

Today on this very memorable occasion, we are here to honor our very dear friend, Michi Nishiura Weglyn. I am happy to say a few words for the friendship I have with Michi. She and her late husband Walter have been such gracious friends and have been so supportive and instrumental in bringing attention to the unique cause of the resisters.

As many of you know, my husband Dave was one of the 63 young men at Heart Mountain Relocation Center who had refused to be inducted into military service because of being denied their constitutional rights. I am very proud of the stand that he took.

In 1942 he was a NCAA wrestling champion as a senior at San Jose State College. Dave valued education and was majoring in business administration with hopes of a career in electronics. With just weeks away from earning his degree, the war came.

Dave attempted to volunteer into the military service after Pearl Harbor but was not accepted. He was classified as "4-C" an enemy alien.

A few months later, President Franklin Roosevelt, bowing to local political pressure and public hysteria signed Executive Order 9066 which began the forced internment of all Japanese Americans from the west coast. Dave and his family were evacuated first to the Pomona Assembly Center and then on to Heart Mountain Relocation Center in Wyoming.

When Michi learned that Dave had not graduated in 1942 because of evacuation, she wrote to President Robert Caret at San Jose State University. After the faculty evaluation, I was notified that a posthumous Bachelor's degree would be awarded to Dave and I was asked to speak at

the commencement exercises. Michi's letter must have been affective. I was overwhelmed. It was an honor to receive his diploma made possible by the concerted and kind efforts of Michi.

At the commencement exercises, President Caret said, "We can never atone for the damage done to the loyal, principled men who maintained they deserved their democratic rights regardless of their ancestry."

Through the years, Michi and Walter's friendship encouraged the resisters to return to their communities and stand up for what they did to set right the wrong done to all Japanese Americans.

On behalf of my family, I want to express my most sincere appreciation to Michi for all she has done to benefit so many.

Toshiko Kawamoto

21 February 1998