

**JA LIVING LEGACY.ORG**

The real story. Japanese American History told by those who lived it.

Ms. Susan Uyemura, CEO
(714) 278-4483
suyemura@jalivinglegacy.org

NEWS RELEASE
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
October 4, 2008

Tani Family Honors Donald Wakida with a Living Legacy Award



Tani Family recognizing Donald Wakida the “Living Legacy” recipient.

A few months ago, Japanese American Living Legacy received an email from Sharon Tani. Tani asked if JA Living Legacy would assist her and her family in recognizing one individual for his services to the veteran community. Tani also expressed an interest in making donations in the name of her late father, Mamoru Tani (L Company 442nd) and Donald Wakida to Japanese American Veterans Association (JAVA), Friends and Family of Nisei Veterans (FFNV) and Japanese American Living Legacy. After careful planning,

it was soon discovered that Grant Ichikawa from JAVA would be in attendance at the FFNV Reunion. That would mean representatives from all three organizations would be at the same location along with the honoree. Tani made arrangements for her family to attend FFNV's reunion. This was kept a secret to maximize the surprise for the honoree, Donald Wakida.

Monday nights banquet held at the California Hotel in Las Vegas, Nevada. The Tani family along with Japanese American Living Legacy recognized Donald for his caring efforts to perpetuate the legacy of Nisei Veterans by giving him the first "Living Legacy" award. When questioned at what point did Wakida realize the recipient of the award was himself, he responded with, "I had no idea who the awardee was until Susan said 'he is an active member of Nisei VFW Post 8499 in Fresno, California.' Wakida was completely caught off-guard. Uyemura joked that she had a hard time keeping a straight face and thought Don would catch on after she mentioned that the awardee was a "career veteran who served in the Navy" – there were no other Navy attendees. Sharon Tani explained that Donald had been a key figure in helping her track down information on her father and it was through Don she was able to meet a lot of L Company 442nd veterans.

This was the first Living Legacy Award and although JA Living Legacy would love to acknowledge many individuals, this award was made possible only because of the generosity of the Tani family and their desire to recognize an individual for everything he did for them.

For more information on the Friends and Family of Nisei Veterans Annual reunion or organization, please contact Lawson Sakai at Lawson.sakai@gmail.com. Annual membership dues are only \$25 which includes invitations and advance notices to their quarterly meetings, annual reunions and special trips.

Japanese American Living Legacy is a California non-profit 501c(3) organization based out of California State University, Fullerton. All of the board of directors, staff and advisors are volunteers. For more information on Japanese American Living Legacy, please visit their website at www.jalivinglegacy.org or call them at (714) 278-4483.

###