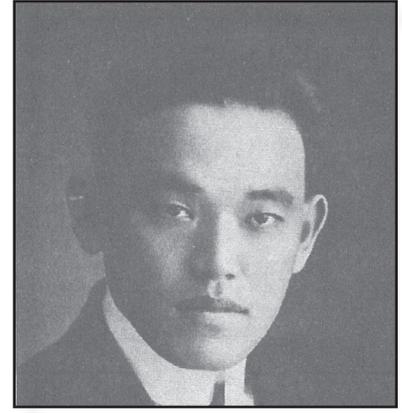

Honoring
Frank Futoshi Arakawa
(1891 - 1977)
Distinguished Alumnus
in Memoriam



Frank Arakawa’s life story reads like a book of “firsts.” For starters, Frank was a member of Hilo High School’s *first* graduating class, and the *first* person of Japanese ancestry from Hilo High to graduate from Stanford University.

After graduating from Stanford in Engineering and Architecture, Frank returned to Hilo around the time America entered World War I. Frank stepped up and quickly distinguished himself by becoming one of the *first* Nisei commissioned officers.

Resuming his professional career, Frank worked for decades designing buildings throughout Hilo town. Even today, you will find at least 10 buildings that Frank designed still occupying an important place in Hilo’s architectural landscape.

All of the buildings that Frank designed are unique. Collectively, they serve as historical reminders that define and connect us with our unique town and school history. Included amongst them is the Hilo High School auditorium, which has played a prominent role for 88 of our school’s 109-year history. The auditorium building has been a pivotal part of campus life—a place where students past and present have gathered for assemblies, meetings, plays and performances.

Beyond Frank’s accomplishments and contributions as an architect, his story is one of loyalty, dedication and dignity. He was the *first* president of the Japanese American Citizens League of Hawaii, an organization that encouraged Hawaii born Japanese to promote U.S. citizenship and loyalty.

However, despite his outstanding contributions to this community, service in the U.S. Army, and dedication to his state and country, Frank was detained and sent to an internment camp in Arkansas following the outbreak of World War II. In spite of this cruel injustice, Frank continued to demonstrate his steadfast loyalty to his country. While interned, he wrote a letter to his wife, Haru, in which he said: “Tell David [their son] that once he becomes...a soldier his body and soul belong to the country he serves... he must endeavor his utmost upholding the dignity of the country.” And, David did just that, proudly serving with the famed 100th Battalion of the 442nd Regimental Combat Team.

Architecturally, Frank Arakawa left all Hilo High alums with an auditorium, classrooms and corridors—functional settings that have led to many life-long friendships. These structures have helped to define a sense of place where generations of students continue to forge memories and bonds of connectivity to today. His life of “firsts,” like those of other Hilo High School alumni, serves as a beacon of inspiration for generations of Vikings to come.
