



THE HONORABLE DANIEL K. AKAKA
United States Senator

**DISTINGUISHED SERVICE AND LEADERSHIP
CITATION**

The Japanese American Veterans Association (JAVA) celebrates the distinguished service and leadership of the Honorable Daniel K. Akaka, who served in the US Senate since 1990 and in the US House of Representatives from 1976 to 1990.

Senator Akaka has been an ardent advocate for veterans. Under his chairmanship, the Senate Committee on Veterans' Affairs produced an unmatched record of new laws affecting veterans health care and compensation benefits, on issues ranging from mental health care, including treatment of homeless veterans, to post 9/11 GI Bill of Rights for veterans' education as well as transition assistance programs for out-processing soldiers.

Using his legislative and negotiating skills, Senator Akaka obtained for Asian Pacific Americans, including Japanese American veterans, awards, benefits and recognition they were entitled to receive. Examples of his legislative endeavors to the community, organizations and individual veterans include:

- Wrote the law to create the Department of Veterans Affairs (DVA) Office of Minority Veterans that included the Center for Minority Veterans and Center for Women Veterans to ensure that VA services and benefits appropriately address the unique needs of minority and women veterans.
- Worked to establish Hawaii's first DVA medical center (collocated at Tripler Army Medical Center); an associated veterans nursing home; and a statewide network of community based clinics and veterans readjustment counseling centers in the neighboring islands; the expansion of the State Veterans Cemetery system; the construction of the Pacific Center for Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) and War-Related Disorders, a DVA facility in Hilo, Hawaii.
- Introduced and championed the Native Hawaiian Government Reorganization Act that would provide parity through a government-to-government relationship between the Native Hawaiian people and the federal government.

- Provided key support to the passage of legislation relating to the National Japanese Memorial to Patriotism in Washington, DC and the Civil Liberties Act of 1988 that resulted in President Ronald Reagan offering a formal apology for the incarceration of 120,000 ethnic Japanese in internment camps.
- Actively led efforts in providing Veterans benefits and compensation enabling one-time payments of \$15,000 to Filipino World War II veterans who are U.S. citizens, and \$9,000 to Filipino World War II veterans who are non-citizens.
- Secured a congressionally mandated review of the Distinguished Service Cross medals awarded to Asian Americans to determine whether they were unfairly denied the Medal of Honor resulting in President Bill Clinton awarding the MOH to 22 Asian Americans.
- Cosponsored legislation that resulted in the award of the Congressional Gold Medal, the highest civilian honor Congress can bestow, collectively to the 100th Infantry Battalion, the 442nd Regimental Combat Team and the Military Intelligence Service.
- Requested a review that resulted in the award of the Presidential Unit Citation to the MIS 3,000 linguists who served in the Asia Pacific Theater during WW II.
- Arranged with the US Army to publish a 514 page history of the MIS entitled *Nisei Linguists: Japanese Americans in the Military Intelligence Service During World War II*, a comprehensive and authoritative record of the MIS.
- Obtained federal support for the preservation of Building 640, the original site of the first MIS Language School at the Presidio of San Francisco resulting in Building 640 being designated as the MIS Historic Learning Center.
- Requested, individually, the review of the records of LTC Richard M. Sakakida, an Army undercover agent in wartime Manila, Philippines, that resulted in the award of the Distinguished Service Medal; Anthony Kaho'ohanohano, which resulted in the upgrade of his Distinguished Service Cross to Medal of Honor for heroism in the Korean War; and Shinyei Rocky Matayoshi, which resulted in the validation of his Distinguished Service Cross for heroism in Italy with the 442nd RCT.
- Co-sponsored legislation creating a \$38 million grant program to preserve the legacy of the Japanese American experiences during World War II.

In appreciation of his service and leadership, JAVA presents Senator Akaka, a charter JAVA Honorary Chair, with a replica of the Congressional Gold Medal.

September 27, 2012
Washington, D C



Gerald Yamada
President