

UNIVERSITY of
NORTHERN COLORADO



Presidential Academy in American History and Civics Education

November 7, 2006

To Whom It May Concern:

I have been asked by Mark Saiki to write on behalf of his application for employment as an instructor of history at your institution. I have known Mark for the past four years as the chair of his advisory committee of graduate studies, as well as a professor in several of his history graduate seminars at the University of Northern Colorado. While I have not observed his teaching in the public school classroom, I believe others can address those dimensions of his academic work. Instead, I would like to offer a few comments on his scholarship and academic potential; both of which will stand him well as a guide to other students in general-education courses in history.

Mark prepared a master's thesis entitled, "Cooperation, Compliance, and Resistance at Amache," for which he received in the summer of 2006 the Graduate Dean's Citation of Excellence for Thesis or Dissertation (one of only two such awards given that summer). In the opinion of Mark's thesis committee, he has prepared a study of the daily life of the Japanese-Americans interned at the World War II-era camp in southeastern Colorado that is path-breaking for its use of primary sources, and his discovery of the nuanced and complex world of camp life. Through a mixture of federal records, state documents, private collections, newspaper clippings, and oral interviews (his own as well as those recorded by others), Mark was able to bring forward representative examples of the voices of the nearly 10,000 internees in ways that revealed their own ambiguities of their incarceration at the height of wartime hysteria.

There is much interest these days about the Amache story, as the National Park Service has undertaken surveys to build a national monument at the site of the former camp outside of Granada. Mark's thesis breaks new ground not only in the history of our state, but also that of a time in our nation's past when emotions got the better of public officials as they fought what they saw as threats to national security.

Please contact me with any additional questions (**970-351-2223**;
Michael.welsh@unco.edu), and thanks for your consideration of the
application of Mark Saiki to teach at your institution.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Michael Welsh". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, stylized initial "M".

Michael Welsh
Professor