

Norman Mineta Statue to be Unveiled at San José Mineta International Airport

Local charity organizes to donate bronze sculpture honoring Silicon Valley great

SAN JOSE, CA, UNITED STATES, January 25, 2024 /EINPresswire.com/ -- A statue honoring Silicon Valley legend Norman Yoshio Mineta will be unveiled January 25th at San José Mineta International Airport (SJC), the airport named after him in 2001. The six-foot-tall bronze sculpture, created by local sculptor Steve Davis, will stand on a granite pedestal in the baggage claim area of Terminal B, which sees 70% of passenger traffic. A public ceremony to mark the occasion will take place at 10 a.m.

The statue was funded by Mineta's numerous friends and supporters and was commissioned by Quest Valley

Charities (QVC), a local nonprofit Silicon Valley organization. Its mission is to publicly honor "those leaders in Silicon Valley who have made an extraordinary difference in our region," according to QVC board chair Colleen Wilcox, Ph.D. She adds, "Norm Mineta was at the top of our list."

“

You could take Dad out of the Valley, but you could never take the Valley out of Dad.”

David Mineta

QVC founder and president Rod Diridon, Sr., who knew Mineta well, says this: "His was indeed an incredible life story. Norm is a role model for the people of San José, someone who came from modest means, suffered the indignity of being detained in a Japanese internment camp, then went on to a lauded public career as San José's mayor, a congressman, and a cabinet member who

proudly served two presidents in two different parties. Beyond all odds, Norm succeeded at the



Photo of Norman Mineta



San Jose Mineta International Airport Logo

highest levels in the United States Government.”

The bronze figure is the work of San José State teacher and sculptor Steve Davis, who runs the University’s foundry. Davis worked with Mineta’s family and scoured the Internet for photos to help his creative process. “I wanted to capture his style – how he moved, how his jacket was cut,” he recalls. The final pose shows Mineta with his hand over his heart: a true American patriot dedicated to the public he served. The statue itself stands atop a granite base engraved with Mineta’s story as well as the names of donors who generously contributed to this public artwork.

When Quest Valley Charities approached the airport about a statue for Mineta, they found an eager partner. “We are extremely proud to bear Secretary Mineta’s name, and we honor his legacy with great care,” says John Aitken, Director of Aviation for the City of San José. “Norm was a champion for America’s transportation infrastructure and a particular friend to SJC.” Still, the logistics of finding just the right setting were daunting. The team sought a location with plenty of light that would get the most exposure but would not be in the way of busy travelers. Even more important, the location had to bear the weight of both the statue and pedestal. “No corners were cut,” Aitken explains. “The installation had to meet the same seismic and engineering requirements as any other airport project. We want to be sure this addition to our terminal is as enduring as Secretary Mineta’s legacy.” In the end, the perfect location was found in the baggage claim area of Terminal B.

“Dad would have been honored and humbled,” says his son David Mineta, remembering how his father loved to joke that his parents named him after this airport. The younger Mineta finds this latest honor particularly poignant now that his father has passed away. “Dad was a worldly person, very well-traveled,” he says. “But this was his beloved hometown, and he loved the Santa Clara Valley. You could take Dad out of the Valley, but you could never take the Valley out of Dad.”

EVENT DETAILS:

When: Thursday, January 25, 2024; 10 - 11:30 AM

Where: San José Mineta International Airport, Baggage Claim, Terminal B

PROGRAM SCHEDULE:

10:00 Taiko Drums

10:20 Blessing – Rev. John Oda, Wesley United Methodist Church, San Jose

10:25 Convening and Introductions – Rod Diridon, Sr., President/Founder of Quest Valley Charities (QVC), Emeritus Executive Director, Mineta Transportation Institute

10:35 Statue Unveiling

10:40 Welcome from Quest Valley Charities – Colleen Wilcox, QVC Chair

10:45 Welcome from San Jose Mineta Internat’l Airport – John Aitken, Dir. Of Aviation

10:50 Welcome from Mineta family – Norman’s sons, David and Stuart

10:55 Tributes to Norm Mineta

San Jose Mayor Matt Mahan, former Mayor Sam Liccardo
Santa Clara County Supervisors, President Susan Ellenberg, former President Cindy Chavez
California State Senator Dave Cortese and State Legislative Delegation
Members of Congress Zoe Lofgren, Anna Eshoo, Ro Khanna
U.S. DHS TSA Administrator David Pekoske (friend of Norm's)
11:20 Closing Comment from Colleen Wilcox, QVC Chair

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