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**GFBNEC’S SERIES “SHARING STORIES AROUND THE TABLE”
EXPLORES GENERATIONAL INFLUENCE OF WWII NISEI VETS**

*Virtual Premiere on March 27, 2021 to Feature Bicultural Story of
442nd RCT’s Fernando Sosa Masuda*

LOS ANGELES (March 24, 2021)—Go For Broke National Education Center (GFBNEC) today announced the premiere online episode of its third new program series, *Sharing Stories Around the Table*, on Saturday, March 27 at 12 p.m. PDT on GFBNEC’s YouTube and Facebook channels. The series examines the significance and influence of the Japanese American World War II veterans’ story from an intergenerational and multi-ethnic perspective.

The first episode, “I Feel with My Heart,” centers on the unique life story of Fernando Sosa Masuda, a Japanese-Mexican American WWII veteran who served in the segregated Japanese American 442nd Regimental Combat Team (RCT). Born and raised in the East Los Angeles neighborhood of Boyle Heights, Sosa Masuda grew up unaware of his Japanese heritage and his “Masuda” surname, which his family had dropped to better assimilate with their Spanish-speaking peers. He and his six siblings were among the few Los Angeles residents of Japanese descent who were not sent to government incarceration camps during WWII. In January, 1945, Sosa Masuda was assigned to the 442nd RCT in Naples, Italy, guarding captured German soldiers. The episode shares Sosa Masuda’s detailed post-war recollection of growing up in East L.A., discovering his dual ethnicity and trying to fit in while his Japanese American unit buddies were trying to figure him out.

In presenting Sosa Masuda’s story, GFBNEC features host Maya Hernandez, a Japanese-Mexican American who grew up in all corners of the U.S. and in Japan, and who was also a part of the 2018 Northern California Cherry Blossom Festival Queen Program Court. Hernandez is joined by special guest Mia Lopez, a Japanese-Mexican American from Southern California and a First Princess on the 2019 Nisei Week Court. GFBNEC President and Chief Executive Officer Mitchell Maki will join in the conversation as Hernandez and Lopez delve into the shared experiences of bi-cultural identity within their own Japanese and Mexican American families. Throughout the episode’s premiere, Hernandez and Lopez will be live-chatting on the YouTube feed.

GFBNEC is slated to release three more episodes of *Sharing Stories Around the Table* on June 26, September 25 and December 18, 2021. On its YouTube channel are GFBNEC's two additional new series, *Heroes Among Us: Stories of Courage, Patriotism and Sacrifice* which premiered on January 25, 2021 with "The Gothic Line," and *Living the Nisei Dream* which premiered on February 27, 2021 with guest hip-hop artist and educator, Kaze Jones, and special appearance by Irene Tsukada Simonian, owner of Bunka Do.

"I Feel With My Heart" and other episodes of GFBNEC's online series will be available free of charge at GFBNEC's online links: <https://www.youtube.com/goforbrokenationaleducationcenter/> and <https://www.facebook.com/goforbrokenationaleducationcenter/>.

For more information about GFBNEC's educational programming and resources, visit www.goforbroke.org.

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About Go For 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 Nisei 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* exhibit in downtown Los Angeles, as well as extensive oral histories and archives, education and training programs, and other initiatives.

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