



**Asian American
Bar Association
of New York**

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NEW YORK COUNTY LAWYERS ASSOCIATION HOSTS SECOND ANNUAL FRED KOREMATSU DAY CELEBRATION IN NEW YORK CITY, JOINED BY ASIAN AMERICAN BAR ASSOCIATION OF NEW YORK, NEW YORK DAY OF REMEMBRANCE COMMITTEE AND COMMUNITY GROUPS

NEW YORK, January 25, 2019 - New York City will celebrate its 2nd annual Fred Korematsu Day of Civil Liberties and the Constitution on Wednesday, January 30, 2019, hosted by the New York County Lawyers Association (NYCLA) at 14 Vesey Street from 6:30 pm to 9:00 pm. This event marks Korematsu's 100th birthday. The Fred Korematsu Day of Civil Liberties and the Constitution is already officially recognized in four states and was first officially celebrated in New York City in 2018. Spearheaded by the Asian Practice Committee of NYCLA, the Asian American Bar Association of New York joins the New York Day of Remembrance Committee and numerous community groups to organize this historic event.

At the celebration, Asian American Bar Association of New York (AABANY) members will perform "Fred Korematsu and His Fight for Justice," a reenactment of legal proceedings in *Korematsu v. United States*. Judge Denny Chin, United States Circuit Court of Appeals for the Second Circuit, and Kathy Hirata Chin, Partner at Crowell & Moring, will narrate the reenactment.

"Why the Korematsu Case Still Matters Today," a panel discussion, will follow the reenactment. The panelists are Prof. Rose Cuison Villazor of Rutgers Law School and Afaf Nasher, Executive Director for the New York Chapter of the Council on American Islamic Relations, and Chris Kwok, AABANY Board Director and Issues Committee Chair, will be the moderator.

Fred T. Korematsu was a national civil rights hero. In 1942, at the age of 23, he refused to go to the government's incarceration camps for Japanese Americans. After he was arrested and convicted of defying the government's order, he appealed his case all the way to the Supreme Court. In 1944, the Supreme Court ruled against him, arguing that the incarceration was justified by military necessity.

In 1983, in light of new evidence of government misconduct, Korematsu's 40-year-old case was reopened. On November 10, 1983, Korematsu's conviction was overturned in a federal court in San Francisco. It was a pivotal moment in civil rights history.

Korematsu remained an activist throughout his life. In 1998, he received the Presidential Medal of Freedom, the nation's highest civilian honor, from President Bill Clinton.

“AABANY is proud to help celebrate Fred Korematsu’s 100th birthday, on the occasion of the second annual Korematsu Day in New York City,” states Yang Chen, AABANY’s Executive Director. “AABANY was among the groups in New York that testified before the New York City Council in 2017 in support of commemorating January 30th each year as the Fred Korematsu Day of Civil Liberties and the Constitution in New York City. We were there last year for the inaugural celebration, and we are honored to be able to present one of our trial reenactments to recount the story of Fred Korematsu and his struggle for justice. The only way we can ensure that we as Americans never again repeat the gross injustice Japanese Americans suffered during World War II is to tell his story and share its many lessons with the general public.”

For more information, please contact Yang Chen, AABANY Executive Director, at (212) 332-2478, or main@aabany.org.

The Asian American Bar Association of New York is a professional membership organization of attorneys concerned with issues affecting the Asian Pacific American community. Incorporated in 1989, AABANY seeks not only to encourage the professional growth of its members but also to advocate for the Asian Pacific American community as a whole. AABANY is a New York regional affiliate of the National Asian Pacific American Bar Association (NAPABA).

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