

Robert (Bob) Y. Fuchigami was born 1930 in Marysville, in northern California. In 1942, after President Franklin Roosevelt signed Executive Order 9066 authorizing the forced relocation of U.S. citizens of Japanese ancestry off the West Coast, Bob and his family—his father, mother, and seven siblings—were evicted from their fruit and vegetable farm by the U.S. Army and sent by train to Merced Detention Center in California. Later that year, they were moved again to the Granada Relocation Center, otherwise known as Amache, in the southeast plains of Colorado. At Amache, the Fuchigami family was incarcerated behind barbed wire for three years, during which time they lost everything. After the war, the family moved to Greeley, Colorado, and Bob completed high school, enrolled in college and completed two years before joining the U.S. Navy and fighting in the Korean War. After four years in the military, Bob completed a B.A. and M.A. at San Jose State University and in 1964 earned a doctorate degree at the University of Illinois, where he met his wife of 58 years. Bob taught in several elementary and secondary schools in California, was a State Consultant with the Illinois State Department of Education, and developed teacher training programs in Special Education at the University of Hawaii and at Sonoma State University in California, where he also later served as Chairman of the Education Department and Dean of Graduate Studies. Before retirement in 1992, he served as California's State Director of Special Education. For decades, Bob has been an advocate for preserving and protecting the Amache site, a mission he dedicates to the Issei generation, his parents, whose struggle for survival in a hostile environment remains a lasting source of inspiration. Bob lives in Evergreen, Colorado, with his two daughters and grandchildren.