

**Smithsonian Institution
National Museum of American History**

**Philanthropy Initiative
Oral History Project**

**Interview with:
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President, U.S.-Japan Council Washington, D.C.**

**Interview conducted by:
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AMANDA MONIZ: This is Amanda Moniz conducting an oral history with Irene Hirano Inouye. It's June 8, 2017. We're at the US-Japan Council offices. This interview is for the National Museum of American History's Philanthropy Initiative Oral History Project. Could you please state your name and place of birth?

IRENE HIRANO INOUE: Okay. Irene Hirano Inouye. I was born in Los Angeles, California.

MONIZ: Thank you. Did you grow up in Los Angeles?

HIRANO INOUE: I did. I grew up in Los Angeles. I did my undergraduate and graduate work at the University of Southern California in Los Angeles.

MONIZ: Who did you live with growing up? Who was part of your family?

HIRANO INOUE: My immediate family were my parents. I have two sisters and a brother. In my earlier years, my grandfather on my father's side, my father's father lived with us until he passed away. In my early years, my father was the eldest of a family of eight. Some of his younger siblings lived with us for short periods of time. My grandfather and many of my relatives were incarcerated during World War Two along with other Japanese Americans who were removed from their home in the West Coast. My father was serving in the US military already so he did not go to camp. After the war, my grandfather and some of my relatives came back to southern California. My father came back, was married, and then I was born after the war.

MONIZ: Could you tell me about the community you grew up in?

HIRANO INOUE: I grew up in an area called Gardena, California. It was earlier a farming community but it was a very diverse part of Los Angeles County. There were many Japanese American families that had resettled because there were many that were living there before World War Two. There were also African Americans, Hispanic Americans and Caucasians. It was a very diverse area.

MONIZ: Could you tell me about the school you went to as a child?

HIRANO INOUE: When I started out in school, I went to a private Christian school. Then in the fifth grade I moved, my parents sent me to public school. I went to Gardena Elementary School and then to the local junior high school and then to Gardena High School.

MONIZ: Why did they change the school you went to?

HIRANO INOUE: I was the eldest of four children. The second in the family, my younger sister went to private school for a year. Then when my third sister got ready to go to kindergarten, my parents decided it was too expensive to send three to a private school so we all moved to public school.

MONIZ: Your family has a Christian background. Are you practicing Christians?

HIRANO INOUE: My father was raised as a Buddhist. His family was Buddhist. During World War Two, he served in the military intelligence service. One of the officers was very active in the Episcopal church. When the war ended and before my father left the military, my father and several of the others that were in his unit became Episcopalians. My mother was also Buddhist but she became an Episcopalian. When we were growing up, we were raised in the Episcopal church. That was one of the reasons I think I was sent to a Christian school.

MONIZ: You said that the community you grew up in was very diverse. Did the different groups interact and mingle?

HIRANO INOUE: The schools that I went to, there was a lot of intermingling. I can't remember when it was an area that was segregated. I always grew up with this sense of community and a diverse community, also because the Gardena area did have a fair number of Japanese Americans, I did have many Japanese American friends. Grew up in both in a family setting because many of our extended family would come and visit but also many friends again of very diverse backgrounds.

MONIZ: Did your family members talk about their experience in the incarceration camps?

HIRANO INOUE: No, they never talked about it. They would refer to being together in camp. I never actually thought about what that meant. It wasn't until I was in college that I began to learn more about the incarceration experience for Japanese Americans and then what happened to my own family and began to understand better the impact that the war had on them as well as other Japanese Americans.

MONIZ: How did learning about it at that age shape you?

HIRANO INOUE: It was, as I said, it was when I was in college, I majored in public administration. I was deciding what to do with respect to graduate school.

I think learning more about what happened to my own family and that of many other people began to instill a sense of the importance of public policy, the public sector. Ultimately, I stayed in the public administration field and became active in many community activities.

MONIZ: What did you learn from your family and community growing up about philanthropy?

HIRANO INOUYE: Well, as I said, my father who is very close with his commanding officer was active in the Episcopal church, there was a sense of giving in terms of the church, there was also being involved in a community. I was involved in service clubs, in school a number of us in high school started a girls service club and we're still friends to this day. We still try to get together and are connected. We used to raise money for different community activities. That sense of service and being part of a larger community was something that for as long as I can remember was a part of my growing up and became part of who I was.

MONIZ: Do you remember the sort of activities you raised money for with the girls service club?

HIRANO INOUYE: We did. I remember we raised money to buy a wheelchair for a children's orphanage. We supported other types of youth activities. One of our members' father was active in the Veterans of Foreign War. We used to support veterans' activities as well, would help volunteer at events that they were doing and so forth.

MONIZ: So a very varied experience. Then after you graduated from college, you began your career working at a ... It was after graduate school that you began working at a nonprofit community health clinic is that right?

HIRANO INOUYE: Yes.

MONIZ: Could you talk more about why you decided to work in the nonprofit world?

HIRANO INOUYE: Actually being in public administration, many people either go into the government sector or the nonprofit sector. I actually worked in Washington on a special project for a few months. I wanted to see what it was like living in Washington and if that was something that I wanted to consider. I worked at that time for the Department of Health, Education and Welfare. It was HEW at the time. I didn't find being in a government bureaucracy particularly exciting or rewarding. I finished up the project

that I was brought on to do and then I went back to Los Angeles. Fortunately I actually specialized in health care when I was getting my master's degree. I had a fellowship from NIH so had the opportunity to meet with some women that had started a community clinic. It was at the time when women's clinics and community clinics were beginning to become an important part of the healthcare delivery system. I was offered the position as the executive director as it was just starting out while I was in college. I had been involved in other community activities as well. It was a great opportunity to be on the ground floor. That afforded me the chance to become very much involved in women's issues and healthcare issues and community issues.

MONIZ: Can you talk a little bit more about what your experience working there was like? What kind of challenges did you face?

HIRANO INOUE: The clinic was in a part of Los Angeles, south west Los Angeles. We served primarily low to moderate income women and families. It was a neighborhood that was predominantly African American and a growing Hispanic community. It was also an Asian American community that was beginning to grow in the larger south west area. We, in addition to serving many African American and Hispanic women, we started a special Asian American program that provided multi-lingual services. The Asian American community was becoming much more diverse, many more first generation that needed language support. We started one of the first multilingual Asian American programs in the county. We began to serve a growing Asian American group of women and children. The community clinic became a place not only to provide primary care, women's services but also as a community clinic, very much an advocate for access to quality health care, to expanded services. I became very involved in a variety of different health organizations locally and nationally and was also involved in women's activities, was asked to chair the California Commission on the Status of Women, did a lot of work statewide with regards to women and in particular Asian American women.

MONIZ: At the community health clinic, what were your relationships like with doctors?

HIRANO INOUYE: There were doctors that were part of our staff. Much of the service was provided by nurse practitioners. This was a time when nurse practitioners were beginning to play an important role in the delivery of primary care, women's health care. We had a close relationship with the local public health office and with many of the doctors in the area because they recognized that the cost of health care was rising, that the availability of quality service was more limited. They were very supportive of the work that we were doing.

MONIZ: Did you interact much with patients in your role?

HIRANO INOUYE: I did. It started out as a small clinic. Everybody was hands on although my job was in administration and fundraising and building out a network of partnerships with different community organizations. Certainly there was the opportunity to talk with and meet with clients that came to the clinic. A lot of my work was done more externally.

MONIZ: I'm curious about how your interactions with patients even if that was relatively limited shaped your work.

HIRANO INOUYE: I think part of the importance of having and meeting with those that were using our services was to understand more holistically the types of needs that they had. It wasn't just providing whatever specific health need that they might have come to us for, but it was really understanding some of the challenges from a more holistic perspective and understanding that I felt as a community organization was important then to link with and be able to connect people to other types of services if there were things that we were not necessarily providing, but also that that was ... there was a need to build a more integrated approach to the connections between services in a community. I did a lot of work with elected officials that served the area, that actually began to peak my interest in becoming involved in campaigns and working in that realm. It was so critical to ensure that we had good relationships with the public sector because of funding that we were receiving and also to be seen as an important institution within the community that people trusted and that they knew were going to provide good service and would also in some sense go beyond whatever we could do within our own building, connect people in ways that would help them meet other needs.

MONIZ: Then I want to shift to talking about the next stage in your career. After that, am I right that you became the director and president of the Japanese American National Museum?

HIRANO INOUE: Correct.

MONIZ: What led you to shift from working in the medical field to the realm of history and culture? It seems like a big shift.

HIRANO INOUE: It does. Some people that I knew that were part of the founding board of the Japanese American National Museum, which they wanted to build in downtown Los Angeles had come to me 'cause they were looking for someone to help to start and run the organization. I was heavily involved in a variety of not only the work that I did day to day but as I said, very heavily involved in health care organizations, women's organizations and the broader set of relationships that I had developed. I said I was not interested in changing jobs nor changing careers, that was a big shift. Over the course of probably six to eight months, they kept coming back and saying, "We'd really like you to consider this. We've done this and this". The more they talked about it and the more they kept coming back ... These were people that I knew from other organizations, it was an interesting idea, that's what it was at that point, it was an idea and a vision. I felt that perhaps taking on a new challenge at that point would be something that would build on the skills that I had but also then expand in terms of an institution that would serve a national audience. After many months of back and forth, I made a decision that perhaps it was time to make a change.

MONIZ: Does this relate back to your discovery about your family's experience in the camps?

HIRANO INOUE: That certainly happened from before. There was in that time period, I left

and again to work at the museum in 1988. In 1988 was the year that the Civil Liberties Act of 1988 was passed. That was the act that was approved by the US Congress and signed by then President Regan that provided a formal apology to Japanese Americans and provided token reparations and redress. Leading up to that point in the preceding several years, there had been more and more discussion about what had happened during the war. Many people like myself didn't know very much what happened to their families. There began through a set of hearings leading up to the consideration of the bill that invited people to come and testify about what had happened to them. Through that whole process became a much more heightened awareness about what happened but also began to share stories that had never been told before. It was through the personal stories that people felt that they could finally share that the deep impact that the incarceration had on people individually, their families, what it did to communities became much more real. I think all of that led to the point that building museum that would provide a permanent home and as importantly, continue to share those stories to a larger audience understanding that it wasn't just a Japanese American story, really part of American history.

MONIZ: Can you tell me more about your role at the museum, what you accomplished?

HIRANO INOUE: As I said, at the time that I joined the museum was just beginning. They were negotiating to secure a building from the city of Los Angeles, a former Buddhist temple in downtown Los Angeles, which is Little Tokyo. That was the early development, that there needed to be a building of a National Board. The founding group was a local group. The experiences that I had had through health care and through women's activities ... I knew a lot of people around the country, I then began to talk to people around the country to see was this something that they would be willing to support, how could someone in Hawaii or New York or Seattle Washington feel that they were part of a national institution when it was being built in Los Angeles. People usually equate national with something in Washington DC. It was a hurdle to think about, that you would put this in Los Angeles and that you would call it national, that would it truly be that national. That began a process of building a collection, began building the oral histories and I think most importantly, building a sense of community that brought together many different types of people from all over the country, people that had perhaps similar backgrounds but didn't know each other.

World War Two had dispersed communities, had separated a lot of people, in some ways because of the camps, it had brought some people together. Some people knew other people that they had been in camp with. The Japanese American veterans who served in the military, that was another group that had served together and that was another important group of people. Those are all ... it was a matter of finding ways to connect key individuals within those different groups. The museum was officially opened in 1992. We then built a second new building. We used a former Buddhist temple. It was a historic building that was restored. That became the first home and then we expanded and built a second building, and then we expanded onto the original temple building and built an expansion to that facility. Over the course of that time, not only had the opportunity to provide a campus of facilities, but also build a constituency, a large membership, a large support base.

MONIZ: How many people would come to visit the museum annually once it was really up and running?

HIRANO INOUE: There were probably ... it started out with about 100,000, when we built the second building 250,000 plus. I think what was the most amazing part of that experience were just the numbers of people that supported the museum. When we opened the first building we had 65,000 plus members. We through the first two campaigns that we did raised close to 50 million dollars not only through large gifts but many, many small gifts because we wanted people to feel that they had a stake and a connection and a place for themselves and for their families to come, that there was a personal part of them that was connected to the museum.

MONIZ: Could you talk about how you see the museum having contributed to a national conversation about the camps during World War Two?

HIRANO INOUE: Some of the founders of the museum always believed as I said that it was

an American story. Redress and reparations provided the national acknowledgement that what happened was an abridgment of civil liberties, that there was a wrong that was done, and that America had been willing to apologize, which many countries and governments will not do. It did help to connect the story with many more people, certainly in Los Angeles but then nationally and internationally. The relationship to the Smithsonian was important. Over the years I have worked with and gotten to know many people at the Smithsonian as there were opportunities to do a collaboration. I think now as we look back that even today, the story of Japanese Americans and what happened is even more relevant, certainly after September the 11th, the comments about Americans and Muslims should be rounded up into camps. There was media outspoken messaging from at that time President Bush because he had Norman Mineta as his Secretary of Transportation. I think the fact that in World War Two when this occurred, there were not leaders who were willing to speak up or to take a stand against what the government decided ultimately to do, demonstrated that it's important to not only ensure that those mistakes are not done again, but understand the processes that led to it and the absence of voices that could speak to the importance of maintaining civil liberties and civil rights.

MONIZ: You're suggesting that you see it as a story that other groups of Americans now look to when they're thinking about contemporary policy.

HIRANO INOUE: I think they certainly some unfortunate rhetoric around so called travel bans and the restriction of immigration based on someone's country of origin. I think all of that is reminiscent of the types of statements that were made that led to the incarceration of Japanese Americans. It was done through executive order. It reminds us that history can repeat itself and that why it's important to not only learn from and remember but also ensure that those lessons, which people might think are only relevant to that particular point in time are not and are relevant certainly in things that are going on today.

MONIZ: I'd like to shift now to talking about how you moved from working in nonprofits and the museum to being a leader on the board of foundations and cultural organizations. First, I'd like to talk about your role as the chair of the board of the Kresge Foundation and the Ford Foundation. Basic question, what do you do as a board chair?

HIRANO INOUE: I became connected to the Kresge Foundation and the Ford Foundation as a grantee. The Japanese American National Museum received grants from

the Kresge Foundation and later the Ford Foundation. In that process I met the presidents of the foundations and program officers and met many other leaders of philanthropic organizations, foundations because of the work that we did, the fact that we received grants from those organizations but also because the museum always saw itself as a place where conversations were held and brought together people to talk about a variety of issues. When the museum was built, part of the intention was that it could be a gathering place besides being that of a place where people would come to see an exhibition or public private program. I had an opportunity to meet the executives in both foundations. I was first approached by the president of the Kresge Foundation to consider joining the board of the foundation, which then enabled me to understand what is required of being a board member of a foundation, which is very different from the board of other nonprofit organizations mainly because on other nonprofit organizations including the work that I did as director of two organizations, you are raising money.

When you own a foundation, you don't need to raise money to say, you're a steward for the money that someone contributed. People used to always think, "Oh wonderful. It's easy to give away money. That must be a wonderful thing to do. It was wonderful to be on a foundation board". You quickly learn that to provide funding from a foundation takes a lot of thought and skill and you're entrusted with ensuring that the monies that was left by whoever created the foundation to do good ... I mean the Kresge Foundation's mission is very quite simply, Sebastian Kresge who created the Kresge Foundation was to do good in the world or very simply to support mankind. It's a very simple directive. The responsibility of being on a board is to steward the resources, ensure that however you're investing those resources, that they are done in a prudent manner but also one that'll help grow an endowment and two that as you're making grants, that you're trying to think of how can you have impact and how can you provide support for an organization that is doing good, that is working to do good.

In the case of the Kresge Foundation, when I joined the board, I was the first Asian American, probably maybe the third female board member. The foundation is located in Troy, Michigan, just outside of Detroit. The CEO at that time, John Marshall made the decision to retire a few years after I joined the board. The chair at the time when I joined the Kresge board was actually Dr. Bruce Kresge who was the grandson of the founder. There was one family member so unlike other family foundations where there are often many more family members. This was a private foundation but still had a connection to the family. I got to know many of

the board members. One of the initial areas of work that I took on was around board governance. The foundation had been in existence for many years. Some of the more contemporary standards of good board governance term limits, age limits and so forth were something that the foundation had not previously incorporated. Like many other organizations, you have to keep evolving and keep remaining current. It was a small board. I had the opportunity to get to know board members. There were board members who lived and worked in Detroit and then there were others like myself who were national board members or lived outside.

Over the course of working with board members, there was a time for a change. Bruce Kresge was stepping down from the board. I was elected. I joined the board in 2001 and was elected chair in 2004. Shortly after I became the chair, John Marshall was going to retire. We also then embarked upon a search for a CEO. Kresge Foundation's current CEO Rip Rapson was brought on. Now it's been almost 12 years ago. I served as a chair during that time.

MONIZ: I wanted to talk more about a number of these things you've just mentioned. Maybe first, could you tell me more about your experience as one of the few women and the first Asian American on this board?

HIRANO INOUE: Yeah. There was one other female board member when I joined the Kresge board. At that time, the foundation was doing only ... they were supporting capital campaigns for buildings. That's how we became a grantee because they supported the construction of our second building. Because it was a small enough board, you could ... there were times when it was important to talk about the importance of diversity, for example, the importance of looking at questions of organizations that we were funding and were they thinking about issues of gender and race diversity. Those were questions that came up around the board table that was important to understand that people had different experiences. We did by that time. The other female that was on the board was a Hispanic female. The then-president of the University of Michigan was on the board, someone who certainly was a strong advocate of diversity and the CEO. John Marshall was someone who I think one of the reasons I was brought on the board was to ensure the board had greater diversity. I was also I think maybe the only one that came from the western part of the United States. It was often about geographic diversity. National boards tend to be more east coast focused.

I think ensuring that boards understand and think about how one deals

with issues like diversity, you have to build a good working relationship with people and a personal relationship, a small board allows you to do that. I was able I think to develop a good working relationship with other members on the board, I think that's really important, that's part of what I try to do with every board that I'm involved in. I do think that there is a responsibility when you join a board that the values that you care about and that you bring to a board that you have an opportunity to ensure that those are brought to the table. There certainly are going to be differences of opinion but I think that a foundation that believes in supporting the mission of the foundation to do good, that those are core values that you want to be sure that are incorporated in whatever we do. It's an evolutionary process. I think people learned from me based on my own personal background. That's the great thing about having different people on a table. You learn from each other.

I was able to share both because of the work that I did but also because of my own personal history, something about what it was like to be a Japanese American, to be an Asian American and what was happening in terms of other communities that they may not necessarily have experience with but that I could bring to the table based on my knowledge and work.

MONIZ: How do you develop a sense of stewardship for an organization? That means developing a connection with the founders, the past, people that you aren't going to meet. I'm curious about how that evolves.

HIRANO INOUE: Some of that I think is understanding the history of foundation. The fortunate thing in the case of the Kresge Foundation was that because one of the family members was at that time the chair of the board and to this day, we have a family member on the board, it's now the children of the success of grandchildren. I think understanding what motivated someone to set up the foundation, understanding the kinds of things that they may have supported in the past and then understanding ... I always felt it was important to understand what was happening in the foundation or the philanthropic sector at any given time. We learn a lot from our colleagues in other foundations. That knowledge, I think, is important for other board member of a foundation because it's not just the foundation that you're involved in, but you're part of a larger cohort of similar organizations that ought to be learning from each other and sharing best practices and constantly trying to improve the standards of the sector at large.

I always felt that and I think at whatever job that I've had, I've always tried to be involved in associations that of which represent the field, so whether it was healthcare or the museum field, I was very active in the museum

field when I was working at the museum and then have tried to be involved in larger philanthropic associations, one because you learn and you can take that back as a board member but two because I think that it's not just as I said the one organization that you may be involved in but the sector of which that organization sits in.

MONIZ: Could you say more about that? I mean why does it matter to one foundation what another foundation is doing?

HIRANO INOUE: Because we in a sense are a part of now, what is a growing philanthropic sector. Understanding as I said what are best practices, what are we doing that maybe other people can learn from and certainly learning from other people and again, it's a network of leaders that knowing other people is beneficial for ensuring that as the public looks at these sets of organizations, that they have a better understanding of, in this case, the importance of philanthropy, what we do, what impact that we make and also to encourage more people to give. I always think that that context is important.

MONIZ: Tell me, do you have a sense that people at large in general pay attention to what foundations do or understand what foundations do?

HIRANO INOUE: No. I think that's a part of the work that philanthropy needs to do. I don't think that the average person has a very good understanding of that. I think sometimes it's more focused on the headline of an abuse, if somebody does something that's egregious or outrageous, that's what usually gets the headline, not all the good things that foundations do over the various organizations they support. I think it is important that we also have a responsibility to help people understand why foundations are important, what role we play, that we don't replace government or we don't replace business and that it is a part of what makes America very unique and why I think that our democracy has flourished because of the fact that we have a very strong philanthropic sector.

MONIZ: Why do you think people don't know more about foundations?

HIRANO INOUE: In some ways foundations appear to be mysterious. They make these decisions about grants and people don't really ... they're not as transparent as they should be. I do think that foundations, like all nonprofit organizations, have a responsibility to be transparent. Our current CEO at Ford foundation Darren Walker has really been a strong leader in having the Ford Foundation take a lead in sharing the work that it does more broadly, making that much more available on our website, talking about

the work that we do, and sometimes the things that we can do better when he gives speeches. We need more leaders in the philanthropic sector to do that. I tried to convene trustees, Asian American trustees in foundations because I felt that one of the ways that we could ensure that there was better diversity on foundation boards was that for those of us that had the honor and the opportunity to serve to understand and know when people had vacancies that were coming up on boards and to build a broader network. It's been hard to do that.

We had a few convenings but people I think are unfortunately pretty much focused on the foundation that they're in and don't necessarily see the value of why trustees should get to know each other and should perhaps think about what would make a difference in the bringing together of more diverse ideas, more diverse funding to the communities that we come from and more diversity on the boards itself.

MONIZ: Could you say more about what you see as the connection between philanthropy and democracy?

HIRANO INOUE: Certainly. Philanthropy encourages and supports a variety of organizations. It's about giving money. It's about giving time. So much of our civil society sector has been supported by philanthropy. One might argue that today it's become more political than I think perhaps some of us would like to see. Nonetheless, I do think it's through philanthropy that we've been able to build a really robust civil society sector, which has been really critical I think for the development of America and the variety of organizations that are supported through philanthropic dollars that wouldn't be supported by the government or the business sectors.

MONIZ: How does that support democracy?

HIRANO INOUE: I think it gives voice to organizations that can help whether it's challenging or encouraging people to be volunteers and to do good. I think that that kind of civic engagement, it's a part of what philanthropy supports, has been an important way that America continued to grow in its ability to have a much more robust civil society sector.

MONIZ: From the Kresge Foundation you went to being on the board at the Ford Foundation. I'm curious if you could talk about the shift from being on the board of a more focused organization to a more expansive foundation, one of the largest foundations in the world, the second largest in the United States. What's that shift like?

HIRANO INOUE: Similar to Kresge, I was a grantee of the Ford Foundation and got to know the president Susan Berresford at the time and was asked to join the Ford Foundation board. I was already on the board of the Kresge Foundation. Ford of course is a global organization and has offices in many parts of the world, is a foundation committed to social justice supported institutions like mine that were part of the arts and culture sector. It was a tremendous learning opportunity to think about then, how do you determine what to support when you're looking at the entire world. Although there were certain countries that the foundation focused on, it does require a different set of criteria as the foundation thinks about what are its areas of focus and how best to support organizations around the world. It continues to be, as does Kresge, a tremendous learning opportunity, but also one that from a board level, it's not ever about individual grants, but it's really more about strategy, the direction of the foundation, a fiduciary, responsibilities, the legal responsibilities, the investment responsibility. There's both an administrative and a financial role that the board plays and then also a strategic programmatic world.

MONIZ: What kind of a time commitment is being on a board?

HIRANO INOUE: If you're a good board member, it's a fair amount of time. It's not just the meetings, both in this case, the two foundations meet quarterly. You have committees, you have work in between. There's always a significant amount of preparation for a board meeting if you are a good board member. It does require a significant amount of time.

MONIZ: The USC Price School of Public Policy has established a philanthropic leadership fund named in your honor. Could you talk about your vision for philanthropic leadership?

HIRANO INOUE: It was really a tremendous honor to have a fund created and one that would focus on governance. Similar to Kresge, I've had the opportunity to chair the Ford Foundation and have I think in the case of both boards, been someone who has helped to ensure that the boards became stronger, that we always thought about what was the responsibility that the board had. Being an executive of a nonprofit that also has its own board, you understand the importance of the role of the board and the role of the CEO. Both have to be strong in order for an organization to be strong. You see instances of boards that are strong, but don't have strong of a CEO or vice versa, that's usually when you've run into problems of one sort or another. I've always felt the most effective organizations had good CEOs and good boards. I think one is the unique role that a foundation board plays and the parameters that it should be mindful of were not the ones

that manage the organization day to day. I think large foundations, the boards don't approve grants. Kresge did at the beginning when I first joined the board and then we moved to where that's a delegated authority to the staff with the exception of larger grants.

At Ford, it's all delegated to the staff. Then there are certain roles that an effective foundation board can play. There's issues again around diversity. Unfortunately for many foundations, you don't see the kind of diversity that you would hope would be present in foundations that are serving the larger public that is diverse. Then there's also I think the questions of, what kind of role does a board play with regards to these strategies and the program priorities that a foundation takes on? While that needs to be led by the CEO and the staff, there's also an important role that the board can play to again ask good questions and continue to think about how does the foundation have impact and how does it steward the dollars that it has been provided. For me, I think certainly having had the opportunity to serve on two foundation boards and to chair both boards that the issues around governance are really important because again, I think it not only contributes to the individual foundations but there is this larger context of foundations at large and what role, responsibility, what types of ... what should we be doing to ensure that we are good stewards of the monies that we have been charged with.

MONIZ: I want to ask you for a few final reflections about your philanthropic career. Is there something that you regret or that didn't go the way you hoped in your philanthropic career?

HIRANO INOUE: No, As I said, I think every organization has a variety of different challenges. You want to be sure that you have good people sitting around a table to help think through those challenges. I don't have any regrets. I think that one of the things that I've learned is that the second most important thing that a foundation board can do, one, is to hire the best CEO but two, is to be sure that whoever else gets recruited onto the board that they help to make the board stronger and better. You hope that when you recruit somebody onto a board that you know what they're going to bring, you're not always 100%. I feel good about the fact that both Ford and Kresge the organizations and the boards are much stronger today than they were certainly when I joined. I hope that they'll be stronger even after I finish. I just finished the Kresge board yesterday and would be stepping down from the Ford. My term finishes on the Ford board in October. I think change is good. You need new people to bring new thinking to a board. I'm a big proponent of term limits and having the kind of

requirements that allow a board to bring in new individuals, give other people the opportunity to serve.

Many foundations don't have term limits so you see people that are on the boards for years and years and years, which I think is not good for an organization and certainly not good for a foundation. I have really enjoyed the work that I've done and it's made me really appreciate how hard it is, as I said, in the beginning to give money in a very thoughtful and meaningful way and also that there is a wonderful part of our society that we're seeing the philanthropical sector grow with some of the younger philanthropists that are emerging, some of which have different ideas about philanthropy, we're going to see philanthropy change I think in the years to come. I think that basic tenet of people giving their money to do good, that it's not just about them and their own families but larger society is really something that's a part of what I feel really makes this country great.

MONIZ: Could you say a little bit more about why it's hard to give money away? What is hard about it?

HIRANO INOUE: Well I think one is that there's no shortage of organizations that are looking for money. I think one is to find organizations that are really going to take a grant and use it in for whatever purpose that they set out to do. You want to be sure that the organization themselves have good governance, are strong financially. I think you also, as a foundation, want to support more than just the named organizations. If the two foundations and many other foundations had not been willing to support the Japanese American National Museum, which was a new organization, didn't have a long track record compared to museums that had been around for 100 plus years, it would not have been possible to develop as quickly as we were able to do. You want foundations to take risks and that's hard. When you think about the variety of choices that a foundation may have, it's easier to make a safe grant. I think that's not really the opportunity that foundations have to help newer organizations, smaller organizations as well as to encourage the larger institutions to constantly be improving themselves and constantly be looking at are the people that they're serving, whatever the mission is, is it still relevant, and are they continuing to grow in ways that meet needs that are constantly changing. As you think about all of that, it is hard to make gifts in a thoughtful manner.

MONIZ: What is your proudest accomplishment in your philanthropic career?

HIRANO INOUE: As I said, I was chair of both the Kresge Foundation and Ford Foundation when we hired the current CEOs so Rip Rapson at Kresge and Darren Walker at Ford. I asked in the case of Kresge two people that chaired the search committee during the time that I was chair because I felt that I needed to make sure that the boards of the work was going forward. I served on the search committee. In the case of the Ford Foundation, likewise I asked someone to chair the board who I felt would have really been really able to do the work that was needed. It resulted in two really great foundation leaders. As I said, I think I'm also proud that the boards of both foundations are great boards. We have been able to recruit exceptional individuals. Every board has a culture and that culture should be reflective of the culture of the foundation. Every foundation is different. You want to find the right people that is best for that particular organization. In the case of Ford and Kresge, I'm very proud that both of the CEOs that are there are real leaders in the philanthropic field. It's not just about the work that Ford or Kresge does but that they really contribute to the large philanthropic field, to the sectors that we support and that the chairs that succeeded me after I was board chair of both are terrific board chairs.

In both cases, they were the chair of the search committees because I think that's a important transition, that whoever chairs the search committee can work with the new CEO but then eventually can work with the CEO as the board chair. I think that's a model that I found that has worked very well. I'm really proud of both foundations where they're at, their CEOs and the boards they have today, which I hope that I've been able to contribute in part with a lot of other good people to bring to this point.

MONIZ: Last question, is there an object that captures your philanthropic story?

HIRANO INOUE: Oh that's a hard question, an object-

MONIZ: You have a museum background-

HIRANO INOUE: I know, that's why that's hard. I don't know ... I don't know if it's an object but I think ... one of the things that Darren Walker has done at the Ford Foundation is he moved our Ford archives to the Rockefeller archives. Darren has done a lot of work going back into the history of the Ford Foundation and finding documents, finding objects, finding things that reflected the history of the Ford Foundation. There have been and one day we did a board trip to the Ford archives and there were samples of grants that had been made years before or samples of board decisions that were really monumental in some respects. In the case of Kresge, again some of the early documents about what Sebastian Kresge's vision was ... When I think about objects that reflect philanthropy, it's often the words of the people who were involved in early stages or different stages of a foundation's life that you understand or have a better understanding of why they made certain types of decisions. I can't pinpoint one but when you look at those you think, "Oh my gosh, that's really amazing that we can look back and that these pieces in the archives really help to illuminate whatever the board and or the CEO was thinking at the time".

We know times are going to change. Somebody's going to look back to this point in time and say, "Why in the world did they decide to do x, y or z"? Yet when you understand the context that they were making those decisions in and sometimes the impact of that, I think that's what stands out for me is those voices of people that were in leadership at key moments.

MONIZ: Well thank you. Any final thoughts that you want to offer?

HIRANO INOUE: I want to say that I'm really glad that you're ... that this work is being done. I think it's really appropriate that it's at [the National Museum of] American History. Again I think because the public doesn't understand what philanthropy is, having an exhibition and having a way for people to better understand what sometimes seems like an invisible place is I think really important. I'm really glad that that investment has been made.

MONIZ: Well thank you. This has been a terrific discussion. Thank you very much.