



## Announcement from the **Executive Director**

Dear Friends,

After more than five years serving as Executive Director of Friends of Minidoka, it is with the fullest heart and deepest gratitude and that I announce my departure from my position on June 4th.

It is a bittersweet moment to be closing out this chapter at Friends of Minidoka, as it has been a great honor to serve all of you for the past five years in support of education, research, and historic preservation of the WWII Japanese American incarceration experience at Minidoka. Without you, Friends of Minidoka would not be the dynamic organization it is today. I feel so privileged to have been surrounded by an incredible community of friends, board members, partners, and supporters with deeply personal ties and unshakeable belief in the value of preserving the Minidoka site and its legacy. I am extremely proud of what we have accomplished together, and will hold these relationships close to my heart long into the future.

When I joined as the first Executive Director in 2016, Friends of Minidoka had a large, all-volunteer board with big dreams, but limited resources to turn them into reality. Regardless of those challenges, in this time, we have completed the guard tower and baseball field reconstructions; produced five Minidoka Civil Liberties Symposia as well as countless talks, tours, and virtual programs; digitized and shared family photo collections and those in the National Archives; told the story of the Issei through the Legacy of Courage exhibit; supported the National Park Service in dedicating a new visitors center, complete with exhibits and an award-winning orientation film; established a new internship program; and are wrapping production on a broadcast documentary film and a sorely needed 7th-12th grade curriculum on Minidoka.

We have helped put Minidoka on the map for tourists, teachers, and the national parks community, and more importantly, helped shift the narrative towards a broader, more nuanced public understanding of the history that took place at Minidoka. Behind the scenes, our operating budget has grown by 40% allowing us to increase staff time and grow our program capacity. We have also invested in foundational assessment, governance, and development skills and systems necessary for our continued success. Today we're a healthy organization with an impressive track record, a truly collaborative national network of peers, and even bigger dreams. I'm confident that I am leaving the organization in capable hands with a sustainable and tremendously exciting future ahead.

The board of directors is committed to ensuring that Friends of Minidoka continues to grow in its ability to provide educational resources and experiences to the public and serve as a strong partner to the National Park Service. Over the next few months, the board will be conducting strategic planning to inform their search for the next Executive Director. They will keep you apprised of next steps and I have no doubt they will identify a passionate, capable leader to usher the organization into its next chapter and propel Friends of Minidoka through its next phase and beyond.

I'm pleased to be able to say that in my new role as Executive Assistant at the Japanese American National Museum in Los Angeles, I will continue in the mission-driven community work that I so valued in my time at Friends of Minidoka, safeguarding the history and greater lessons of the Japanese American experience. I will of course continue to be a friend and advocate of Minidoka, and I look forward to seeing many of you in Little Tokyo in the years to come!



**Thank you for being a friend,**

**Mia Russell**

*Executive Director*



## Updates from Minidoka National Historic Site

In March, Hanako Wakatsuki, Minidoka's Chief of Interpretation and Education for the past four years, was selected to serve as the first superintendent of Honouliuli National Historic Site in Honolulu, Hawaii.

"I am honored and excited to continue working in the Japanese American Confinement Sites network, given my family's connection to the World War II incarceration at Manzanar, Minidoka, and Tule Lake; sites that are now preserved as units of the national park system," said Wakatsuki. "I look forward to serving the area's communities and sharing the history of civilians, POWs and Native Hawaiians who are connected to this site." Honouliuli National Historic Site is a unit within the national park system that interprets the history of incarceration and the experience of prisoners of war in Hawai'i during World War II.

Friends of Minidoka wishes Hanako a wonderful transition to her new role at Honouliuli, and expresses our gratitude for her heartfelt dedication to Minidoka National Historic Site in her time

as Chief, and in her service to the Friends of Minidoka board for many years before that. We know that Honouliuli is in very good hands!

Following Hanako's departure, Kurt Ikeda was selected for a 120-day detail to serve as the Acting Chief of Interpretation and Education for Minidoka National Historic Site. For the past year, Kurt has served as the Education Coordinator for the three south Idaho Parks. Prior to the National Park Service, he worked at the Japanese American Museum of Oregon, did advocacy within the AAPI community, and served as high school teacher in Los Angeles. Kurt was also Friends of Minidoka's very first intern, serving at Minidoka National Historic Site in 2018!

As a Shin-Nisei, 2nd generation Japanese American and a descendent of camp survivors, Kurt has a personal connection to the history and strives to help all visitors see themselves in their national parks. On his new opportunity, Kurt said "I am humbled at the opportunity to lead in the legacy of excellence

that has come to define Minidoka National Historic Site. A big thank you to our former Chief of Interpretation and Education, Hanako Wakatsuki, for her tireless commitment to preserve the history of the mass incarceration of Japanese Americans during WWII. To the dedicated staff, community partners, camp survivors, and to my family and my wife, I extend an 'okage-sama-de' - I am who I am thanks to you."

Minidoka's Lead Park Ranger Annette Rousseau also departed from Minidoka at the beginning of May for her exciting new role as Chief of Interpretation and Education at Martin Van Buren National Historic Site! Annette has been a pillar of the Minidoka community and south Idaho parks and has provided steadfast support in park operations, visitor center management, and volunteer and intern mentorship. Her passion for education and junior rangers has made a mark on how to interpret this history with young people. Many of our Friends will recognize Ranger Annette from her long years of service in support of Minidoka and a familiar face at many Minidoka Pilgrimages. We wish Annette the best of luck in her next chapter and are grateful for her dedication and service!



Wakatsuki and Ikeda, pictured in the Minidoka Visitor Center | NPS Photo

*Come visit Minidoka National Historic Site this summer! The Visitor Center opens for the summer season on May 28, 2021. It will be open Friday, Saturday, and Sunday from 10:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m. The physical address is 1428 Hunt Road Jerome, ID 83338. Please contact the National Park Service by phone at 208-825-4169 if you have any questions about planning your visit.*



## Get to Know our Board of Directors



**Lauren Waude**

We are proud to introduce you to the newest members of the Friends of Minidoka Board of Directors, who were elected to the board to serve a three-year term starting in March.

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*"Friends of Minidoka's work and mission are so important to me personally and play a critical role in preserving the history of Japanese American Incarceration. I never learned about JA incarceration in school, and my family didn't always openly discuss their painful experience at "camp" and the emotional, social and financial toll it took on them. As a yonsei, fourth generation Japanese American, I feel it is vitally important to understand how the history and generational trauma of incarceration continues to impact me, my family, and the Japanese American community and how we can lift up this history to advocate for racial justice."*

**Lauren Mariko Waudé** is a Program Specialist Senior working with housing stability programs for Multnomah County in Portland, Oregon. Before her journey into local government, she was a Philanthropy Northwest Momentum Fellow at the Meyer Memorial Trust, where she supported both their housing and strategic initiatives work. She has worked with housing and community focused programs in Seattle and Portland for over 13 years. She holds a Master's in Public Administration with a specialization in Nonprofit Management from Portland State University. In addition to Friends of Minidoka board, Lauren also serves as the Board Secretary for the Independent Publishing Resource Center.



**Beth Markley**

*"I am interested in Idaho history, civil rights education, and social justice advocacy. I feel that expanding public knowledge of the Japanese American incarceration experience is especially important in light of the perspective it can lend to current events. I am excited that the site has been developed and the opportunity it presents to ensure the stories of survivors are preserved and shared. My family history with Hunt Camp makes further connection especially compelling on a personal level. My feelings about my grandfather's role as a security official on staff with Hunt Camp are complex, and part of why I find this project so compelling. Perhaps my work here will help me gain perspective on that role, but regardless I find a board position fulfilling and appreciate the opportunity to help raise the profile of the organization, helping others learn, and honoring the experience of the survivors."*

**Beth Markley**, CFRE, has been working with nonprofit organizations for more than 25 years. Her background includes managing annual and capital campaigns, developing donor outreach strategies, and communication and marketing plans, volunteer training and content development for small to medium-sized nonprofits. Currently, she works as an independent consultant on behalf of area nonprofits; managing campaigns, events, communications outreach and volunteer training. She is also serving as interim general manager of Radio Boise where she hosts the public affairs program "Vital Idaho." Markley and her husband live in Boise where they have raised their two sons.



## Meet the Friends of **Minidoka** Interns



**Rachel Alldredge**



**Camille Daw**

This year, Friends of Minidoka has been growing our team through a brand new internship program! We are very excited to showcase the work of our three interns, who are supporting the joint mission of Friends of Minidoka and the National Park Service through their work at Minidoka National Historic Site as well as remotely! The internship program is designed to provide hands on training and experience to those interested in exploring potential careers with the National Park Service, resource management, and public history.

Our first intern was **Rachel Alldredge**, from Idaho Falls, ID. Rachel previously interned with the National Park Service in the interpretation and education division, and was interested in cross-training in the maintenance division to learn the basics of woodwork, electrical, plumbing, and welding and become versed in new skillsets. Rachel worked at Minidoka National Historic Site under the guidance of Sam Bowlin of the National Park Service’s Maintenance Division. Rachel served for 12 weeks from January through March, and helped behind the scenes to ensure that visitors to Minidoka have a great experience. She also helped restore and install a 1/6 scale model of a Minidoka guard tower at the intersection of I-25 and Hunt Road.

**Camille Daw** began with Friends of Minidoka in late

January, and her internship is currently ongoing. Camille is a history student at Boise State University, and has previously served as a summer intern at Minidoka National Historic Site in education, interpretation, and visitor services. Camille is working remotely through a partnership with Boise State University to digitize the Robert C. Sims Collection in Special Collections and Archives. Dr. Sims was the preeminent scholar on Minidoka and the Japanese American experience in Idaho., and The Robert C. Sims Collection on Minidoka and Japanese Americans is one of the most-used collections at Boise State. Camille is assisting in digitizing, indexing, and identifying collections items so we can better understand the scope of this collection for future exhibits and interpretive programming. The final product will be used to enhance finding aides and documentation for future researchers.

**Erin Aoyama** is serving as a Community Research & Outreach Fellow for Friends of Minidoka and the National Park Service. Erin is a Ph.D student in American Studies at Brown University and will be working on public outreach engagement programs including special events, the 2021 Tadaima Virtual Pilgrimage, as well as integrating Japanese American history into Pearl Harbor National Memorial’s *Beyond Pearl Harbor* event to commemorate the 80th anniversary of the attack on Pearl Harbor. We are excited to have Rachel, Camille, and Erin on board, and to be able to support their great work!



**Erin Aoyama**



## Minidoka 2021 Virtual Education Series

Minidoka was designated a unit of the National Park Service on January 17th, 2001. On January 17th we commemorated the 20th anniversary of Minidoka National Historic Site through a day of virtual conversations with survivors, partners, and the trailblazers who made it possible to establish the NPS unit, the Minidoka Pilgrimage, and the Friends of Minidoka.

This series of virtual programs was produced in partnership with the National Park Service, Friends of Minidoka, Japanese American Memorial Pilgrimages, and the Minidoka Pilgrimage Planning Committee; with support from: Boise State University, ACLU Idaho, The Community Library, and Boise City Department of Arts & History.

These programs are available online to go back and view on the Japanese American Memorial Pilgrimages Youtube channel, with individual links and descriptions of each program listed below.



Join us for a moving panel with Minidoka survivors Paul Tomita, Joni Kimoto, and Dave Sakura to hear about their family's experiences being incarcerated at Minidoka during WWII.

Watch it on Youtube: <https://youtu.be/pH2iNqT1hEQ>



Join us for a discussion about how Minidoka was established as a unit of the National Park Service, and how it became Minidoka National Historic Site. Learn about the early days of the site's development with Neil King (First Superintendent at Minidoka), Dan Sakura (Clinton Administration Staffer), Emily Momohara (Founder of the Friends of Minidoka), Anna Tamura (National Park Service Planner), and Hanako Wakatsuki (Chief of Interpretation at Minidoka); moderated by Wade Vagias (Superintendent of Minidoka).

Watch it on Youtube: <https://youtu.be/rwfKmOwvyXM>



Join us for a panel discussion to talk about the beginning and evolution of the Minidoka Pilgrimage with Anna Tamura, Dale Watanabe, Stephen Kitajo, and Gloria Shigeno.

Watch it on Youtube: [https://youtu.be/twy7r\\_W3gvI](https://youtu.be/twy7r_W3gvI)



## Minidoka 2021 Virtual Education Series



The United States Postal Service has issued a commemorative postage stamp titled *Go for Broke: Japanese American Soldiers of WWII* that will be available beginning June 3, 2021. The Postal Service announced:

*With this commemorative stamp issuance, the U.S. Postal Service recognizes the contributions of Japanese American soldiers, some 33,000 altogether, who served in the U.S. Army during World War II.*

*For a time, these second-generation Japanese Americans, known as Nisei, were denied the opportunity to fight despite being American citizens. Many were forcibly removed to incarceration camps for fear their loyalty lay with the country of their parents rather than the country in which they were born and raised.*

*They were, however, eventually formed into what became one of the most distinguished American fighting units of World War II: the all-Japanese American 100th Infantry Battalion/442nd Regimental Combat Team.*

*Thousands of other Nisei served as translators, interpreters, and interrogators in the Pacific Theater for the Military Intelligence Service (MIS), nearly a thousand served in the 1399th Engineer Construction Battalion, and more than 100 Nisei women joined the Women's Army Corp.*

*The stamp art is based on a photograph of a member of the 442nd Regimental Combat Team, whose motto was "Go for Broke." The photograph was taken in 1944 at a railroad station in France. The stamp was printed in the intaglio print*

*method. The color scheme of the stamp is patriotic, and the type runs up the side in a manner suggestive of the vertical style in which Japanese text was traditionally written. The stamp was designed by art director Antonio Alcalá.*

Our friends at Stamp Our Story have led the campaign to honor the Nisei veterans through a commemorative stamp for over 15 years, and have submitted formal requests for a "Go For Broke" stamp in various forms since 2005. "The issuance of this stamp is a culmination of over 15 years of work by Stamp Our Story campaign founders Fusa Takahashi, Aiko O. King, the late Chiz Ohira, and the many individuals who have helped over the years," said Wayne Osako, co-chair of the Stamp Our Story campaign. Friends of Minidoka was able to garner the support of Representative Mike Simpson and Senators Mike Crapo and James Risch for the stamp in 2017, when the delegation submitted a letter to the Post Master General in support of a stamp to honor the Nisei soldiers.

Stamps and commemorative first day covers and digital postmarks are available for preorder and will be available for purchase June 3rd at <https://store.usps.com>

As part of our 2021 virtual education series in celebration of the 20th anniversary of Minidoka National Historic Site, the National Park Service and Friends of Minidoka invite you to join us on Sunday, June 13th, for a special virtual program to dedicate the Go for Broke stamp and commemorate the rich legacy of Idaho's Japanese American soldiers who served in the US Army during WWII.

This program is brought to you by Friends of Minidoka in partnership with the National Park Service and Boise State University School of Public Service, ACLU of Idaho, The Community Library, the Boise City Department of Arts and History, and the Japanese American Citizens League and produced by Japanese American Memorial Pilgrimages.

Join the livestream on the **Japanese American Memorial Pilgrimages Youtube channel** at or visit [www.minidoka.org/events](http://www.minidoka.org/events) for more information.



## Idaho Gives

Over 110 supporters made a gift during our 2021 Idaho Gives campaign! Thanks to all of you, we were able to meet our \$10,000 matching donation challenge and surpass our total goal!

We are so grateful for your support of our education programs to make sure the lessons of Minidoka are available to be learned in classrooms and living rooms everywhere. Your support will help us implement our new 7th-12th grade educational curriculum based on the first person experiences of WWII Japanese American incarceration survivors, and will sponsor free school bus transportation for field trips for students to experience the power of place-based learning at Minidoka National Historic Site.

*In addition to those listed, several donors wished to remain anonymous.*

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*Mary Abo in honor of Shonosuke and Nobu Tanaka*

*Robyn Achilles*

*Natalia Arai in honor of the Arais, incarcerated at Minidoka*

*Virgie Arambarri*

*Chris Bean*

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*Gary Bohlen in honor of Dale and Pauline Bohlen, homesteaders in 1948*

*Boise Valley Japanese American Citizens League*

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*Kats and Alice Hikido in memory of Shonosuke and Nobu Tanaka*

*David and Michelle Hirai*

*Denise Hutchins*

*Randy Imai in honor of Shiro Imai and Chieko Aono-Imai*

*Mike Iseri*

*Grant Jacobson*

*Barbara Johns in honor of Sandy Kita, grandson of Takuichi Fujii*

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*Bob and Janet Keegan*

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*Neil King in honor of Dr. Robert Sims*

*Atsushi Kiuchi in memory of John Ryotaro Kiuchi*

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*Meta Kortum*

*Sheldon Kuwana*

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*Abba's Storehouse Foundation in honor of Teresa Tamura and her passionate work in preserving this history*

*Beth and Mike Markley*

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*Shawn Newman*

*Harvey and Kathy Nishimura in memory of Tok and Emiko Nishimura*

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Support **FRIENDS OF MINIDOKA** and the Work We are Doing!

### OUR MISSION

Friends of Minidoka engages in and supports education, research, and historic preservation of the WWII Japanese American incarceration experience. We strive to pass on the history, legacy, and lessons of civil liberties through transforming and inspiring experiences for the general public and those with personal and familial ties to Minidoka. We are committed to working with our partners to accomplish these goals.

### THANK YOU FOR YOUR GENEROUS SUPPORT!

#### MAIL:

Friends of Minidoka, PO Box 1085, Twin Falls, ID 83303-1085

#### ONLINE:

[www.minidoka.org/donate](http://www.minidoka.org/donate)

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