Oregon Nikkei Center

Portland, OR



Japanese American Incarceration—more relevant today than ever before

The Oregon Nikkei Legacy Center (ONLC) tells the story of Portland's Japanese American community—from the creation of bustling Japantown; to the wrenching dissolution of the community during WW2, when 120,000 Japanese Americans were incarcerated; to how the community is rebuilding itself after this dark period in civil rights history.

AldrichPears is working with the ONLC to re-envision its exhibits for a new space. Our concept immerses visitors in the atmosphere, issues, emotions and personal stories of each era. Visitors progress through a busy Japantown scene into the starkly contrasting concentration camp barracks at Minikoka. Artifacts, oral histories and archival photo slideshows are integrated into each immersive vignette. Interactive exhibits focus on challenging visitors to think about how they would react/cope/feel in the face of such discrimination, loss of rights and community.

The Legacy gallery focuses on the achievements of the Japanese American 442nd Combat Regiment in WW2 and the progress made by individuals and the community in defeating discriminatory legislation and public perception, ultimately gaining a congressional redress in 1988.

