

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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About the Democracy Center

LOS ANGELES, CA – Founded by the Japanese American National Museum in 2000, the National Center for the Preservation of Democracy was relaunched as the Daniel K. Inouye National Center for the Preservation of Democracy (Democracy Center) on December 1, 2023. The Democracy Center convenes and educates people of all ages about democracy to transform attitudes, celebrate culture, and promote civic engagement. The Democracy Center examines issues around race, identity, social justice, and explores the evolving idea of what democracy is and what it means to be an American. A place for education and participation, the Democracy Center engages the public and leaders from all sectors to bring diverse communities together, advocate for positive change, and promote democracy.

The Democracy Center envisions an enduring American Democracy where all people understand their right and responsibility to participate.

Current and upcoming initiatives of the Democracy Center include:

- **Norman Y. Mineta Distinguished Lecture Series**
A signature series on the leadership values and principles inspired by Secretary Mineta, including public service, social justice and US-Japan relations.
- **Irene Hirano Inouye Distinguished Lecture Series**
A signature series on the leadership values and principles that inspired Irene Hirano Inouye to empower community, uplift women and build bridges between the US and Japan.
- The **Toshizo Watanabe Democracy Fellowship**, which will promote democracy, leadership, diversity, and community empowerment. The Fellowship will facilitate dialogue and cooperation between early to mid-career leaders from Japan drawn from government, business, media, the arts, and NGO sectors and their American counterparts. The Fellowship program will be housed at the Democracy Center.
- The [Irene Yamamoto Arts Writers Fellowship](#), awarded annually to two emerging writers of color who have demonstrated commitment to writing about the art of communities of color and whose unique perspectives or points of view contribute to arts writing.
- The collaborative program **Our Shared Future Los Angeles**, a two week summit offered in connection with the Smithsonian Institution's initiative, *Our Shared Future*:

Reckoning with Our Racial Past with Los Angeles partners LA Plaza de Cultura y Artes and Chinese American Museum, December 1–17, 2023.

- **Empathy & Democracy**, a live four-part podcast series and pop-up art program presented by the Democracy Center in collaboration with the Gratitude Blooming Podcast. [Part 3](#) will be on February 10, 2024 and [Part 4](#) will be on May 4, 2024.
- Programs with **community partners** including AAPI Equity Alliance, Artistas de Colores Unido, Asian American Journalists Association, California Black Freedom Fund, Chinese American Museum, The Huey P. Newton Foundation, LA Live Talks, and La Plaza de Cultura y Artes, and others.
- ***The Bias Inside Us***, an exhibition and community engagement project from the Smithsonian that explores the social science, psychology, and consequences of implicit bias.

US Senator Daniel K. Inouye (1924 – 2012) is an American hero and statesman whose life and career embodied the values and principles of democracy. Born on September 7, 1924, in Honolulu, Hawai'i, Senator Inouye was the second longest serving member of the US Senate prior to his death. He served for more than forty-nine years and, as president pro tempore (third in line of presidential succession) from 2010–2012, he was the highest-ranking public official of Asian descent in US history. In addition to the bipartisanship and moral courage that marked his political career, Senator Inouye is also recognized for his bravery and heroism in combat during World War II. He was awarded the Medal of Honor, the nation's highest award for military valor. His political career illustrated his belief in America's democracy and both its enduring strength and fragility. This belief and his unwavering commitment to justice would lead to his championing of the Civil Liberties Act of 1988, which resulted in a formal apology and reparations from the US government to individuals of Japanese ancestry who were unjustly incarcerated during World War II. Inouye, chair emeritus of the Japanese American National Museum, led the effort to establish and fund the National Center for the Preservation of Democracy at JANM in 2000.

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About the Japanese American National Museum (JANM)

Established in 1985, **JANM** promotes understanding and appreciation of America's ethnic and cultural diversity by sharing the Japanese American experience. Located in the historic Little Tokyo district of downtown Los Angeles, **JANM** is a center for civil rights, ensuring that the hard-fought lessons of the World War II incarceration are not forgotten. A Smithsonian Affiliate and one of America's Cultural Treasures, **JANM** is a hybrid institution that straddles traditional museum categories. **JANM** is a center for the arts as well as history. It provides a voice for Japanese Americans and a forum that enables all people to explore their own heritage and culture. Since opening to the public in 1992, **JANM** has presented over 100 exhibitions onsite while traveling 40 exhibits to venues such as the Smithsonian Institution and the Ellis Island Museum in the United States, and to several leading cultural museums in Japan and South America. **JANM** is open on Tuesday, Wednesday, and Friday–Sunday from 11 a.m.–5 p.m. and on Thursday from 12 p.m.–8 p.m. **JANM** is free every third Thursday of the month. On all other Thursdays, **JANM** is free from 5 p.m.–8 p.m. For more information, visit janm.org or follow us on social media [@jamuseum](#).