



# MILITARY

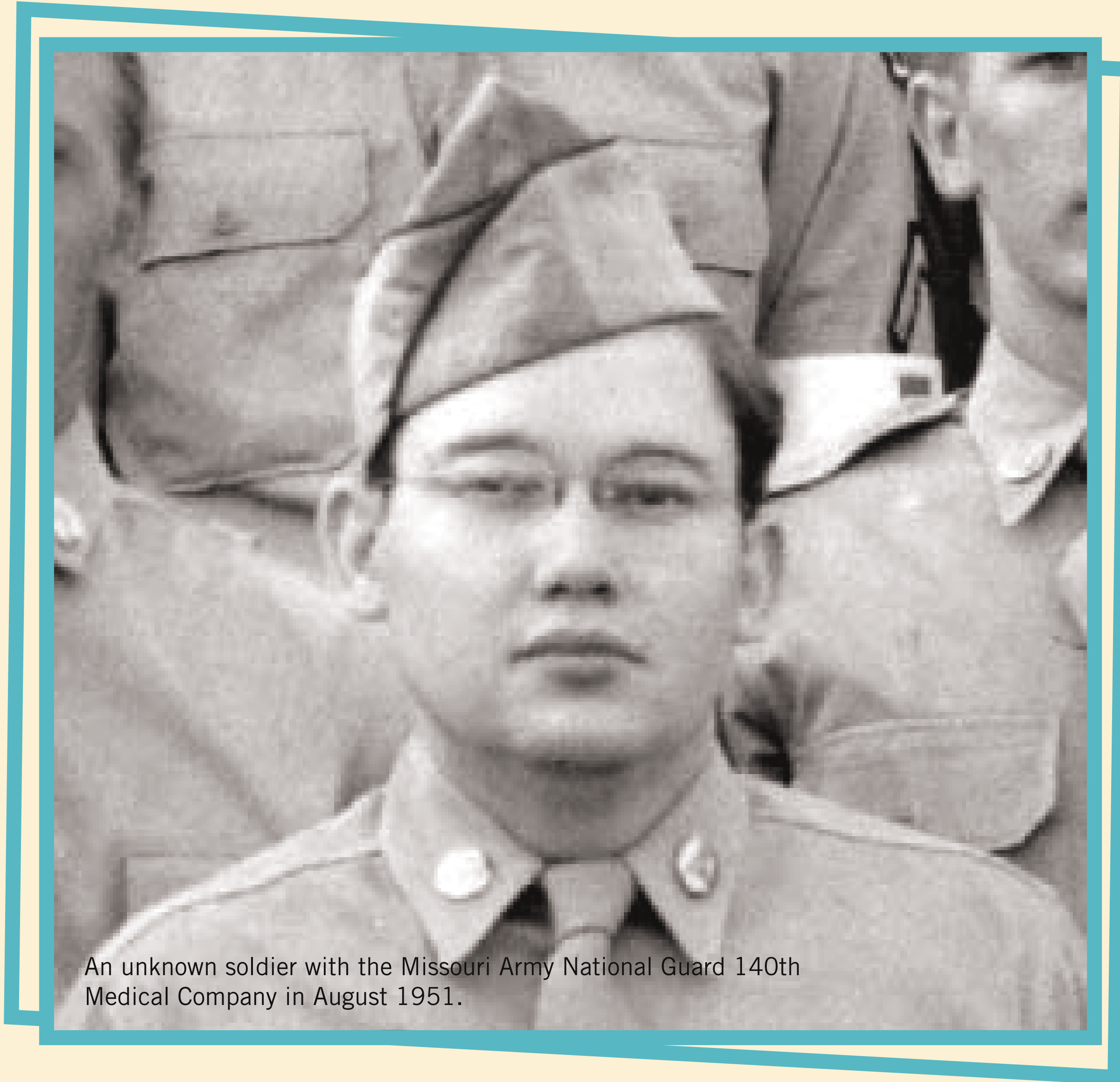
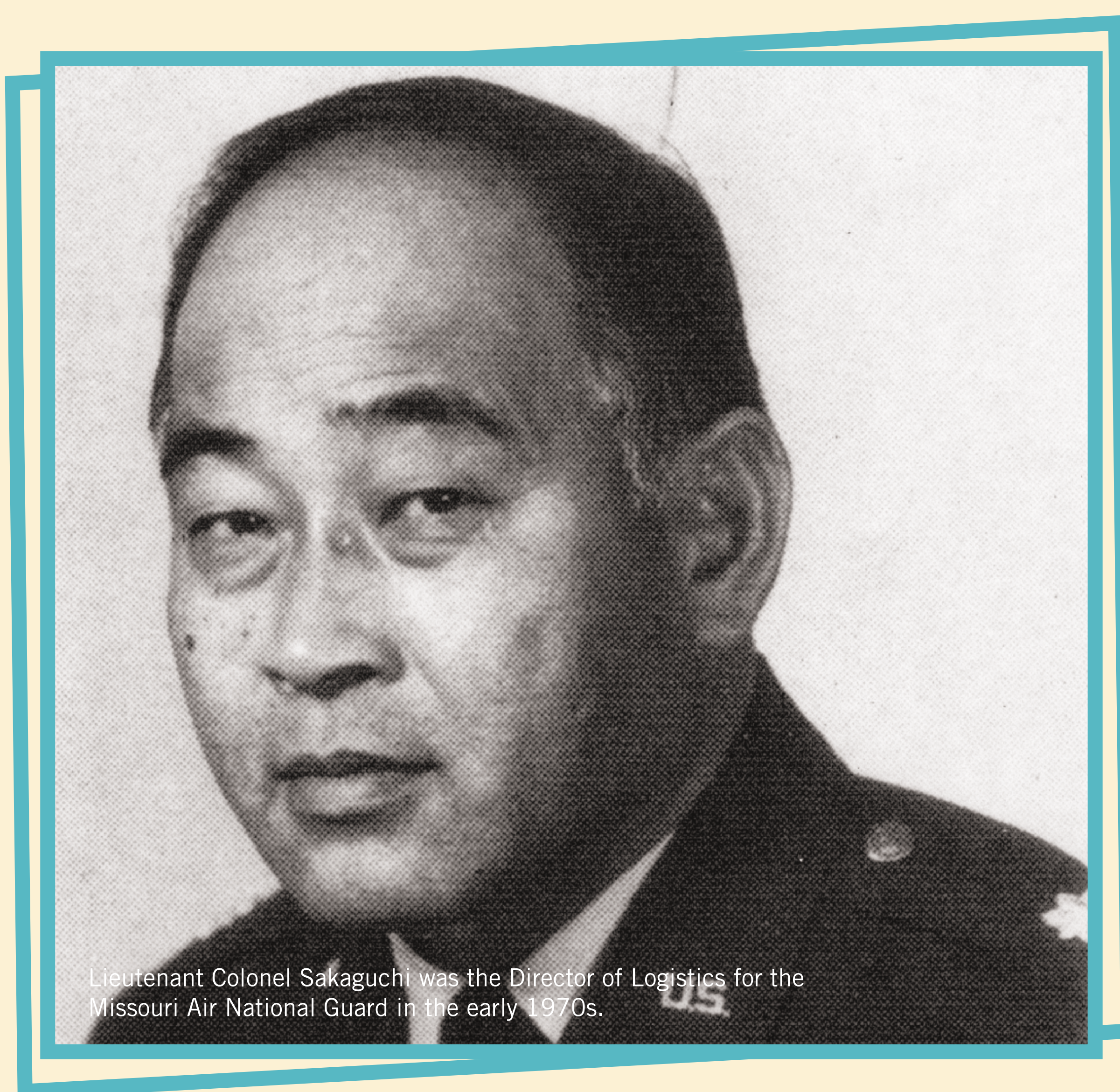
## ASIAN AMERICAN MILITARY SERVICE

While early records are scarce and incomplete, it's known that Asian Americans have served in the United States military since the War of 1812. Asian Americans fought on both sides during the American Civil War. They went on to fight in the Spanish-American War and World War I, but failed to get much attention until World War II, when significant contributions from Japanese, Chinese, Filipino and Korean Americans were recognized.

Of particular note is the all-Japanese 442nd Regimental Combat Team, who fought in Italy (twice), France and Germany. In total, about 14,000 men served in the 4,000-man unit, earning 9,486 Purple Hearts and becoming one of the most decorated units in the entire history of the U.S. military.

In 1948, Harry S. Truman issued the executive order that desegregated the U.S. military, putting an end to segregated Asian American units by 1951. Many individuals continued to serve in integrated units in future conflicts. By 1989, Asian Americans made up approximately 2.3% of the total armed services. Today, Asian Americans, Pacific Islanders and Native Hawaiians account for 5.7% of all military members.

Nearly three dozen Asian Americans, Native Hawaiians and Pacific Islanders have been awarded the Medal of Honor, the highest U.S. military decoration. Over the last decade, Japanese, Filipino and, most recently, Chinese American World War II veterans have had their contributions recognized with Congressional Gold Medals.



Photos courtesy of Museum of Missouri Military History