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**CHICAGO TO HOST "COURAGE AND COMPASSION: OUR SHARED STORY OF THE JAPANESE AMERICAN WWII EXPERIENCE"**

*National GFBNEC Exhibition Reveals Little-Known Chapter of Illinois History;  
Sponsors Include American Honda Motor Co. Inc., National Park Service*

**CHICAGO and LOS ANGELES (February 25, 2019)** - The Chicago Japanese American Historical Society, Japanese American Service Committee and Japanese American Citizens League-Chicago Chapter will host "Courage and Compassion: Our Shared Story of the Japanese American World War II Experience" from March 2 to May 4, 2019 at the Trickster Gallery in Schaumburg, Illinois. The national exhibit, sponsored by Go For Broke National Education Center in Los Angeles (GFBNEC), reveals little-known stories of bravery and compassion among local everyday Americans during and after the turbulent days of World War II.

Funded in part by a grant from the National Park Service and American Honda Motor Co., Inc, "Courage and Compassion" covers events from the attack on Pearl Harbor to the fateful decision to incarcerate West Coast Japanese Americans in wartime camps to the courageous segregated units of the 100th Infantry Battalion, 442nd Regimental Combat Team (RCT), and the Military Intelligence Service (MIS). Visitors will learn about the Nisei (second-generation Japanese American) WWII experience and its legacy; study the nature of courage during a time of crisis; and consider the relevance of that wartime experience today.

While the West Coast escalated its systematic oppression of Japanese Americans, Chicago showed relative tolerance. By 1944, nearly 35,000 young Nisei had left the incarceration camps for the Midwest, with a majority arriving in Chicago. The War Relocation Authority opened its regional field offices in Chicago and worked closely with 16 religious and civic organizations that supported the Japanese American community, including Chicago Resettlers Committee and Fourth Presbyterian Church. Individuals in the Chicago area showed compassion towards Japanese Americans. The National Council of Churches received many letters from Japanese American parents asking for families to foster their children outside the exclusion zone. Isabelle "Jill" Douglas Graham Johnston Parr welcomed Frances Morawaki and Yosuko Imada into her home from Poston. As a result, Jill received hate mail and was ostracized by her neighbors.

For many young Nisei, Chicago offered possibilities with the University of Chicago, Northwestern University and a large number of employers. However, many schools and companies closed their doors to these young Americans. The few exceptions, including the Curtiss Candy Company, International Harvester, and A. C. McClurg & Co, served as critical lifelines for the community at the nexus of economic exploitation and need.

Many Japanese Americans also moved into Chicago's historic African American neighborhoods. The Chicago Defender, one of the preeminent black newspapers of the 20th century, was the rare defender of Japanese Americans during the war. Chicago Defender columnist Langston Hughes drew explicit connections with Japanese American incarceration arguing that it showed citizenship was "ever-contingent" for all people of color. In one poignant column, Hughes described "American Negroes and American Japanese" as being "in the same boat."

"Courage and Compassion" will be shown at the Trickster Gallery, established to create a unique contemporary view of Native arts, cultural education and awareness, located at [190 South Roselle Road](#).

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[Schaumburg Illinois](#). The gallery is open Tuesday through Friday from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. and Saturday from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. For more information, please visit [www.trickstergallery.com](http://www.trickstergallery.com).

Mitchell T. Maki, Ph.D., president and chief executive officer of GFBNEC, noted that Chicago's overall response to its Japanese American residents was a rare exception during the hysteria and suspicion of WWII. "Many local organizations formed to support the Japanese Americans new to the Chicago area," Maki said. "These courageous everyday people did not tolerate discrimination against individuals based on the color of their skin, the God whom they worship, or their country of origin. Today, they exemplify the best that America has to offer."

From July 2017 through fall 2019, the exhibit is visiting 10 U.S. communities where citizens extended a helping hand to Japanese Americans during and after the end of WWII. Other community partners include: Willamette Heritage Center, Salem, Ore.; Japanese Cultural Center of Hawai'i, Honolulu, Hawai'i; the Kingsburg Historical Society, Kingsburg, Calif.; Oberlin College and Conservatory, Oberlin, Ohio; Twin Cities Japanese American Citizens League, Minneapolis/St. Paul, Minn.; Saint Marys School of Nursing Alumni Association, Rochester, Minn.; History Department, Bradley University, Peoria, Ill.; Japanese American Citizens League of the Monterey Peninsula, Monterey, Calif.; and New Mexico Japanese American Citizens League, Albuquerque, New Mexico. For more information and upcoming dates, please visit [www.goforbroke.org/visit/traveling\\_exhibit/index.php](http://www.goforbroke.org/visit/traveling_exhibit/index.php).

#### **About Broke National Education Center**

Go For Broke National Education Center (GFBNEC) is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization that educates the public on the valor of Japanese American veterans of World War II and their contributions to democracy. Our goal is to inspire new generations to embody the Japanese American veterans' core values of courage, sacrifice, equality, humility and patriotism. Founded in 1989, GFBNEC maintains the Go For Broke Monument and the interactive "GFBNEC's Defining Courage Exhibition" in downtown Los Angeles, as well as extensive oral histories and archives, education and training programs, and other initiatives. For more information, please visit [www.goforbroke.org](http://www.goforbroke.org).

#### **About the NPS JACS Program**

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