO JUSTLY DESERVED. WILLIAM NAKAMURA EMBODIES THE AMERICAN SPIRIT – AN INDIVIDUAL WHO FACED ENORMOUS INEQUITY IMPOSED BY HIS COUNTRY, YET HE NOBLY VOLUNTEERED TO PROTECT IT AND PAID THE ULTIMATE SACRIFICE. PFC WILLIAM NAKAMURA'S COURAGE AND VALOR STAND TO REMIND US THAT THE FREEDOMS WE ALL ENJOY OFTEN CARRY A HIGH PRICE.

*U.S. Congressman Jim McDermott*



## TECHNICIAN FIFTH GRADE JAMES K. OKUBO

James Okubo was born in 1920 in Anacortes, Washington, one of six children of Kenzo and Fuyu Okubo. Jim and his family later moved to Bellingham, where the Okubos ran the Sunrise Café on Holly Street. After the death of Mrs. Okubo's sister, the Okubos added three nephews and one niece to their family.

Jim played football at Bellingham High School, and after graduation, he attended Western Washington University, where he was a member of the ski club.

In 1942, the entire Okubo family was relocated first to the Tule Lake concentration camp in California, and then to the Heart Mountain concentration camp in Wyoming. After two years of incarceration, the Okubo family was allowed to settle in Detroit, Michigan.

Despite their internment, Jim, along with his brothers Sumi and Hiram and his cousins Isamu and Saburo Kunimatsu, volunteered to serve in the military. The three Okubo brothers – T/5 Jim Okubo, S.Sgt. Hiram Okubo, and PFC Sumi Okubo – and cousin Isamu Kunimatsu were assigned to the 442nd Regimental Combat Team. Saburo Kunimatsu, Jim's cousin and Isamu's brother, served in the Military Intelligence Service. Sumi and Hiram Okubo were disabled as a result of their war injuries, and Isamu was killed in action in Italy.

I AM DEEPLY SADDENED BY THE UNFORTUNATE EXPERIENCES OF MR. JAMES OKUBO AND HIS FAMILY. IT IS DIFFICULT TO UNDERSTAND THAT THE U.S. GOVERNMENT COULD FORCIBLY RELOCATE MR. OKUBO'S FAMILY TO PRISON CAMPS AND THEN TO MICHIGAN SIMPLY BECAUSE THEY WERE JAPANESE AMERICAN. AFTER HIS HEROIC SERVICE, TEC-5 OKUBO JOINED HIS FAMILY IN MICHIGAN RATHER THAN RETURNING TO THE PACIFIC NORTHWEST. WE LOST A VALUED MEMBER OF OUR COMMUNITY, AND YET, WASHINGTON'S LOSS WAS MICHIGAN'S GAIN.

*U.S. Congressman Rick Larsen*

THE PHYSICAL ACTS OF HEROISM BY JAMES OKUBO ARE BEYOND THE IMAGINATION. DESPITE MISTREATMENT BY HIS NATIVE COUNTRY, JAMES OKUBO DEMONSTRATED HIS PATRIOTISM AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE TRUE PRINCIPLES OF FREEDOM BY VOLUNTEERING FOR THE U.S. ARMY. HE SERVED VALIANTLY AND SELFLESSLY, SAVING THE LIVES OF MANY OF HIS FELLOW SOLDIERS. HE WAS A TRUE HERO.

*Bellingham Mayor Mark Asmundson*



*Nobi, his wife, and Jim at a K Company reunion in Hawaii in 1961.*



*T/5 James Okubo (left) regularly risked his life to evacuate and treat his wounded comrades during battle.*

T/5 Jim Okubo served as a medic for the 442nd RCT and risked his life many times to evacuate and treat his wounded comrades during battle. Several Washingtonians remember Jim tending to their wounds including John Matsudaira and Frank Matsuda of Seattle, and Fred Shiosaki of Spokane. Members of "K" Company of the 442nd also remember Jim giving first aid classes to other platoons.

After the war, Jim joined his family in Michigan. He graduated from Wayne State University and received a Doctorate of Dentistry from the University of Detroit. After graduation from dental school, he started a private practice and joined the faculty at the University of Detroit's Dental School. Jim and his wife, Nobi, had two sons, John and William, and a daughter, Anne. Tragically, Jim died in a car accident in 1967.

At gatherings of "K" Company veterans, Jim's name was mentioned frequently with awe and respect. But, as was the case with many World War II heroes, Jim did not share his heroic actions with friends and relatives after the war. Even after years of marriage, his wife was unaware of her husband's heroics until Jim took his whole family to their first "K" Company reunion in 1961. Since then, Nobi has attended five reunions, the last in 1998.

UNITED STATES ARMY  
MEDAL OF HONOR CITATIONS

The President of the United States of America, authorized by Act of Congress, March 3, 1863, has awarded in the name of The Congress the Medal of Honor to

**PRIVATE FIRST CLASS WILLIAM K. NAKAMURA, UNITED STATES ARMY**

for conspicuous gallantry and intrepidity at the risk of his life above and beyond the call of duty:

Private First Class William K. Nakamura distinguished himself by extraordinary heroism in action on 4 July 1944, near Castellina, Italy. During a fierce firefight, Private First Class Nakamura's platoon became pinned down by enemy machine gun fire from a concealed position. On his own initiative, Private First Class Nakamura crawled 20 yards toward the hostile nest with fire from the enemy machine gun barely missing him. Reaching a point 15 yards from the position, he quickly raised himself to a kneeling position and threw four hand grenades, killing or wounding at least three of the enemy soldiers. The enemy weapon silenced, Private First Class Nakamura crawled back to his platoon, which was able to continue its advance as a result of his courageous action. Later, his company was ordered to withdraw from the crest of a hill so that a mortar barrage could be placed on the ridge. On his own initiative, Private First Class Nakamura remained in position to cover his comrades' withdrawal. While moving toward the safety of a wooded draw, his platoon became pinned down by deadly machine gun fire. Crawling to a point from which he could fire on the enemy position, Private First Class Nakamura quickly and accurately fired his weapon to pin down the enemy machine gunners. His platoon was then able to withdraw to safety without further casualties. Private First Class Nakamura was killed during this heroic stand. Private First Class Nakamura's extraordinary heroism and devotion to duty are in keeping with the highest traditions of military service and reflect great credit on him, his unit, and the United States Army.

**TECHNICIAN FIFTH GRADE JAMES K. OKUBO, UNITED STATES ARMY**

for conspicuous gallantry and intrepidity at the risk of his life above and beyond the call of duty:

Technician Fifth Grade James K. Okubo distinguished himself by extraordinary heroism in action on 28 and 29 October and 4 November 1944, in the Foret Domaniale de Champ, near Biffontaine, eastern France. On 28 October, under strong enemy fire coming from behind mine fields and roadblocks, Technician Fifth Grade Okubo, a medic, crawled 150 yards to within 40 yards of the enemy lines. Two grenades were thrown at him while he left his last covered position to carry back wounded comrades. Under constant barrages of enemy small arms and machine gun fire, he treated 17 men on 28 October and 8 more men on 29 October. On 4 November, Technician Fifth Grade Okubo ran 75 yards under grazing machine gun fire and, while exposed to hostile fire directed at him, evacuated and treated a seriously wounded crewman from a burning tank, who otherwise would have died. Technician Fifth Grade James K. Okubo's extraordinary heroism and devotion to duty are in keeping with the highest traditions of military service and reflect great credit on him, his unit, and the United States Army.



*Nakamura/Okubo Medal of Honor  
Commemorative Program – March 25, 2001  
Mercer Arena, Seattle Center*

**MUSICAL PRELUDE** Fort Lewis Band, Conductor *SFC Steve Donahue*  
Washington Middle School Choir, Director *Taryn Webber*

**WELCOME** Mistress of Ceremonies, *Julie Ogata, KOMO-TV*  
Niece of James Okubo

**POSTING THE COLORS** Fort Lewis Color Guard

**PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE** *Allison Brocher, Granddaughter of T-5 James Okubo*

**NATIONAL ANTHEM** *Jim Hopkins, CWO, USMC Reserve*

**INVOCATION** *Rev. Kerry Kaino, Chaplain, USN Reserve and Pastor  
Japanese Presbyterian Church*

**OPENING REMARKS** *Robert S. Sato, Commander, Nisei Veterans Committee*

**RECOGNITION OF DIGNITARIES**

**GREETINGS** *Paul Schell, Mayor, City of Seattle  
Mark Asmundson, Mayor, City of Bellingham  
Ron Sims, King County Executive  
Gary Locke, Governor, State of Washington*

**RECOGNITION OF MEDAL OF HONOR RECIPIENTS** *Dr. James McNaughton, Command Historian  
Department of the Army*

**READING OF NAKAMURA CITATION** *Jim McDermott, US Congressman*

**PRESENTATION** *George Yamane, Chair  
Nakamura/Okubo MOH Committee*

**READING OF OKUBO CITATION** *Colonel Tom Deal, Commander  
Madigan Army Medical Center*

**PRESENTATION** *George Yamane*

**PRESENTATION OF FLAGS** *Robert S. Sato*

**SPEAKERS** *Eric Saul, Historian  
Major General Roger L. Brautigam  
Deputy Commanding General/Chief of Staff  
I Corps and Fort Lewis  
Representing General Eric Shinseki, Chief of Staff, US Army*

**A VOICE IN THE NIGHT** *Poetry reading by Joel Onodera, Author's Nephew  
(by Satoru Onodera, KIA July 5, 1944, 100th/442nd RCT)*

**I'M PROUD TO BE AN AMERICAN** *Jim Hopkins*

**BENEDICTION** *Rev. John Iwohara, Seattle Buddhist Temple*

**TAPS**

**RETIRE THE COLORS**

**CLOSING** *Julie Ogata*

**RECEPTION** *Hosted by NVC Women's Auxiliary*

*T*HE NISEI [IN THE MIS] SHORTENED THE PACIFIC WAR  
BY TWO YEARS AND SAVED POSSIBLY  
A MILLION AMERICAN LIVES.

NISEI IN THE MILITARY INTELLIGENCE SERVICE

**America's Supreme Secret Weapon**

Approximately 6,000 Nisei men and women served in the U.S. Military Intelligence Service (MIS) during World War II and fought covertly against the land of their ancestry—contributing tremendously to the Allied victory in the Pacific. They were America's supreme secret weapon, and their activities have been one of the best-kept secrets of the war.

The Nisei in the MIS were indispensable and irreplaceable, for they employed a devastatingly effective weapon – their knowledge of Japan's complex and difficult language, which few on the Allied side could understand or use. They were superbly resourceful, courageous and loyal soldiers who served side by side with Allied forces in all campaigns and on all fronts of the far-flung war, throughout the Pacific and in China, India, Burma, and even Europe.

As translators of captured documents, interrogators of prisoners, and persuaders of surrender, the Nisei members of the MIS were extraordinarily effective. They laboriously translated millions of captured documents – maps, battle plans, diaries, letters, records, manuals – producing extensive intelligence that influenced Allied strategy and operations. MIS soldiers were deemed so valuable to Major General Frank Merrill that he ordered his troops to protect them with their own lives.



IF YOU JAPANESE AMERICANS  
ARE EVER QUESTIONED AS TO YOUR LOYALTY,  
DON'T EVEN BOTHER TO REPLY...YOUR GALLANT  
DEEDS UNDER FIRE WILL SPEAK SO LOUDLY  
THAT YOU NEED NOT ANSWER.

*Major General Clayton Bissell,  
Chief of the Military Intelligence  
Division of the War Department*

*Major General Charles Willoughby, General MacArthur's Chief of Intelligence*



*Nisei interpreters attend class on Japanese characters, part of a program to enable them to more rapidly recognize Japanese characters.*

Yet, despite these contributions and sacrifices, their remarkable efforts for their country remained a strict military secret until only recently.

The story of the Nisei in the MIS includes small units assigned to every combat division in every Pacific campaign, as well as larger groups that served at the three main intelligence centers at the Army and Area Headquarters level. These intelligence centers were absolutely critical to the success of U.S. operations and included the ATIS (Allied Translator Interpreter Section), where as many as 3,000 Nisei translated more than 20 million pages under General Douglas MacArthur; the JICPOA (Joint Intelligence Center, Pacific Ocean Area) under Admiral Chester Nimitz; and the SEATIC (South-east Asia Translation and Interrogation Center) under General Joseph "Vinegar Joe" Stilwell.



One of the most miraculous escapes from a bomb explosion is pictured here. In this foxhole in the side of the shell crater is S.Sgt. Dye Ogata.

The story of the MIS starts in September 1941 when Lt. Col. John Weckerling began recruiting Japanese-speaking Nisei for a Japanese-language school at the Presidio of San Francisco, which would lead to assignment to the MIS. After the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor, and subsequent removal of Japanese Americans from the West Coast, the school was renamed the Military Intelligence Service Language School and moved to Camp Savage, Minnesota. Nisei in the MIS made the following contributions to the Allied forces:

- ★ Due to the work of the MIS and Navy code breakers assigned to Admiral Nimitz's intelligence units, the U.S. Navy was able to predict the Japanese invasion of Midway. When the battle began in June 1942, the American fleet commanders knew the Japanese fleet location and handed the Imperial Navy its first major defeat, which turned the tide of the war.
- ★ As American forces began their offensive in the South Pacific in August 1942, the MIS interrogated captured Japanese pilots, revealing critical information that helped the Allies capture Guadalcanal in February 1943.
- ★ In the fall of 1942, the MIS translated the Japanese Imperial Navy's Order of Battle document, which gave Admiral Nimitz the call signs and code names for every Japanese naval air squadron and air station and for every transport and warship in the fleet, including names and descriptions of ships the U.S. Navy did not know existed.
- ★ The MIS translated an updated roster of all 40,000 Imperial Army officers along with their ranks, units, and job titles. This knowledge enabled General MacArthur to accurately determine the locations and strengths of the Japanese units he faced, which contributed to the success of his campaigns in the South Pacific.

*AS FOR THE NISEI [IN THE MIS]  
I COULDN'T HAVE GOTTEN  
ALONG WITHOUT THEM.*

*Major General Frank Merrill  
of Merrill's Marauders*



*BECAUSE OF THE MIS*  
NEVER IN MILITARY HISTORY  
DID AN ARMY KNOW SO MUCH  
ABOUT THE ENEMY PRIOR TO  
ACTUAL ENGAGEMENT.

*General of the Army,  
Douglas MacArthur*

- ★ With the help of MIS code breakers and translators, American forces knew in advance that Admiral Isoroku Yamamoto, the Supreme Commander of the Imperial Navy and strategist behind the attack on Pearl Harbor, would be flying from Truk to Rabaul. American fighters shot down his plane on April 18, 1943, an event deemed by General MacArthur as one of the most significant of the war.
- ★ In early 1944, MIS translators deciphered the Japanese "Z" plan for the defense of the Marianas, giving Admiral Raymond Spruance the advantage he needed. He sailed for the Marianas with 500 ships and 125,000 troops. On June 20, 1944, American pilots shot down 400 Japanese planes and sank a multitude of vessels, including three aircraft carriers. After such devastating losses, the Japanese Navy ceased to threaten the Allied advance.
- ★ On October 20, 1944, Nisei soldiers landed along with four divisions of U.S. troops at Leyte in the Philippines. With the help of captured documents translated by the MIS, General MacArthur's field commanders decided they could proceed without waiting for reinforcements. The landings at Leyte and Lingayen enabled Allied forces to isolate General Tomoyuki Yamashita, known as the "Tiger of Malaya."
- ★ As American troops pushed north toward Japan, MIS members were key in flushing Japanese soldiers and civilian residents from caves on Saipan and Iwo Jima. The Americans planned to use Okinawa as the staging area for the final assault on Japan, which would have been difficult if not for the MIS translation of captured maps that gave Allied forces the exact locations of Japanese gun emplacements. This information enabled American artillery to pinpoint any target, thus assuring an Allied victory in Okinawa.
- ★ After Japan's surrender, the MIS helped identify war criminals, translated for both prosecution and defense at war crimes trials, and interpreted for the military occupation. The many talents of the MIS shortened a bitter and devastating war and assisted in Japan's recovery.

*Japanese American interpreters with [then] Brig. Gen. Frank Merrill's infantry troops in Northern Burma in May of 1944.*



## JAPANESE AMERICAN VETERANS REMEMBERED

### *Honoring Their Sacrifice Each Memorial Day in Seattle*

Every Memorial Day at 10 a.m., the Nisei Veterans Committee conducts a memorial service at the Nisei War Memorial Monument at Lake View Cemetery on Seattle's Capitol Hill. The ceremony honors all Japanese American soldiers from the Northwest who were killed in action during the Spanish-American War, World War II, the Korea and Vietnam Wars, and in the Grenada invasion.

A 21-foot obelisk carved from Minnesota Rainbow Colspring granite stand there in honor of their sacrifice. The top of the monument lists the major campaigns fought during World War II and conveys our eternal respect and thanks for the service of those who made the ultimate sacrifice for their country.

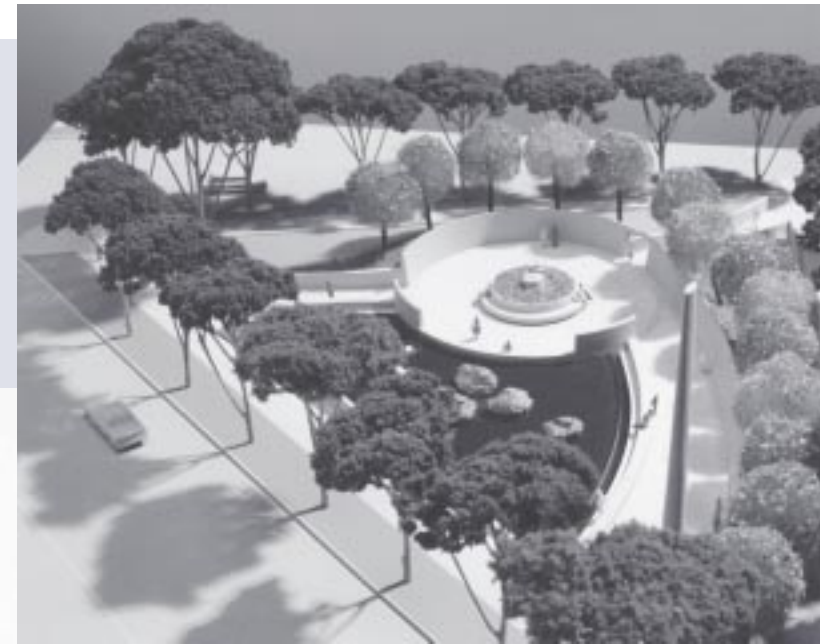
AMERICANISM IS A MATTER  
OF THE MIND AND HEART.  
AMERICANISM IS NOT, AND  
NEVER WAS, A MATTER OF  
RACE OR ANCESTRY  
FRANKLIN D. ROOSEVELT

THIS MEMORIAL IS DEDICATED  
TO THE AMERICAN SOLDIERS  
OF JAPANESE ANCESTRY FROM  
SEATTLE AND VICINITY WHO  
DIED IN THE SERVICE OF THEIR  
COUNTRY IN WORLD WAR II

*Nisei War Memorial, Lake View Cemetery,  
Seattle, Washington.*



*Artist's rendition of the National Japanese American Memorial to Patriotism in Washington, D.C.*



VISITORS [TO THIS MEMORIAL] WILL LEARN  
A DEFINITION OF PATRIOTISM MORE PERSONAL  
AND POWERFUL THAN ANY DICTIONARY  
COULD CONVEY. THEY WILL LEARN ABOUT  
PEOPLE WHO BELIEVED IN FIDELITY TO AMERICA,  
EVEN WHEN AMERICA WAS WRONG, IN THE  
BELIEF THAT ONE DAY IT WOULD BE RIGHT  
AGAIN. THEY WILL LEARN ABOUT PEOPLE WHO  
CONTINUED TO LOVE AMERICA AT A TIME WHEN  
MANY IN AMERICA LOOKED ON THEM WITH  
FEAR. THEY WILL LEARN ABOUT PEOPLE WHO  
BELIEVED IN THEMSELVES EVEN WHEN OTHERS  
DOUBTED. BECAUSE EACH AND EVERY ONE  
OF THEM, ESPECIALLY OUR VETERANS, HAD  
A LOYALTY THAT TRANSCENDED ANY  
QUESTIONNAIRE – A LOYALTY TO WHAT  
AMERICA COULD BE AND SHOULD BE.

*Deputy Secretary of Defense Rudy de Leon,  
excerpted from remarks at the dedication of the  
memorial, November 9, 2000*

### *National Monument to Japanese American Patriotism in Washington DC*

The National Japanese American Memorial to Patriotism was dedicated in Washington, D.C., on November 9, 2000. The Memorial not only commemorates the heroism and sacrifice of Japanese Americans who fought and died in defense of their country during World War II, but it tells how, despite both the violation of their civil rights and their imprisonment, 120,000 brave men, women and children maintained their loyalty on the home front. The Memorial also honors the United States for its admission of the wrongs committed during the hysteria of war and for its forthright apology to Japanese Americans through the Civil Liberties Act enacted by Congress in 1988.

The Memorial is located on a triangle of federal land bordered by Louisiana Avenue, New Jersey Avenue, and D Street. The site is about 600 yards north of the U.S. Capitol, between the Capitol and historic Union Station.

The Memorial tells three stories within its three-cornered site: First, the journey of Japanese Americans within the American culture; second, the hardship endured by those interned during World War II; and third, the valor of those who served their country in the military during the war.

*Making Amends Upholds the Honor of the United States of America*

Despite the clear injustices done to them by their country and their fellow Americans, Japanese Americans served loyally and valiantly to uphold the Constitution of the United States. They never lost faith in the ideals on which our country was built. Our Nation has taken many steps since the end of World War II to honor and uphold their example:

- ★ In January 1948, President Truman ended segregation in the armed forces.
- ★ In 1952, the McCarran-Walter Act allowed Asian immigrants, including Issei (first-generation Japanese Americans), to become naturalized U.S. citizens
- ★ In 1955, the California Alien Land Act, which prevented immigrant Japanese from owning or leasing land, was repealed.
- ★ On February 19, 1976, President Gerald Ford officially terminated Executive Order 9066.
- ★ In 1980, Congress established the Commission on Wartime Relocation and Internment of Civilians. The official report in 1982 concluded, "Executive Order 9066 was not justified by military necessity. The broad historical causes for the mass internment of Japanese American civilians were racial prejudice, war hysteria, and a failure of political leadership."
- ★ On August 10, 1988, President Ronald Reagan signed the Civil Liberties Act of 1988, which provided an official Presidential apology and symbolic payment of \$20,000 to each person of Japanese ancestry who lost liberty or property because of discriminatory action by the Federal government during World War II. The Act also created the Civil Liberties Public Education Fund to help teach the public and especially children about the internment period.

- ★ In October 1990, President George Bush sent re-dress payments along with signed letters of apology to survivors of the Japanese American internment.
- ★ On June 22, 1999, Japanese American General Eric K. Shinseki assumed duties as Chief of Staff of the U.S. Army.
- ★ On June 21, 2000, the Medal of Honor was awarded to 22 Asian American World War II veterans after a review of service records to assure that deserving individuals were properly recognized.
- ★ On November 9, 2000, the National Japanese American Memorial to Patriotism was dedicated in Washington, D.C.
- ★ On November 9, 2000, President William Clinton signed a bill to rename the United States Courthouse in Seattle for Medal of Honor recipient William Kenzo Nakamura.
- ★ Japanese Americans are now welcomed as members of military veterans organizations that formerly excluded them.



WE CAN NEVER FULLY RIGHT THE WRONGS OF THE PAST. BUT, WE CAN TAKE A CLEAR STAND FOR JUSTICE AND RECOGNIZE THAT SERIOUS INJUSTICES WERE DONE TO JAPANESE AMERICANS DURING WORLD WAR II...IN ENACTING A LAW CALLING FOR RESTITUTION AND OFFERING A SINCERE APOLOGY, YOUR FELLOW AMERICANS HAVE, IN A VERY REAL SENSE, RENEWED THEIR TRADITIONAL COMMITMENT TO THE IDEALS OF FREEDOM, EQUALITY, AND JUSTICE.

*President George Bush, October 1990*



*First Memorial Day Service, May 30, 1946 at Lake View Cemetery:*

*Front Row (l-r): Kaun Onodera, Misashi Nishimura, Ted Higashi, Satoru Sakuma, Poison Kato, Haruo Kato, Roy Tanagi, Mack Shoji, (?), Mac Nishimoto, Terry Kurimura, Shig Momoda, Shadow Nakashima, (?), Art Susumi, Tatsumi Tada, Shiro Iwana, Ben Sugawara, Hiro Nishimura, Roy Fujiwara, Shig Sumioka and Hiromi Nishimura  
Second Row Kneeling: Sho Higashi, Mickey Kimura, Shig Kosugi, Ken Tanaka, Ish Aoki, Harry Kataoka, Joe Nakatsu, Canon Watanabe, (?), Mich Shinoda, Mas Watanabe, Charles Okada, Koichi Arita, Dick Setsuda, Howard Minato, Pancho Tsujimoto, Kay Nakamura, Min Masuda, Mits Yamamoto, John Ogishima, George Abe and Mits Sato  
Standing: Frank Koriyama, Kai Matsushita, Kenji Ota, Tom Okazaki, Kiyoshi Uomoto, Gus Murakami, Ossi Hirata, Pat Hagiwara, Tad Katayama, Ken Higashi, Kohei Ikeda, Sam Sakai, Tod Fujioka, Mac Nogaki, Bill Yanagimachi, Morio Matakauchi, Tak Nakawatase, Sid Katayama, George Kanda, Pete Kozu, Nobie Tanaka, Hiroshi Yahagi, Dave Hirahara, Salty Mizuta, Juggo Hata, Jack Sameshima and Harry Takagi. Photo by T. Amano and courtesy of NVC.*

REFLECTIONS ON THE CONTRIBUTIONS  
OF JAPANESE AMERICANS TO OUR GREAT NATION

Private First Class Nakamura and Technician Fifth Grade Okubo displayed extraordinary heroism and devotion to duty that exemplifies the highest traditions of military service. Their sacrifices for our freedom, and the freedom of others around the world will not be forgotten. By remembering Mr. Nakamura and Mr. Okubo and their service in World War II, [we] help teach young people and remind all Americans of the importance of never again questioning the loyalty or patriotism of any American based on their race, religion, or national origin.

*PRESIDENT GEORGE W. BUSH*

They risked their lives, on their own initiative, sometimes even against orders, to take out machine guns, give aid to wounded soldiers, draw fire, pinpoint the enemy, protect their own. People who can agree on nothing else fall silent before that kind of courage.

*FORMER PRESIDENT WILLIAM JEFFERSON CLINTON*



William Kenzo Nakamura and James Okubo were men of extraordinary heroism and devotion. Without hesitation, both men gallantly put themselves in harm's way on behalf of their comrades and our nation. They repeatedly risked their lives above and beyond the call of duty and left a legacy of courage, patriotism, and honor that will inspire and guide future generations. Our nation owes these heroes our deepest gratitude.

*MEDAL OF HONOR RECIPIENT AND U.S. SENATOR FROM HAWAII DANIEL K. INOUE*



I greatly admire the World War II generation. Their remarkable patriotism saved democracy and built a prosperous nation. James Okubo and William Nakamura were the embodiment of the best ideals of the United States. Today we honor and remember these two men for their service, along with all of those who have sacrificed on behalf of our Nation.

*MEDAL OF HONOR RECIPIENT AND FORMER U.S. SENATOR FROM NEBRASKA BOB KERREY*



William Nakamura and James Okubo now stand where they belong among the most decorated and honored Washington State veterans. Their historic service and sacrifices are as powerful and important today as they were more than 50 years ago. This is a proud day for Washington State as we gather for this lasting tribute to Nakamura and Okubo.

*U.S. SENATOR PATTY MURRAY*



In the face of profound prejudice and bigotry, Japanese Americans served their Nation proudly in World War II. Americans of all backgrounds owe them a tremendous debt, and their contributions should never be forgotten.

*U.S. SENATOR MARIA CANTWELL*



The recognition of William Nakamura and James Okubo for their heroic conduct and service during World War II is both well deserved and long overdue. Against incredible odds, both at home and abroad, these men served proudly to defend one of our most precious freedoms as Americans—equality. They responded to the prejudices and suspicions of their fellow Americans by making incredible personal sacrifices in the name of freedom for all, and we will remain forever grateful for their loyalty and heart.

*WASHINGTON STATE GOVERNOR GARY LOCKE*



We owe our freedom today to Americans like Okubo and Nakamura who were willing and did make the ultimate sacrifice for their country. It saddens me that it took over fifty years for our Nation to recognize their heroics and that many of their relatives, friends, and fellow soldiers passed away without knowing just how much we appreciate them.

*U.S. CONGRESSMAN NORM DICKS*

How humbling to pay tribute to William Nakamura and James Okubo, two Washingtonians who made such great contributions to our Nation. It is a privilege to honor these two soldiers who selflessly and bravely fought to protect our freedom.

*U.S. CONGRESSWOMAN JENNIFER DUNN*



William Nakamura and James Okubo weren't prominent Washingtonians, they were so much more. Barely out of high school, these young men were willing to make the ultimate sacrifice in defense of their country. Even with their families interned, both men served proudly and heroically, demonstrating that simple virtues of patriotism can be transcendent. This recognition and the completion of the National Japanese American Memorial to Patriotism in Washington, D.C., will serve as a fitting tribute to the proud history of Nisei soldiers and the Japanese American community.

*U.S. CONGRESSMAN GEORGE R. NETHERCUTT, JR.*

I am very pleased that our Nation has recognized the contributions of the Japanese Americans during World War II. James Okubo and William Nakamura are two native Washingtonian World War II veterans who are not only deserving of their Medal of Honor, but are also deserving of our Nation's gratitude and recognition.

*U.S. CONGRESSMAN ADAM SMITH*



We all are proud of William Nakamura and James Okubo, and are honored to stand with the families of these Nisei veterans to recognize their legacy today. It is my hope that this ceremony will help ease the pain of the many in Puget Sound whose families endured internment and discrimination during World War II.

*U.S. CONGRESSMAN JAY INSLEE*



I am so proud that our country has seen fit to honor the extraordinary heroism and devotion to duty exhibited by Private First Class Nakamura and Technician Fifth Grade Okubo by awarding them the Medal of Honor. Too often, we as Americans living in the last few years of one century and entering the first few years of the next one, don't take time to stop and reflect upon the sacrifices made by those who came before us. These brave men, like so many of their generation, put duty, honor and country above all other things. And for Japanese Americans like PFC Nakamura and T/5 Okubo, they did so at a time when their government forced more than 100,000 Asian Americans into detention camps and barracks. Our Nation can never fully repay their sacrifice, but we can honor to their memory by dedicating ourselves to the principles for which they fought and died—fighting for freedom, standing up for equality and insisting on fairness from ourselves and our leaders.

*U.S. CONGRESSMAN BRIAN BAIRD*

With great pride I write to express the gratitude of a great Nation; greater because of patriots such as Medic James Okubo and Private First Class William K. Nakamura. I am humbled by their acts of bravery and selflessness. Men of this caliber symbolize the courage of the World War II generation, serving gallantly the country they love and preserving democracy.

*WASHINGTON STATE LT. GOVERNOR BRAD OWEN*



They fought for freedoms their families didn't have. They fought in a spirit of selflessness and self-sacrifice. Yet William Nakamura and James Okubo were passed over for honors they very clearly had earned. We have forgotten their names for too long. I am proud to stand with others today to recognize two heroes of combat who take their proper place in the history of our Nation and our community.

*KING COUNTY EXECUTIVE RON SIMS*

The heroism of Private First Class William Kenzo Nakamura and Medic James Okubo serves as a powerful reminder of the extraordinary patriotism of Japanese Americans who volunteered to join the 442nd Regimental Combat Team, one of the most decorated military units in U.S. history.

*SEATTLE MAYOR PAUL SCHELL*



The City of Issaquah is grateful to all those who have given their lives in defense of freedom. It is singularly appropriate to honor heroes who sacrificed themselves for a freedom of which they were deprived and in so doing apologize for a wrong done to them. May we learn from their magnanimity and as a nation never prejudice any person's patriotism.

*ISSAQUAH MAYOR AVA FRISINGER*

Washington State sons William Kenzo Nakamura and James Okubo were heroes in every sense of the word, each risking his life under heavy fire to save fellow soldiers, with Nakamura dying in that effort. It took the federal government 56 years to acknowledge that military racism had deprived these two men of the Congressional Medals of Honor they had earned.

*SEATTLE CITY COUNCILMEMBER JAN DRAGO*



It is high time that we recognize the bravery of these heroic men who served their country so well.

*RENTON MAYOR JESSE TANNER*

## SPONSORS



The Nisei Veterans Committee and the Nakamura/Okubo MOH Committee wish to thank our corporate sponsors for their generous support of this celebration.

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Military Intelligence Services, Northwest  
American Legion Cathay Post 186  
Japanese American Citizens League, Seattle Chapter  
Japanese American Citizens League, Pacific NW District  
Seattle Center*

## PARTICIPATING ORGANIZATIONS

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American Legion Post 1, Seattle  
American Legion Post 7, Bellingham  
Veterans of Foreign Wars  
Seattle School District  
University of Washington Alumni Association UWAA  
WWII Memorial Committee  
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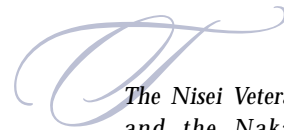
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## DONORS



*The Nisei Veterans Committee and the Nakamura/Okubo MOH Committee wish to thank the following individuals and organizations for their gifts, which made this celebration possible. We deeply apologize if we have failed to mention anyone.*

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SEATTLE CHAPTER  
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PATRICIA & FRANCIS FUKUHARA

KAY & SHIZUKO FUKUMA  
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