

Pvt. Shinyei Nakamine

February 26, 1920 - June 2, 1944



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Shinyei Nakamine was born on February 26, 1920 in Waianae, Oahu. He was the son of Kame and Ushi (Higa) Nakamine and the eldest of four siblings, followed by Charles, Larry, and Anita Korenaga. He was educated at Waianae Elementary, Junior, and High School on Oahu. Before entering the service he was an apprentice cook in Honolulu, then joined the Civilian Conservation Corp. to plant trees in the island of Molokai, and lastly returned to Waianae to work at the Hawaiian Gas Products, Ltd. as a jackhammer operator.

On November 14, 1941 Shinyei Nakamine was inducted into the Army at Honolulu, Oahu (Serial No. 30 101 852). He trained at Schofield Barracks, Oahu with the 298th Infantry Regiment and later at Camp McCoy, Wisconsin and Camp Shelby, Mississippi with the 100th Infantry Battalion, Company B. He saw service in the Hawaiian

Islands, the continental United States, Algeria, and Italy. Pvt. Shinyei Nakamine was killed in action near La Torreta, Italy on June 2, 1944 in the Anzio to Rome Campaign. He was awarded the **Distinguished Service Cross** posthumously, which was upgraded to **Medal of Honor**, the nation's highest honor for valor in combat for heroism, which was presented at a White House ceremony on June 21, 2000 by President William J. Clinton. Pvt. Shinyei Nakamine was awarded also the Bronze Star, Purple Heart with Oak Leaf Cluster, Combat Infantryman Badge, the Asiatic-Pacific, American, and European-African-Middle Eastern Campaign Medals, and the World War II Victory Medal. He is interred at the National Memorial Cemetery of the Pacific at Punchbowl, Honolulu.

Recipient of the **Medal of Honor**—**Private Shinyei Nakamine** distinguished himself by extraordinary heroism in action on 2 June 1944, near La Torreta, Italy. During an attack, Private Nakamine's platoon became pinned down by intense machine gun crossfire from a small knoll 200 yards to the front. On his own initiative, Private Nakamine crawled toward one of the hostile weapons. Reaching a point 25 yards from the enemy, he charged the machine gun nest, firing his submachine gun, and killed three enemy soldiers and captured two. Later that afternoon, Private Nakamine discovered an enemy soldier on the right flank of his platoon's position. Crawling 25 yards from his position, Private Nakamine opened fire and killed the soldier. Then, seeing a machine gun nest to his front approximately 75 yards away, he returned to his platoon and led an automatic rifle team toward the enemy. Under covering fire from his team, Private Nakamine crawled to a point 25 yards from the nest and threw hand grenades at the enemy soldiers, wounding one and capturing four. Spotting another machine gun nest 100 yards to his right flank, he led the automatic rifle team toward the hostile position but was killed by a burst of machine gun fire. Private Nakamine's extraordinary heroism and devotion to duty are in keeping with the highest traditions of military service and reflect great credit on him, his unit, and the United States Army.

Regarding Pot. Shingei Nakamine

Are MOH recipients made of special mold?
I wish my parents were here to tell me about my brother, Shingei Nakamine, who died at age 24 in Italy.

I hardly knew him. He was born in 1920 and I came along in 1930. But I remember

He left the ^{simple} sugar plantation life after graduation to become an apprentice cook in the city of Honolulu. This was a huge adventure and a major step for a country boy. Later he joined the Civilian Conservation Corp to plant trees in the island of Molokai. He returned to Waianae and worked at the Gaspar Company before being drafted into the army. I remember Shingei sharing and teaching us new ideas and trends, everytime he visited home. He was a fascinating young fellow and explained the nutritional value of the miso soup and tofu to mother (way before it was public knowledge), how good posture was very important for a growing girl, that weight-lifting was necessary for growing boys and brothers, and encouraged us with the use of other beneficial products.

In a small ^{high-knit} rural community, he bought the first Indian motorcycle and caused quite a stir; he talked the town tailor to sewing his trousers with the wrong side of the fabric (introducing a new fad); entered a Japanese Language School song contest singing all 6 verses of an Okinawan song (it was not the thing to do in the 30's) - but he captured the hearts of the Okinawan immigrants with his dishing audacity and seriousness of purpose. (proud to be

on Okinawa!)

In late 1941, he came in his motorcycle to bid me farewell at the elementary school. Did I ever shine! That is the last time I saw my brother. A few months later, someone said that Shingei and the other soldiers were going to pass Waianae town in a train on the way to a ship's harbor. I ran to Pokai Bay train station, just in time to wave goodbye to the blur of men's faces. I cried all the way home.

A few months later, he sent a snapshot of me waving. Was I thrilled that Shingei saw me!

I was in the 5th or 6th grade and my mother forced me to write a letter to the General in Camp McCoy, Wisconsin to buy a cake for Shingei on his 22nd birthday. I don't remember the amount of money she put in the envelope, but the Medal of Honor picture of Pot. Shingei Nakanine is the top half of a snapshot with him holding a huge birthday cake.

I remember a picture of Shingei and his buddy in Las Vegas with two lovely Japanese girls. How did he get there? Before he passed away, he sent me a beautiful card in a simple envelope and it arrived unscratched! I was the beneficiary of all his War Bonds. They financed my education at the University of Hawaii, (which gave me a wonderful career and life)

That he was special, daring, daring, brave and a courageous American from Hawaii — there is absolutely no doubt.

— Aita K. Kawanaga