



Fred T. Korematsu Institute Promotes Courtney Peagler to Executive Director to Co-Lead Organization's Next Phase

Former VP and Director of Education assumes new role as Founder Karen Korematsu continues as President and CEO during a period of strategic transition.



SAN FRANCISCO, CA — The Fred T. Korematsu Institute, a leading national non-profit dedicated to civil rights education and advocacy, is proud to announce the promotion of Courtney Peagler as its new full-time Executive Director.

Founder Dr. Karen Korematsu, the daughter of civil rights icon Fred Korematsu, will continue to serve as the organization's President and CEO. This partnership will enable her to co-lead the Institute's long-term vision, national partnerships, and preservation of her father's legacy, while meeting the growing demand for her to speak to audiences across the country.

"Courtney has been instrumental to our educational programming for several years," said Karen Korematsu. "Her deep understanding of our mission, combined with her strong strategic sense, makes her the natural choice to lead our daily operations. As we grow our reach to meet the challenges of today's civil rights landscape, I am thrilled to work alongside her."

A descendant of Japanese Americans forced to leave their homes on the West Coast during WWII, Peagler brings over a decade of multi-disciplinary experience in education, technology, and media production to the role. Joining first as a consultant, then serving as the Institute's Vice President and Director of Education since 2023, she has been critical to the organization's major programmatic initiatives, including the national traveling exhibition, "Am I An American Or Am I Not?" - Fred Korematsu. Peagler holds a bachelor's degree in psychology from Harvard and a master's degree in educational communication and technology from New York University's Steinhardt School of Education.

"I am deeply honored to lead the Korematsu Institute with Karen during this critical time," said Courtney Peagler. "In this moment, when the lessons of history are more vital than ever, we are choosing to lean in and amplify our voice. We must continue to teach the truth about our history and advocate for justice, just as Fred did. We aren't just maintaining a legacy; we are building a future where civil rights are understood as a collective responsibility." [korematsuinstitute.org/](https://www.korematsuinstitute.org/)

The transition marks a significant milestone for the Institute, designed to support sustainable, long-term national influence.

About the Fred T. Korematsu Institute

Founded in 2009, the Fred T. Korematsu Institute honors the legacy of Fred Korematsu, who famously challenged the unjust exclusion and incarceration of Japanese Americans during World War II. The Institute promotes social justice and civil rights through education and advocacy, providing resources and inspiration for people of all ages to "stand up for what is right" to protect the fundamental rights of all communities. For more information, visit <https://www.korematsuinstitute.org/>