# RES25-149
# Testimony

**MISC. COMM. 286**

PARKS (PKS)

**PARKS (PKS)  Meeting**

Meeting Date: May 27, 2025 @ 02:30 PM

Support: 7

Oppose: 0

I wish to comment: 0

| Name: | Email: | Zip: |
|---|---|---|
| Cynthia Rezentes | rezentesc@aol.com | 96792 |
| Representing: | Position: | Submitted: |
| Self | Support | May 21, 2025 @ 08:41 AM |

Testimony:

Aloha Chair Tupola and members of the Parks Committee,

I Strongly Support the renaming of the Waianae District Park to recognize Shinyei Nakamine and the 100th Battalion at this time. When I first tried to champion this renaming of the Waianae District Park, the City had a firm position that they wished all District Parks to be named for the area rather than a person thus causing us to rename just a portion of the park facilities located in the Waianae District Park.

This recognition is long overdue to recognize the sacrifices made by a son of Waianae.

Please support this resolution.

Mahalo,

Cynthia K.L. Rezentes

Ma`ili Resident

| Name: | Email: | Zip: |
|---|---|---|
| James Hirai | jatehi888@icloud.com | 96789 |
| Representing: | Position: | Submitted: |
| Self | Support | May 21, 2025 @ 07:47 PM |

Testimony:

I humbly submit the following supporting comments as an Army veteran raised on Oahu. The City and County's parks are community icons that provide amazing opportunities for the growth and development of our citizens and especially our youth. Because of their wide use and appeal, renaming them helps educate and inspire park users about the accomplishments and service of the memorialized individuals/organizations. Renaming is particularly effective when the person being memorialized is a product of the neighborhood/district, and when their contributions are truly exceptional and had significant impacts beyond the community. Memorializing a soldier also provides a logical venue for recognizing all veterans on appropriate national holidays, such as Veterans Day, and is a source of mutual respect among the civilian, veterans, and currently serving military members of the community. I appreciate the thoughtfulness of all involved with this process. Sincerely, James Hirai, Retired U.S. Army Brigadier General

| Name: | Email: | Zip: |
|---|---|---|
| KATHLEEN HAYASHI | kathih@verizon.net | 96825 |

| Representing: | Position: | Submitted: |
| --- | --- | --- |
| 100th Infantry Battalion Veterans | Support | May 23, 2025 @ 02:56 PM |

Testimony:

My name is Kathi Hayashi and I am the Presdient and Education Chair fo the 100th Infantry Battalion Veterans organization (aka Club 100). I humbly submit testimony supporting this Resolution.

Private Shinyei Nakamine, son of Waianae, served in the 100th Infantry Battalion (Separate). He was killed in an extraordinary show of courage, personally attacking multiple enemy machine gun nests, which earned him the Medal of Honor. Private Nakamine was killed before the 442nd unit landed in Europe, he served solely with the Hawaii-born, 100th Infantry Battalion (Separate).

A Park in Private Nakamine's and the 100th Infantry Battalion will honor his sacrifice and the Hawaii-born unit of the 100th Infantry Battalion.

The Hawaii men were humble and didn't brag about their accomplishments, thus many don't know of the 100th Infantry Battalion (Separate) or that the 100th was the precursor to the 442nd. The 100th was in battle 9 months before the 442nd unit arrived in Italy. The 100th is "The Purple Heart Battalion". They proved with their blood, like Private Nakamine, that even though they looked like the Japanese enemy, they were loyal Americans. Even the 442nd would say, there would not be a 442nd, if not for the sacrifices of the 100th. The 100th was supposed to guard train stations instead of being in combat. But, they begged to fight and lose their lives to PROVE they were loyal Americans.

When the 442nd arrived for combat in Italy, the 100th became the 1st Battalion (other battalions: 2nd, 3rd, 522nd Field Artillery battalions) of the 442nd , but allowed to maintain the 100th name due to their stellar military record as a separate unit.

Before the 100th was formed , the American of Japanese ancestry (AJA) men were part of the federalized Hawaii National Guard (US Army) -298th and 299th Infantry tasked to guard Hawaii's shorelines from enemy attack. After the attack on Pearl Harbor by the Japanese Imperial Navy, the AJA men in the Guard were segregated and put into a a separate unit, just because they looked like the enemy.

Naming a Park after Private Nakamine and the 100th is an invitation for everyone , especially students, to be proud of our Hawaii men- our heroes that took a stand over 80 years ago to make a difference and to change the way people of color are treated. An invitation, to learn more about how these men, small in stature -on average 5'3" and 125 lbs- could become with the 442nd, the MOST decorated in U.S. Military history. This is an important lesson on overcoming obstacles and setbacks and setting goals in a positive way to make a difference.

Waianae can be a memorialized as a point, where we know one person who sent the 100th off with well-wishes. That one person is still alive and is Private Nakamine's sister, Anita Korenaga, who lives in Waianae. Because of the secret nature of

the 100th deployment to the mainland , there was no opportunity to say goodbye to family or friends, no lei, no ceremonies.  Anita, as a 5th grader, recalls her mom telling her to run to say goodbye to the soldiers leaving Waianae on the train. She said she waved at every train car hoping to that her brother would see her. Here's the Star advertiser article.

https://archives.starbulletin.com/2007/11/12/news/story04.html

| Name: | Email: | Zip: |
|---|---|---|
| Maureen Oberacker | antiqconn@msn.com | 96825 |
| Representing: | Position: | Submitted: |
| Self | Support | May 25, 2025 @ 06:00 PM |

Testimony:

Selected Agenda Item: RES25-149

RENAMING WAI'ANAE DISTRICT PARK TO THE SHINYEI NAKAMINE AND 100TH INFANTRY BATTALION MEMORIAL PARK

Mahalo for your consideration

| Name: | Email: | Zip: |
|---|---|---|
| Isami Yoshihara | iyoshihara62@gmail.com | 96817 |
| Representing: | Position: | Submitted: |
| Self | Support | May 26, 2025 @ 02:00 PM |

Testimony:

The 100th Infantry Battalion (Separate) was ordered by the 34th Infantry Division commanding officer to clear the last obstacle to liberate Rome on June 2, 1944. The unit was successful in overtaking the objective that 6 other battalions couldn't accomplish, but at a heavy loss of casualties with 21 soldiers killed in action including Pvt Shinyei Nakamine. Pvt Nakamine was one of 6 soldiers to receive the Distinguished Service Cross (DSC) in that battle, with his DSC being upgraded to the Medal of Honor in June 2000.

| Name: | Email: | Zip: |
|---|---|---|
| Anita Korenaga | kmkorenaga@gmail.com | 96792 |
| Representing: | Position: | Submitted: |
| Self | Support | May 26, 2025 @ 02:32 PM |

Testimony:

Oral testimony to be given at hearing 5/27/2025 please

| Name: | Email: | Zip: |
|---|---|---|
| Kimie Korenaga-Kepo'o | kimiekorenaga@gmail.com | 96792 |
| Representing: | Position: | Submitted: |
| Self | Support | May 26, 2025 @ 03:00 PM |

Testimony:

My name is Kimie Korenaga-Kepoo, I was born and raised and continue to live in Waianae. I stand before you in support of RES25-149 to rename the Waianae District Park to honor Shinyei Nakamine.

At the park's Christmas event this past year, (which was a great event for the keiki) I noticed the plaque for Shinyei in the basketball court. I wonder how many others may stop to read it, or notice it if at all. And I think about how important it is to tell the stories of those who came before us, for us.

We need good role models. Now, more than ever. We need more of them. We need them from all walks of life, all times in history. We need to tell their stories. We need our people to know that they are connected to heroes, that they too can be heroes.

Our community continues to grow exponentially, but remember— roots and exponents go together. Our roots are what ground us, and we need to water them. Certain people, like Shinyei come along and change a community. We need to tell their stories.

Did you know that Shinyei had the first motorcycle in Waianae?

He had a tailor sew his suit inside-out so that he could wear a different style than everyone else.

He bought war bonds and was able to send his little sister, Anita Korenaga, to college from his grave. His sister, who became THE Mrs. Korenaga of Waianae, who I have heard countless stories from strangers all over about how she changed the life of them, their families…. Roots. Exponents. We need to tell their stories.

There are so many amazing things that I could tell you about why this should be important to you and our community. Our conversation could grow, exponentially, into hours. Eventually we'd connect your roots with mine. We'd find what makes us all community.

Renaming this park is a small nod to the power in our plantation communities and the generation that comprised them. How beautiful would it be that the name sparks someone's interest, they ask questions, do a google search, learn. They will find connections, inspiration, and identity. I support RES 25-149 because it continues to prompt the conversation and open the dialogue to share the stories, exponentially, of our community history-- our ancestors. Our roots. We need to tell their stories.

Mahalo