



DANIEL K. INOUE
INSTITUTE

September 21, 2026

Aloha friends, family, and members of our DKI ohana,

We have two wonderful updates to share with our DKI ohana this month — one from the High Seas, and one from Hollywood.



A Brotherhood Underway: USS TED STEVENS and USS DANIEL INOUE Sail Together

On September 17th, off the coast of San Diego, the Navy's newest Flight III Arleigh Burke-class guided-missile destroyer, Pre-Commissioning Unit TED STEVENS (DDG 128), sailed alongside the guided-missile destroyer USS DANIEL INOUE (DDG 118). When we saw these photos, it stopped us in our tracks — two warships, two names, one extraordinary friendship, together again.



Longtime friends of the Institute will remember the story we shared of the forty-year friendship between Senator Inouye and Senator Ted Stevens of Alaska, the longest-serving Republican in Senate history. Charlie Houy, who worked for both men on the Senate Appropriations Committee, called them “the quintessential yin and yang.” They voted together maybe 10 or 20 percent of the time — and it was in that remaining space, on defense, oceans, Native Alaskans and Native Hawaiians, that they built something that lasted more than twenty years, trading the gavel of the Defense Appropriations Subcommittee back and forth five times between 1989 and 2008 without ever missing a beat. As the Senator liked to say, “We can disagree without being disagreeable.” Last December, we shared a tribute to their friendship in this newsletter -- <https://dkii.org/news/december-30-2025-newsletter/>



The TED STEVENS bears the late senator's name, honoring his legacy of defense advocacy alongside his lifelong Senate colleague and close friend, Dan Inouye. The historic transit mirrors the deep partnership — the “brotherhood” — of their namesakes, decorated World War II veterans who jointly championed Pacific defense initiatives and represented the strategic maritime interests of their non-contiguous home states. To see it captured in a single photograph, all these years later, was truly something special.

*Credit for the two ship photos:
U.S. Navy Mass Communication Specialist 3rd Class Aaron J. Rolle*



RENEGADES Earns a DARCYS Nomination for Best Unscripted Series

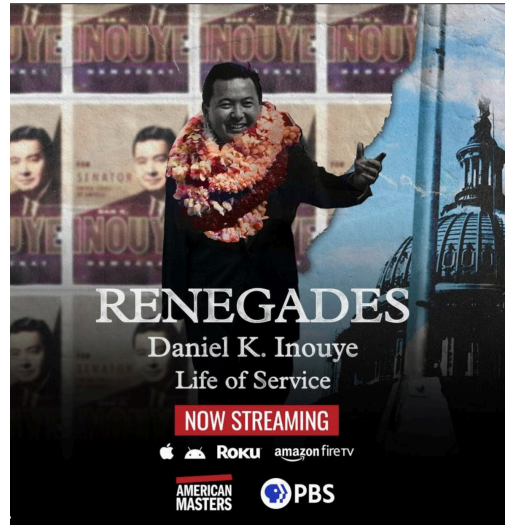
Some wonderful news from Hollywood: the American Masters RENEGADES episode featuring Senator Inouye has been nominated for Best Unscripted Series at the inaugural DARCYS — the Easterseals Disability Arts & Culture Awards, formerly known as the Media Access Awards.

As many of you will recall, when producer Tammy TS Botkin first approached DKII about the series, we told her the Senator might not be the “right fit” because he never considered himself “handicapped.” That was exactly why she and her team wanted to feature him. She flew to Hawaii and interviewed Ken Inouye and Jeff Watanabe at Zippy's, Jennifer at Punchbowl, and Dr. Robert Stodden of the Center on Disability Studies at UH Manoa. The result was a beautiful tribute to the Senator's life and

legacy. Here is the link to the 2024 newsletter on the episode --
<https://dkii.org/news/december-11-2024-newsletter>.

RENEGADES is up against two Netflix and TLC series — Love on the Spectrum and Jay & Pamela — for the award. The inaugural DARCYS ceremony takes place Saturday, October 10th, at the Historic Barker Hangar in Santa Monica. It will be broadcast on PBS SoCal (date TBD), with rebroadcasts on PBS stations nationwide, so check your local listings!

We are so proud of this recognition, and grateful to everyone who helped tell the Senator's story with such care and emotion.



We are a proud 501(c)(3) nonprofit, and every gift — no matter the size — helps us continue sharing the Senator's legacy. Online donations can be made using this link —
<https://dkii.org/donate>

Mahalo for being part of our DKII ohana.

Aloha,
Jennifer, Sara and DKII Team

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