

CONGRESSIONAL GOLD MEDAL CEREMONY

DE YOUNG MUSEUM

JUNE 29, 2013

REMARKS DELIVERED BY

DAPHNE KWOK

GOOD MORNING, LEADER PELOSI, MAYOR LEE, DIRECTOR BAILEY, DIRECTOR NG AND OUR HERO LAWSON SAKAI. AND A VERY SPECIAL GOOD MORNING TO ALL OF THE 442nd/100th/MIS VETERANS AND THEIR FAMILIES.

I AM DAPHNE KWOK, CHAIR OF PRESIDENT OBAMA'S ADVISORY COMMISSION ON ASIAN AMERICANS AND PACIFIC ISLANDERS, AND I BRING GREETINGS TO ALL OF YOU FROM PRESIDENT OBAMA!

ON OCTOBER 5, 2010 IN THE OVAL OFFICE PRESIDENT OBAMA SIGNED S.1055 AUTHORIZING THE CONGRESSIONAL GOLD MEDAL. JOINING THE PRESIDENT AT THE SIGNING, WERE FOUR MEMBERS OF THE 100TH/442ND AND THE MIS.

I HAD THE HONOR OF ATTENDING THE NOVEMBER 2011 CONGRESSIONAL GOLD MEDAL CEREMONIES HELD IN DC. AS A BOARD MEMBER OF THE NATIONAL JAPANESE AMERICAN MEMORIAL FOUNDATION, I ASSISTED IN THE

LOUNGE AREA SURROUNDED BY BULLETIN BOARDS WITH HAND WRITTEN NOTES, PHOTOS AND CONTACT INFORMATION ABOUT THE VETERANS. I WAS MOVED WHEN I SAW FOUR GENERATIONS OF A FAMILY SURROUNDING ONE OF THE BOARDS LISTENING TO A VETERAN TALK ABOUT MEMBERS OF HIS UNIT. I OVERHEARD PARENTS TELLING THEIR CHILDREN ABOUT THE HEROISM OF THEIR RELATIVE DURING THE WAR. YET, EVEN AT THIS CELEBRATION REUNION, THE HUMBLE VETERANS **INSISTED** THEY WERE **JUST** “DOING THEIR JOB”.

AT THE CONGRESSIONAL GOLD MEDAL CEREMONY GALA, PRESIDENT OBAMA’S GREETING WAS

THOUGH THEIR ROLE IN AMERICA'S STORY HAS NOT ALWAYS BEEN GIVEN ITS DUE, THE JAPANESE AMERICAN HEROES, WE CELEBRATE, STAND AMONG **EXTRAORDINARY** PATRIOTS WHOSE BRAVERY AND SELFLESSNESS CHANGED THE COURSE OF AN ENTIRE COUNTRY. THEY BORE THE BURDEN OF DEFENDING OUR FREEDOM AND WAY OF LIFE ABROAD, WHILE MANY OF THEIR LOVED ONES WERE INTERNED BACK HOME. IN THE FACE OF DISCRIMINATION AND ADVERSITY, THEIR DEDICATION TO THEIR COUNTRY **NEVER** WAVERED, AND WE **OWE** A PROFOUND DEBT OF GRATITUDE, TO THE VETERANS AND THEIR FAMILIES.

SO, THANK YOU, TO THE NATIONAL VETERANS NETWORK,
THE NATIONAL JAPANESE AMERICAN HISTORICAL SOCIETY,
THE JAPANESE AMERICAN CITIZENS LEAGUE AND THE
VETERANS FOR BRINGING **THE** CONGRESSIONAL GOLD
MEDAL TO NORTHERN CALIFORNIA!

NOW, OUR JOB, IS TO FILL THE DE YOUNG MUSEUM WITH
CHILDREN, STUDENTS, ADULTS, OUT-OF-TOWNERS FOR THE
NEXT 37 DAYS! IT IS **OUR** DUTY TO MAKE SURE ALL
AMERICANS KNOW ABOUT THE SERVICE OF THE JAPANESE
AMERICAN VETERANS WHILE THEIR FAMILIES WERE
INTERNEED IN THE CAMPS.

THANK YOU AGAIN, TO ALL THE VETERANS.