

## **Events Marking the 20<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the National Apology to Japanese Americans Interned During World War II**

*Washington, D.C., July 31, 2008* – The nation’s capital will host two events marking the 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary of The Civil Liberties Act of 1988. The Act offered an historic national apology and reparations to Japanese Americans unjustly interned by the U.S. government during World War II.

As the August 10<sup>th</sup> date of enactment approaches, the National Japanese American Memorial Foundation (NJAMF) will honor the 120,000 Americans of Japanese ancestry who were involuntarily relocated from their homes to desolate internment camps in remote areas of the United States and the more than 30,000 Japanese Americans who volunteered for military service despite this injustice.

“Redressing the internment was never just a Japanese American issue. It was an American issue,” said **NJAMF board member, former member of Congress and former Cabinet Secretary Norman Y. Mineta**. “The campaign for the Civil Liberties Act of 1988 was successful because of its humanity and because of the broad coalition of Americans who came together to pursue justice and to ensure that the wholesale persecution of any group of Americans never happens again.” Mineta was born and raised in San Jose, California. He and his family would be interned at Heart Mountain, Wyoming during the War. While in Congress, Mineta was a leader in the redress movement.

“The Civil Liberties Act of 1988 is a reminder of a dark moment in American history,” said **Dr. Craig Uchida, chairman of NJAMF’s board**. “However, our government bravely acknowledged its wrongful acts and sought to remedy them. This legislation also reminds us that our citizens’ constitutional rights must be guarded and upheld regardless of their race, religion or ethnicity.”

The first event is a reception on Capitol Hill today, July 31<sup>st</sup>. **Dr. Uchida** will give opening and closing remarks. Former **Cabinet Secretary Norman Y. Mineta** is the featured speaker. Other speakers are scheduled to include:

- **Senator Daniel Inouye** of Hawaii, another leader of the Redress movement, a veteran of World War II and recipient of the Medal of Honor
- **Congressman Mike Honda** of California, Chair of the Congressional Asian Pacific American Caucus, who was also interned at the Amache internment camp during the war
- **Congresswoman Doris Matsui** of California, who was born at the Poston internment camp

The second Foundation event is a public ceremony at the Japanese American Memorial to Patriotism During World War II on August 3<sup>rd</sup>. **Dr. Craig Uchida** will act as master of ceremonies. Former Cabinet Secretary **Norman Y. Mineta** is also the featured speaker for this event. Other speakers include:

- **Robert Nakamoto**, President, Japanese American Veterans’ Association (JAVA)
- **Melanie B. Maron**, Executive Director, American Jewish Committee, Washington, DC chapter

- **Professor Frank F. Wu**, on behalf of the Committee of 100
- **Donna Hollingshead**, on behalf of the Japanese American Citizens League (JACL), Washington, DC chapter
- **Ichiro Fujisaki**, Ambassador of Japan

33 organizations are co-sponsoring the event among them several Asian American organizations and leading civil rights groups, including the **American Jewish Committee, Anti-Defamation League, Asian American Justice Center, Congressional Hispanic Caucus Institute, Leadership Conference on Civil Rights, NAACP, and National Council of La Raza.**

During the ceremony members of JAVA will present the colors and lay a wreath to honor those who served during World War II. The JACL and the Cranes for Compassion Project will present 25,000 paper cranes (1,000 cranes for each of the internment and Department of Justice camps) as a tribute to Japanese Americans' loyalty and courage during the War.

**Event details:**

Congressional Reception (R.S.V.P. required)

July 31, 2008, 6 to 8:00 p.m.

U.S. Capitol Building, Room HC-5

Anniversary Ceremony (free and open to the public)

August 3, 2 to 3:30 p.m.

Japanese American Memorial to Patriotism During World War II

Intersection of Louisiana and New Jersey Avenues and D Street, NW, Washington, D.C.

**About NJAMF:**

The National Japanese American Memorial Foundation (NJAMF) is a nonprofit organization dedicated to education and public awareness about the Japanese American experience during World War II. NJAMF raised the private funds to build the Japanese American Memorial to Patriotism During World War II. The Memorial is not only a monument to the Japanese American experience, but also a reminder that we must not allow anything like this to happen to any minority community again. [www.njamf.com](http://www.njamf.com)