



DR. CHARLES W. SYDNOR, JR.

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February 23, 2015

To Whom This May Concern:

This letter is an enthusiastic, unqualified recommendation for Mr. Sam Mihara as a speaker whose power point presentation about the experiences of Japanese-Americans deprived of their rights and locked in internment camps during the Second World is an especially powerful and compelling first person account. Mr. Mihara was born in San Francisco and age 9 was forcibly removed with his family from their home by the government and sent under armed guard to the Heart Mountain prison camp in Wyoming. Confined there throughout the war, the Mihara family also lost the property and possessions they had accumulated as Americans. The central, gripping point he makes is that this did not happen in Nazi Germany, or Fascist Italy, or Imperial Japan—it happened in the United States of America. From this perspective, Mr. Mihara's presentation is a memorable lesson in the dangers of intolerance and bigotry, and the consequences of stereotyping minorities for whatever reasons—religious, ethnic, economic, social, or racial. The urgent message Mr. Mihara communicates so effectively is that the rights, liberties and individual dignity of all people must be respected and protected, even in times of crisis and danger, so that the laws may not be turned against the life, liberty and property of those our legal system was created to protect.

Mr. Mihara, who is a retired scientist from the Boeing Corporation, is a gifted communicator with a rare ability to connect with young people. When he spoke here to an audience of 150, most of whom were middle school students, he held everyone's rapt attention, and then patiently answered questions from an audience obviously inspired by what he had said. It would be difficult to imagine anyone more effective or naturally suited to speak about why human rights are sacrosanct than Sam Mihara. His program was among the very best we have ever had here.

Charles W. Sydnor, Jr.
President and Executive Director