

The Army Historical Foundation
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Congressional leaders join press announcement for "I Am An American" travelling exhibit about World War II Nisei Soldiers

Washington, DC (September 18, 2024)— Today on Capitol Hill, U.S. Representatives Mark Takano and Jill Tokuda, White House Senior Advisor for Public Engagement Kota Mizutani, and 34th Chief of Staff of the United States Army, retired General Eric K. Shinseki, joined the presentation of plans for "I Am An American," the first travelling exhibit of the National Museum of the United States Army, in partnership with the National Veterans Network and The Army Historical Foundation. The speakers shared the experience of family members who served in segregated units for Americans of Japanese ancestry during World War II and the significance of the U.S. Army choosing this often-overlooked community of Soldiers for its first travelling exhibit.

Ms. Tammy Call, Director of the Museum, highlighted that the exhibit will travel to 11 cities over its five-year tour. The exhibit will highlight 25-35 wartime objects to represent the service of the United States Army's 100th Infantry Battalion, 442nd Regimental Combat team and Military Intelligence Service. The first stop will be at the Presidio MIS Historic Learning Center in San Francisco in February 2026 before moving to the Bishop Museum in Honolulu, Oregon Historical Society in Portland, and Japanese American National Museum in Los Angeles. Additional venues will be announced at a later date.

Ms. Christine Sato-Yamazaki, Executive Director of the National Veterans Network which is providing the historical expertise to develop the exhibit's content, shared the exhibit's design plans. The theme, "I Am An American," was inspired by a photo taken by Dorothea Lange of an "I Am An American" sign placed on an Oakland, California storefront by Tatsuro Matsuda on December 8, 1941 to declare his American identity. The exhibit will highlight the patriotism, courage and selfless service of the Japanese American World War II Nisei Soldiers who served courageously in the European and Pacific Theater, while their families battled discrimination at home. Exploring 5 thematic areas, the 1,500 square foot exhibit will present the national perspective of the Japanese American WWII Soldier experience that includes the historical context of life in Hawaii and Wartime Relocation Authority camps.

"American Soldiers of Japanese Ancestry delivered a powerful lesson in citizenship during World War II," said Shinseki. "Their values – loyalty, courage, patriotism – are timeless statements about being American. Rising above fear and prejudice, they wrote an unrivaled battle history that remains legendary, even today. It's an American story for the ages."

World War II American Soldiers of Japanese ancestry, known as Nisei Soldiers, enlisted from the islands of Hawaii and ten Wartime Relocation Authority Camps that forcibly relocated 120,000 Japanese Americans during the war. An estimated 19,000 Nisei served in the European Theater as part of the 100th Infantry Battalion, 442nd Regimental Combat Team, which went on to become the most decorated unit in

U.S. military history for its size and duration of service. Another 6,000 Japanese Americans served as translators and interpreters in the U.S. Army's Military Intelligence Service.

The Army Historical Foundation is supporting the production of the travelling exhibit. A special gallery on the Nisei experience will be displayed at National Museum of the United States Army at Fort Belvoir, Virginia until 2025.

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About the National Museum of the United States Army

The National Museum of the United States Army provides the only comprehensive portrayal of Army history and traditions through the eyes of the American Soldier. By preserving, interpreting, and exhibiting invaluable artifacts, the National Army Museum creates learning opportunities for all visitors and bonds the American people to their oldest military service. We are America's Army Museum. The U.S. Army owns and operates the Museum. The Army Historical Foundation continues its fundraising role in support of the Museum and manages all retail, catering, and special events. The Museum is open daily with free admission. For more information on the National Museum of the United States Army, visit www.theNMUSA.org.

More details about the Museum can be found in the [Museum's media kit](#).

About The Army Historical Foundation

The Army Historical Foundation establishes, assists, and promotes programs and projects that preserve the history of the American Soldier and promote public understanding of and appreciation for the contributions by all components of the U.S. Army and its members. The Foundation serves as the Army's official fundraising entity for the Capital Campaign for the National Museum of the United States Army. The award-winning, LEED-certified Museum opened on November 11, 2020, at Fort Belvoir, Va., and honors the service and sacrifice of all American Soldiers who have served since the Army's inception in 1775. For more information on the Foundation and the National Museum of the United States Army, visit www.armyhistory.org.

National Veterans Network

The National Veterans Network's (NVN) mission is to educate current and future generations about the extraordinary legacy of American WWII soldiers of Japanese ancestry in order to promote equality and justice. In 2010, the organization led a national campaign to award the Congressional Gold Medal to the 100th, 442nd and MIS units. Following the awarding, NVN partnered with the Smithsonian on a seven-city tour to promote the recognition of the Nisei Soldiers Congressional Gold Medal along with the Nisei Soldier Congressional Gold Medal online exhibition that features 12 life stories of the 100th, 442nd and MIS. NVN continues to work with the Smithsonian Asian Pacific American Center to develop K-8 lessons and trains teachers to incorporate the lessons into the classrooms. Since 2017, NVN has worked with the National Museum of the U.S. Army to provide the historical expertise on the Japanese American WWII experience for the Nisei Soldier Experience, a special exhibit that is on display at the Museum and will launch an 11 city Nisei Soldier traveling exhibition in 2026.

Please visit us at www.nationalveteransnetwork.com, and follow the NVN on Facebook (NationalVeteransNetwork) or Instagram (nationalveteransnetwork).

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