



MILITARY
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SOCIETY OF
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MIS VETERANS

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2023: MIS 80TH ANNIVERSARY
DETAILS TO BE ANNOUNCED

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Greetings and thank you for the opportunity to serve you as president of the Military Intelligence Service Veterans Education Society of Hawaii.

We owe a debt of gratitude to outgoing president Lawrence Enomoto, who served as the leader of our organization for three terms. Lawrence's many accomplishments will hold us in good stead as we pursue our goal of preserving the legacy of our MIS veterans and other nisei soldiers.

In one of my first official duties, I was pleased to represent the MIS at the Emperor's birthday celebration, held at the Japanese Consulate in February. It was quite an event, with guests that included Governor Josh Green and former governors David Ige, Neil Abercrombie, and George Ariyoshi, representatives of the armed forces, and other dignitaries, with a performance by Karen Keawehawaii.

Looking Ahead

MIS membership has dwindled in recent years. We changed our tax status from a veterans entity to a general non-profit to enable non-descendants to join. We hope this action will enable us to expand our rolls.

This year marks the 80th anniversary of the first nisei soldiers from Hawaii being recruited to the MIS. We are planning an event to mark the occasion and will let you know what we have in store.

My father, Tsugio Aoyama, was one of several thousand Japanese Americans who fought against their parents' homeland in World War II as members of the MIS. They used their knowledge of the enemy's language and culture to give America an invaluable edge that shortened the war and saved countless lives.

He was an original member of the 442nd Regimental Combat Team. He volunteered in early 1943 and was one of the many recruits in the photo taken at Iolani Palace. He was among the



2,700 volunteers who were sent to Camp Shelby, Mississippi, for basic training. While there, he was approached to join the MIS because of his Japanese language ability. He was then sent to Camp Savage, Minnesota, for additional training.

He was one of 50 nisei attached to the Marines at Iwo Jima. Dad told me there were two of them assigned to their unit. He said he pushed a cart with a bullhorn, speaking in Japanese to civilians hiding in the caves, urging them to come out. He thought he'd be killed, but he survived that ordeal and others to follow.

After he came home, he opened a business in Honolulu—Uptown Hardware on Nuuanu Avenue—that he ran with my mother for 42 years.

I owe my dad and all the nisei veterans much gratitude for the life I have. I know the prejudice they faced and the price they paid for proving their loyalty to a country that their parents had chosen for them.

In the words of veteran and U.S. Senator Daniel Inouye regarding the war and internment: "Why should we talk about it? We should be vigilant. If only to remind ourselves that this can happen in our democracy, if we are not vigilant, because it did!"

Thanks, Dad, and to all the nisei veterans who have helped inspire me to preserve their memory through my tenure as president.

These are some of the reasons I'm serving as your president. I look forward to a productive term, to strengthening our organization and the legacy of our veterans—and would love to have you join us.

Aloha,
Karen Kikukawa

Iwo Jima, 2014





Photo courtesy Clyde Sugimoto and Ann Kabasawa

MIS Officers and Directors for 2023

The incoming officers and directors of the MIS Veterans took office in January at the organization's annual Shinnenkai. They are, from left: Wilbert Toda, director; James Moy, former director; Karen Kikukawa, president; Sherman Takao, treasurer; Lawrence Enomoto (seated), director and outgoing president; Gregg Hirata, secretary; Bev Ramsey, vice president; and Mark Matsunaga, director. Not pictured: Keith Matsunaga, director.

Five UH Students Receive MIS Awards

"The award gave me security and peace of mind to concentrate on my studies knowing my expenses were taken care of."

Five University of Hawaii students have received awards from the Military Intelligence Service Veterans Hawaii/Makiki Japanese Language School Endowed Scholarship Fund.

The recipients, their high schools, classes and majors, and UH campuses are:

- **Hunter Paul Bugado**, Parker School, junior in communication, Hilo;
- **Collin Matthew DeGuzman**, Mililani High School, sophomore in Japanese, Manoa;
- **Janmel Jethro Fiesta Dumayas**, Baldwin High School, senior in Japanese, Manoa;
- **Eric Pohlman**, Honokaa High School, sophomore in linguistics, Hilo; and
- **Kaitlyn M. Purdy**, Lanai City High School, junior in Japanese studies, Hilo.

Each received \$2,000.

Bugado sent a thank-you to the MIS, reading in part: "I wanted to take this opportunity to graciously thank you for your selection of myself as a scholarship

recipient for this upcoming academic year. Your generous contribution towards the furthering of my education is truly appreciated, and it will surely not go to waste.

"As a communications major and a Japanese studies minor, I wish to find an avenue in life in which I can learn how to be a better communicator towards others as well as to help perpetuate the spread of and appreciation for the Japanese culture and language. Your generous contribution will help me to further pursue the academic requirements needed for me to fulfill these goals and aspirations successfully."

Two representatives of the University of Hawaii Foundation, which administers the MIS/Makiki Fund, spoke at the Shinnenkai in January to describe their work in general and the MIS/Makiki scholarship in particular. They were Christine Koo, associate vice president for advancement services, and John Han, vice president for administration/chief financial officer.

The MIS/Makiki scholarship was established in 2003 using proceeds from

the dissolution of the language school and donations from MIS veterans and others. The goal is to assist students at any UH campus who are perpetuating the Japanese language and culture.

According to the UH Foundation, the book value of the fund stands at \$194,600, with a market value of \$275,000.

Awards averaging about \$9,000 a year have been made during the past 10 years. A typical award is between \$2,000 and \$3,000 per student.

Over the 20-year history of the scholarship, 65 awards have been made to 38 students, for a total of \$127,000.

Kaitlyn Purdy, a two-time recipient, said, "This scholarship made it possible for me to not only aspire [to] a college education, but to go for it. The award gave me security and peace of mind to concentrate on my studies knowing my expenses were taken care of. My sincere appreciation for generous dedicated donors for believing in me and allowing me to continue to dream even during hard times and for helping me get closer to achieving my goals."

MIS Observing 80th Anniversary

by Mark Matsunaga

The Military Intelligence Service Veterans Education Society of Hawaii is planning an 80th anniversary observance this summer at a place and date to be determined.

We will commemorate the 1943 enlistment of large numbers of volunteers from Hawaii—more than seven hundred—who went on to serve in the Pacific against their ancestral homeland.

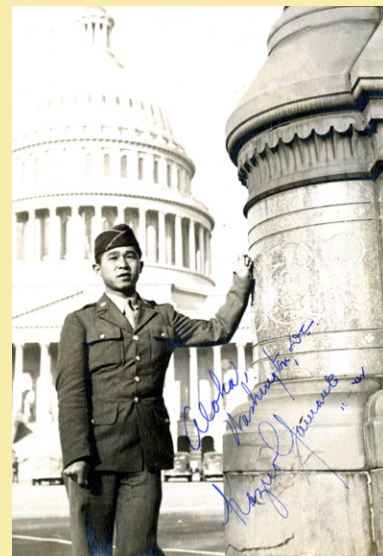
The U.S. Army was already deploying and training small numbers of Americans of Japanese ancestry as interpreters and translators even before Pearl Harbor. Once the war began, the need for loyal soldiers fluent in the enemy's language ballooned and so did racial suspicion and hatred. In January 1942, all of the AJAs in the Hawaii Territorial Guard were abruptly discharged. More than half of them successfully petitioned Hawaii's military government for a chance to perform manual labor, as the Varsity Victory Volunteers. Nationally, the Selective Service designated all ethnic Japanese, IV-C—aliens not eligible for the draft, regardless of their U.S. citizenship.

As the crucial Battle of Midway was being waged in June 1942, some 1,400 AJA infantrymen—most of whom were drafted before Pearl Harbor—were removed from their units in the islands and shipped as the 100th Infantry Battalion (Separate) to Camp McCoy, Wisconsin.

Early AJA linguists proved their value in the futile defense of the Philippines. Others provided valuable intelligence in the South Pacific, Alaska, and New Guinea. The need for linguists was so urgent that some sixty infantrymen from the 100th Battalion were transferred to the MIS Language School at Camp Savage, Minnesota, in December 1942. Meanwhile, some AJAs on the continent—where more than 110,000 Japanese Americans had been removed from the West Coast and locked up in concentration camps—were demanding a chance to prove their loyalty with military service. Some key Army officers agreed. At the end of January 1943, the White House announced that recruits were being sought for a new AJA unit, the 442nd Regimental Combat Team.

In Hawaii, nearly ten thousand Americans of Japanese ancestry volunteered for the combat team in February and March, and more than 2,600 were accepted. This turnout far exceeded Army expectations and the response on the continent. After the volunteers for the 442nd left Hawaii in April 1943, the Army issued a call for volunteers for the Pacific. More than 240 were enlisted and sent to the MIS Language School in Minnesota in June 1943. MIS officials realized they didn't have nearly enough trainees to meet demands. A recruiting team was sent to Camp Shelby, Mississippi, to obtain transfers from the 442nd. They came away with 250 men who were transferred to the MIS Language School. In November 1943, Camp Savage sent another team to Hawaii where they recruited 300 more AJAs. That last batch entered the MIS Language School in February 1944, the last class before the IV-C designation was removed for AJAs and the country resumed drafting them.

Ultimately, nearly 6,000 AJAs served in the war against Japan and the subsequent occupation. They were credited with shortening the war and saving countless lives and, afterwards, played a vital role in Japan's re-emergence as a modern democracy and staunch U.S. ally.



All photos from the MIS Veterans Hawaii website and are courtesy of T. Tsukiyama (top left photo), the K. Yamane family (top right photo), Eric Saul and the Kubo family (second from top), and the Hamada family (bottom left photo). Other photos are public domain (U.S. Army, and U.S. Army Corps of Engineers).



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Mililani Student Profiles MIS Veteran

Ty Wakahiro, a student at Mililani High School, was among a handful of young people across the nation who had their research projects recognized through the National History Day's "Silent Heroes" program.

Wakahiro took up the story of **MIS veteran Wilfred Masao Motokane**, who was killed in a plane crash in Okinawa just days before the Japanese surrender.

Motokane was born in Honolulu. Like many other nisei, he joined the U.S. Army and was sent to the MIS Language School and then to basic training. He was assigned to the Allied Translator and Interpreter Service before being deployed to the Philippines in early 1945.

He was among members of the Counter Intelligence Corps who boarded an aircraft bound for Okinawa to join U.S. forces there. The aircraft crashed outside Naha, killing all onboard.

Motokane's remains were moved from Okinawa to the National Memorial Cemetery of the Pacific in 1949. His name is engraved on a plaque at Honpa Hongwanji Hawaii Betsuin on Pali

Highway.

A Silent Hero is any service member of the U.S. armed forces or civilian support personnel who died honorably while serving the nation. Silent Heroes died while training for or participating in the war or died of wounds received in battle.

National History Day was established to help students and teachers across the nation to honor and tell the stories of American men and women who served their nation and lost their lives either in service to the U.S. or after living as veterans. The program seeks to teach the historical research process through biographical profiles.

Wakahiro's profile on Motokane is available at the "Silent Heroes" website: <https://nhdsilentheroes.org/profiles/wilfred-masao-motokane/>

Is Your MIS Membership Current?

Your current MIS Veterans membership dues expiration date is provided in the box below.

Your dues help the club publish this newsletter, maintain our website, organize various activities, and preserve the legacy of the MIS veterans. If you haven't paid your annual dues, please send a check for \$20.00, made payable to "MIS Veterans Hawaii," to us at:

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Questions:

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Dues Expiration Date