



D E N S H Ō

The Japanese American Legacy Project

Criteria for Densho Interviewee Selection

The Densho Visual History Collection is intended to represent a wide range of perspectives and experiences from a diverse geographic range. Yet Densho does not have enough resources to interview everyone. To help with the difficult decision of who to interview, Densho has developed selection criteria. General guidelines are outlined below.

Willingness and readiness to be interviewed

Some individuals are naturally outgoing, like to talk about their experiences, and do not mind saying things for the record. Others are quite reluctant. Experience shows that talking someone into being interviewed usually does not result in a successful interview.

Good health of the potential interviewee

The potential interviewee should be healthy enough to come to a studio and answer questions for an hour or more.

Experiences that are relatively less well documented

We are seeking to document less known aspects of the incarceration story, such as draft resistance, renunciation of citizenship, and Japanese residence. Densho also interviews Japanese Americans who were not in a detention facility and non-Japanese Americans who played roles in the incarceration process, such as guards, teachers, and administrators in camp.

Ability to reflect and give perspective on issues of civil rights, race relations, and social justice

Densho's materials are used in schools where teachers relate historical events to more recent events like the backlash against Arab Americans and Muslims after the September 11th attacks.

Preserving the past, inspiring the future