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NVN Highlights: Nisei Soldier Traveling Exhibit event in Denver CO, Iris Watanabe (WAC) and Fundraising Continues

1 message

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Nisei Soldier Traveling Exhibit National Outreach

The National Veterans Network visits the Denver Colorado community

On May 16, 2025, NVN visited the Denver, CO community. Tammy Call, director of the National Museum of the U.S. Army and Christine Sato-Yamazaki, executive director of NVN, presented the I Am An American: The Nisei Soldier Experience Traveling Exhibit to more than 100 attendees at the Simpson United Methodist Church in Arvada, CO. Their presentation provided an overview of the National Army Museum and the 11-city traveling exhibit that will showcase the soldiers of the U.S. Army's 100th Infantry Battalion, 442nd RCT, and Military Intelligence Service during World War II. The exhibit will travel to Denver, CO in the first part of 2029. NVN and the Museum would like to thank all of the families and community members for coming out to learn about the upcoming Nisei Soldier traveling exhibit. Special thanks to NVN board members, Donna Cole and Lynn Fuchigami Parks for co-hosting the event, and to Cindy Kondo Dean Tsutsui, Rev. Brian Lee and the many volunteers who helped to make this event possible.



VISIT TO AMACHE



A pilgrimage at Amache (Granada) WRA Incarceration Camp was held on Saturday, May 17.

Christine Sato-Yamazaki, Tammy Call, and NVN board members Donna Cole, Lynn Fuchigami Parks, and Rosalyn Tonai attended the pilgrimage that included a memorial service at the camp site, a luncheon at the Granada High School, and a visit to the Amache Museum where the Ireicho book was made available to families to stamp their family members who were in the WRA camps during World War II. Flowers were laid down at the Monument where 31 Nisei soldiers gave their lives. 953 men and women volunteered and were drafted into the U.S. Army during World War II.

NISEI WAC HIGHLIGHT: IRIS WATANABE

"I welcome this opportunity to serve America, not only for myself, but on behalf of other Japanese Americans."

- Iris Watanabe, Women's Army Corps

Iris Watanabe was born on February 8, 1923 in Santa Cruz, CA. On December 7, 1941, her life changed when Japan attacked the U.S. naval base at Pearl Harbor, HI. Two months after the attack, President Franklin D. Roosevelt signed Executive Order 9066, approving the War Department's removal of Japanese Americans living on the West Coast. Iris and her family were forcibly evacuated to the Salinas Assembly Center in CA.



On July 2, 1942, Iris, her mother Tsugi, and sister Miyako Kate entered the Poston incarceration camp in AZ. Nine months later, they were transferred to the Amache incarceration camp in Granada, CO.

In 1943, recruiters visited the ten American incarceration camps to gauge interest in joining the Women's Army Corps. Army officials noted that Japanese American women who attended the informational meetings agreed on one thing: they had no desire to serve in a segregated unit. On December 13, 1943, Iris enlisted in the Women's Army Corps at the age of 20. She was the first woman to enlist from Amache, CO. She had been waiting for the opportunity to enlist, stating that she was "ready and waiting to do what I felt was my duty. I just felt I had to help in some way."

At her induction ceremony, she enlisted with Bette Nishimura and Sue Ogata, both Nisei women from Colorado. Each of them had a brother serving in the U.S. Army. During WWII, approximately 80 Japanese American women enlisted in the WAC from the mainland U.S. and the territory of Hawaii.

In December 1943, Iris was among the first five Japanese American women to undergo basic training at the WAC Training Center in Fort Des Moines, Iowa. After basic training, she served in the WAC Detachment at Fort Devens, MA, and was selected to attend the MIS Language School in Fort Snelling, MN.

SAVE THE DATE: SOUTH BAY EVENT ON AUGUST 22

The National Veterans Network invites you to a South Bay community event on **Friday, August 22, 2025 (6pm reception, 7pm program)** at El Camino College's East Room in Torrance, CA. We hope you can join us to learn about the U.S. Army's first traveling exhibit, I Am An American: The Nisei Soldier Experience, featuring speakers General Eric K. Shinseki, 34th Army Chief of Staff of the U.S. Army, and Christine Sato-Yamazaki, executive director of the National Veterans Network. More information will follow in the upcoming NVN newsletter.

FUNDRAISING CONTINUES: HONOR THE NISEI SOLDIERS

The National Veterans Network gratefully thanks the many individuals who continue to donate to support the Nisei Soldier traveling exhibit. As we continue to raise \$175,000 for the fabrication of the exhibit by August, please consider honoring a Japanese American World War II Nisei soldier(s) with an individual or family donation. We welcome your support through a stock donation, donor advised funds (DAF), and donations of any amount. August 2025 is our deadline to be eligible for the donor panel. Join our [list of our supporters](#) and consider [making a donation](#) today! If you have any questions or would like more information, please contact NVN at info@nvnvets.org, or for sponsorships, Christine@nvnvets.org.

I AM AN AMERICAN

NISEI SOLDIER EXPERIENCE TRAVELING EXHIBIT

Sponsorship Opportunities

**Become a sponsor to honor the Japanese
American World War II Nisei Soldiers**

Deadline for \$5,000 + sponsors: August 15, 2025
Deadline for \$1,000 sponsors: December 31, 2025

Friends & Family \$1,000+

- ◆ Recognition in 2026 Nisei Soldier Traveling Exhibit Opening Day Program *
- ◆ Website Listing

Community \$5,000+

- ◆ Name on exhibit panel displayed at one location of your choice **First and last name or family name only*
- ◆ Recognition in 2026 Nisei Soldier Traveling Exhibit Opening Day Program *
- ◆ Website Listing

Legacy Circle \$10,000+

- ◆ Name on exhibit displayed at 11 locations **First and last name or family name only*
- ◆ Recognition in 2026 Nisei Soldier Traveling Exhibit Opening Day Program *
- ◆ Website Listing

National Sponsorships \$25,000–\$100,000+

- ◆ Prominent recognition on exhibit panel displayed at 11 locations
- ◆ Exclusive Invitation to the Nisei Soldier Traveling Exhibit VIP Dinner
- ◆ Recognition in all Nisei Soldier Traveling Exhibit Opening Day Events
- ◆ To learn more about national sponsorship benefits and recognition, click [here](#), or

email Christine Sato-Yamazaki, Executive
Director, at Christine@nvnvets.org

Nisei Soldier Traveling Exhibit National Opening Day Program

* All sponsors \$1,000 +
will be listed in the 2026
Opening Day Program that
includes the donor name
and a soldier tribute

EXAMPLES:

*John and Mary Suzuki
In Honor of John Suzuki, 442nd RCT*

*John and Mary Suzuki
In Memory of Taro Suzuki, 100th Infantry Battalion
The Suzuki Family
In memory of the WWII Nisei Soldiers*

DONATE TODAY

NEW FLYER: Nisei Soldier Traveling Exhibit

HELP US SPREAD THE WORD.

The National Museum of the U.S. Army, National Veterans Network, and The Army Historical Foundation have issued a new flyer to promote the **Nisei Soldier Traveling Exhibit**. This front-and-back one-page flyer details information about the traveling exhibit that will launch in February 2026. It is now available to share with friends and family.

To download, click [here](#).

It is also available on the NVN website at www.nvnvets.org.



I AM AN AMERICAN
NISEI SOLDIER EXPERIENCE TRAVELING EXHIBIT

**National
Veterans
Network**
PROSPERING. SERVICING. SUPPORTING.

**THE ARMY
HISTORICAL
FOUNDATION**



The National Museum of the United States Army shares their latest collaboration effort with the National Veterans Network (NVN) and The Army Historical Foundation in support of a Nisei Soldier traveling exhibition scheduled to begin in 2026.

This new traveling exhibit will embark on a five-year journey to 11 cities across the United States starting in 2026. The traveling exhibit is scheduled to be hosted in the following states: San Francisco CA, Honolulu HI, Portland OR, Los Angeles CA, Utah, Colorado, Minnesota, Texas, Georgia, Illinois and New York.

Become a Sponsor

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