

KATSUGO MIHO

BIOGRAPHICAL PROFILE



ECHOES & REFLECTIONS

TEACHING THE HOLOCAUST. INSPIRING THE CLASSROOM.



Katsugo Miho, son of Katsuichi and Ayano, was born on May 15, 1922, in Kahului, Hawaii, on the island of Maui.

Katsugo was the youngest of eight

siblings. His parents—and some of his siblings—were born in Hiroshima, Japan. Katsugo grew up in a Buddhist household, and spoke Japanese and English. The Mihos owned a hotel in Hawaii, and Katsugo's father was also a Japanese language teacher. As a boy, Katsugo helped at the hotel, delivered newspapers and was a member of the Boy Scouts.

After graduating high school, Katsugo worked for a year and saved up money so he could attend college. In September 1941, he began at the University of Hawaii, and was a member of the Reserve Officers' Training Corps (ROTC). On December 7, 1941, while getting ready to attend Church services, Katsugo witnessed the attack on the Pearl Harbor military base. Out of a racist fear of all people of Japanese descent, Katsugo's father—a well-known member of Maui's Japanese community—was arrested that evening. He was incarcerated as a prisoner of war until after the war.

Katsugo and other members of the ROTC were inducted into the newly formed Hawaiian Territorial Guard, and they helped protect buildings across the island. All guardsmen of Japanese descent were discharged in January 1942.

Katsugo went back to Maui, where he worked as a carpenter. In March 1943, Katsugo enlisted in the army. He became a member of the 442nd Infantry Regiment, a unit made up of Japanese-Americans from Hawaii and the mainland United States. Katsugo participated in the Italian campaign, the French

campaign, and the invasion of Germany. In April 1945, Katsugo and other members of his unit helped liberate a sub-camp of Dachau, a concentration camp in Germany.

After the war, Katsugo returned to Hawaii and finished college. He attended George Washington University Law School, and returned to Hawaii, where he married Laura Iida. The couple had four children. Katsugo became a lawyer and a judge. He served as a Republican member of the state legislature from 1959 – 1970, and from 1989 – 1995, he was a member of the Hawaii Housing Commission.

This interview took place on January 27, 1998, in Honolulu, Hawaii. Katsugo Miho passed away on September 11, 2011.