



PACIFIC CITIZEN



One Program Participant Learns That 'Being In-Between Was Also an Opportunity to Connect People.'

CELEBRATING
97
Years

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KAKEHASHI IS MORE THAN A BRIDGE

Participant Nicole Saito stayed at the Morii family ryokan in Yuki Town.

PHOTO: COURTESY OF NICOLE SAITO

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Murder Charges for Son of Former JACL National President

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Academy Museum to Present Short Films for DOR

MURDER CHARGES FOR SON OF JEAN AND DAVID LIN

Police say Patrick Lin killed his parents at their home; father had served as JACL national president.

By P.C. Staff

New Jersey authorities have announced that Patrick J. Lin, 37, was charged Jan. 16 with two counts of first-degree murder, one count of first-degree attempted murder and two counts of third-degree possession of a weapon for an unlawful purpose for the 2025 slayings of his parents, Jean and David Lin, both 69, of Hillsborough Township, N.J. (Nov. 10, 2025, *Pacific Citizen*, tinyurl.com/vm88pns6).

David Lin had served as JACL national board president from 2012-14 and was the organization's first person of Chinese ancestry to hold that office (Aug. 17, 2012, *Pacific Citizen*, tinyurl.com/mr35mj4x). He was re-elected to serve a second biennial term in 2014.

Newly published reports revealed the extent of the damage the Lins sustained. Initial reports stated the cause of death for both was the result of "blunt force trauma to the head." It has now been reported that the injuries were so severe that they were "initially unidentifiable," and the Lins' remains had to be identified with dental records.

Another disturbing revelation, attributed to New Jersey authorities,



David Lin (left); Patrick J. Lin

PHOTOS: PACIFIC CITIZEN/SOMERSET COUNTY PROSECUTOR'S OFFICE



Aerial photo of the Lin residence PHOTO: APPLE MAPS

was a so-called "wishlist," allegedly written by Patrick Lin, with an entry stating that he wanted to "kill someone and get away with it."

Patrick Lin remains hospitalized and is now reportedly in stable condition and under guard. He was initially listed in critical condition after police shot him at the Lins' home on Sept. 25. The shooting occurred after two local police officers entered the

premises to conduct a second welfare check on that day.

After entering the home, they encountered Patrick Lin exiting a bedroom, carrying a knife. After at least one of the officers discharged a firearm, the officers proceeded to perform first aid and called in paramedics to transport him to a local hospital. It was later that the remains of Jean and David Lin were

discovered in separate bedrooms.

Whitepages.com indicates that Patrick Lin had lived at the same Cornell Trail residence at some indeterminate time, though it is not year clear whether he had been living with his parents when the slayings took place.

Pacific Citizen has reached out for additional answers to Somerset County Prosecutor John P. McDonald, who forwarded the email to the chief of detectives and the assistant prosecutors. Emails were also sent to the mayor of Hillsborough Township and the deputy chief medical examiner in an attempt to learn more details.

In the aftermath of the slayings, a David Lin Memorial JACL and OCA Leadership Fund page to raise \$25,000 was created on gofundme.com. It has raised slightly more than \$23,000 as of this report. It can be found at tinyurl.com/muxmc2fn. ■

CORRECTION: In JACL VP of General Operations Gary Nakamura's New Year's article, the Central Library in Downtown Houston, which will host the National Japanese American Baseball Exhibit in March, receives an estimated 25,000 visitors each month (*Pacific Citizen's* Jan. 23-Feb. 5, 2026, issue).

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Harry Honda dedicated 61 years to promoting the *Pacific Citizen*, providing thoughtful coverage of JACL chapter activities, national news and events and issues of general interest to Japanese American and Asian American readers. The fund was launched with a generous donation from author and activist Grant Ujifusa, whose intent was to support the *Pacific Citizen* in hiring outside contributing writers. This support helps expand and strengthen coverage from across the country for our national readership.



Editor Emeritus Harry Honda as drawn by Pete Hironaka



SPRING CAMPAIGN

P.C.'S SPRING CAMPAIGN KICKS OFF 2026

By Gil Asakawa,
Interim Pacific Citizen
Editorial Board Chair

Akemashite Omedetou!

As the interim chair of the Pacific Citizen's Editorial Board, I want to wish a Happy New Year to every reader of the Pacific Citizen, the voice of the JACL, side by side with the organization since its start in 1929. We're just three years from our combined 100th anniversary. Imagine — a century of civil rights, social justice, culture and community serving the Japanese American and wide Asian American Native Hawaiian and Pacific Islander populations!

This year is sure to be significant because of the shocking dysfunction in the United States, with its errant economics, hateful discourse, fractured politics and teetering position in the global world order. And the P.C. will be covering all of the news that affects JACL and JAs, both good and bad. With everything happening across the country from actions by our federal government, you'll want to see how the news affects our communities.

We'll also continue our role of bringing you the traditional and pop culture news that so often gets ignored in the mainstream media but is important to our communities. We'll be rooting this awards season for the powerful film "Rental Family," starring Brendan Fraser, for its focus on contemporary Japanese society, and we're already glad to see "KPop Demon Hunters" raise the profile of all AANHPIs with its fantastic blend of traditional and modern Korean culture in animation and catchy pop music.

Have you noticed how Japanese culture beyond sushi and ramen and manga and anime has started having an impact here in the West? In recent Japanese pop culture, we've enjoyed shows like "Giri/Haji" and "Last Samurai Standing" on Netflix, and we're waiting for the new season of "Shogun" and "Blue Eye Samurai."

And, of course, the P.C. will continue to cover the ever-evolving world of foods from Japan, influenced by Japanese cuisine. Will 2026 be the year that a tsunami of udon and onigiri sweeps across America?

The way you can show your support for our work at the Pacific Citizen is not just to read us in print, on our PDF editions or on the website, but also support us with a donation to our annual Spring Campaign, which is our main source of fundraising. Our 2026 drive starts now, and you'll find the coupon in the print edition, or you can visit this page on our website: <https://www.pacificcitizen.org/donations/>.

We accept PayPal or credit cards, and now, we can take donations via Zelle.

Your support for our annual Spring Campaign helps us to do our work almost 100 years since we first published the P.C., and we do it with a small, dedicated staff. This year, we hope to raise enough to fund more real-time digital engagement and social media presence. Please let us know how we're doing! And again, here's to a terrific 2026!

Gil Asakawa is the author of "Tabemasho! Let's Eat! The Tasty History of Japanese Food in America." He is currently the interim board chair of the Pacific Citizen Editorial Board.

REFLECTIONS

CAN PAST CONGRESSIONAL INVESTIGATIONS INFORM ACCOUNTABILITY TODAY?

By Kathy Masaoka, Matthew
Weisbly, Matt Marumoto and
Katie Masano Hill

Recently, a federal court heard arguments in a case challenging President Donald Trump's invocation of the Alien Enemies Act, the wartime law that he used in March to deport Venezuelans to a notorious prison in El Salvador. As the litigators sparred over whether Venezuela had "invaded" the U.S. and the Act could continue to be used to diminish immigrants' rights, many in the Japanese American community recalled painful memories.

Eighty-five years ago, the same wartime law was used to intern thousands of Japanese immigrants without due process. And the use of the Alien Enemies Act against immigrants quickly gave way to a sweeping claim of executive power to incarcerate U.S. citizens of Japanese descent.

Our organizations, which led the fight for redress for Japanese incarceration, have drawn the court's attention to this history. The Japanese American story cautions the courts against blessing abuses of power.

But our community's struggle does more: It shows that an honest accounting of the abuse of wartime power can help communities heal and ultimately make America stronger. It creates a path for the nation to follow in the wake of Trump's abuse of the Alien Enemies Act and other war authorities.

After WWII, and little by little, Japanese Americans came forward and spoke publicly about the suffering and loss they experienced due to the incarceration policy. In 1980, this culminated in Congress' creation of the Commission on Wartime Relocation and Internment of Civilians, a bipartisan fact-finding body that

investigated whether the treatment of Japanese Americans had been justified by wartime exigency and constitutional power.

The commission held hearings in more than 20 cities, heard testimony from over 750 witnesses and reviewed thousands of pages of government records. Survivors described their experience of forced removal, confinement, family separation and economic devastation — many sharing their pain for the first time.

The CWRIC revealed that the Roosevelt administration's "military necessity" justification for detaining Japanese Americans was false. Indeed, it found that the administration's own intelligence assessments had concluded that the Japanese American community posed no security threat to the U.S.

In its final report, "Personal Justice Denied," the CWRIC concluded that the treatment of Japanese Americans stemmed from "racial prejudice, war hysteria and a failure of political leadership," not legitimate national security interests.

There is reason to believe that a modern-day commission, dedicated to Trump's peacetime use of wartime powers against Venezuelans, would uncover similar facts. Already, independent investigations have found that many of the Venezuelans targeted under the Alien Enemies Act had no criminal history and were in the country lawfully.

They were not "narcoterrorist" invaders as administration officials claimed. Separate investigations have concluded that the Venezuelans faced torture and cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment upon their deportation to a Salvadoran prison.

A now-declassified intelligence assessment undermines key assertions about the threat posed by Venezuela

that Trump relied on when invoking the Act. A formal, bipartisan commission could create a definitive record of where the government has advanced unsupported narratives to harm innocent people.

A modern-day commission could also make policy recommendations that cut through the noise of our divided political landscape. Congress was so moved by the account of Japanese Americans' experiences in "Personal Justice Denied" that it adopted the report's recommendations and passed the Civil Liberties Act of 1988.

Since 1988, the Civil Liberties Act has been cited by courts to bolster constitutional due process and equal protection for all Americans, irrespective of their ethnic background.

An investigation today, as then, could strengthen our constitutional protections and grow our civic culture. At minimum, the Venezuelans targeted under the Alien Enemies Act deserve an opportunity to speak for themselves and place their experiences on the public record.

And our leaders in Congress must root out government malfeasance and identify where our institutions remain vulnerable to abuse. These are necessary steps toward rebuilding a shared belief in the rule of law and the ideals of liberty and justice.

American history is complicated. In it, there are targeted and deliberate actions against marginalized groups, often immigrant communities. But so, too, are there actions taken to reckon with these wrongs and build a better future for all.

Daniel Inouye, who served in the historic 442nd Infantry Regiment during WWII and went on to become the first Japanese American U.S. senator, described democracy as "an imperfect concept slowly seeking perfection." In the 1980s, Congress committed to doing the work of democracy, admitting error and addressing past harms. Will Congress do the same today?

Kathy Masaoka is a member of Nikkei Progressives/Nikkei or Civil Rights & Redress; Matthew Weisbly is JACL education and communications manager; Matt Marumoto is the JACL Daniel K. Inouye Fellow; and Katie Masano Hill is the JACL Norman Y. Mineta Fellow.



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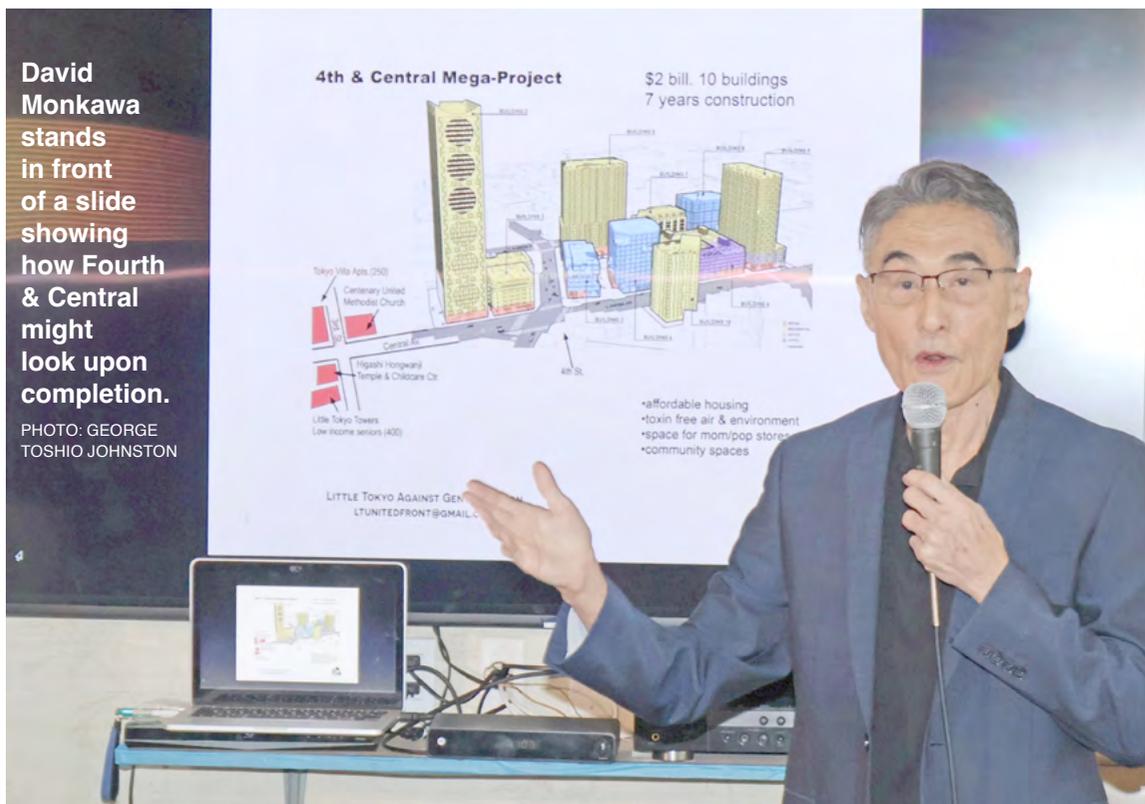
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David Monkawa stands in front of a slide showing how Fourth & Central might look upon completion.

PHOTO: GEORGE TOSHIO JOHNSTON

4TH & CENTRAL OPPONENTS EXPRESS DISSENT

Little Tokyo Against Gentrification continues its campaign against redevelopment plans.

By George Toshio Johnston,
P.C. Senior Editor

Despite the unanimous vote last year (Nov. 14, 2025, *Pacific Citizen*, [tinyurl.com/3y4d5jxv](https://www.pacificcitizen.com/3y4d5jxv)) by the Los Angeles City Planning Commission to recommend that the Los Angeles City Council approve an estimated \$2 billion redevelopment of a Little Tokyo-adjacent property, opposition to the Fourth & Central project persists.

Representing that stance is Little Tokyo Against Gentrification, comprised of Greater Los Angeles JACL, Save Our Seniors and J-Town Action and Solidarity. The group held a news conference on Jan. 21 at the Tokyo Villa recreation room in Little Tokyo.

Speaking first was David Monkawa of Save Our Seniors, who said, “You’re all here at the epicenter of this construction project that’s going to last seven years, cost \$2 billion and, we fear, cause a lot of rents to skyrocket.” He connected increased rents caused by the project to the displacement of current residents and small businesses.

Noting the proximity of 4th & Central to Tokyo Villa, Miyako Gardens and Little Tokyo Towers, which, according to Cindy Lin, a Tokyo Villa resident and community organizer with J-Town Action and Solidarity, are home to “many older adults with fixed incomes,” this project “is a threat to their health and well-being, not only during the long construction period, but also followed by the projected cost-of-living increases that come with luxury developments like this one, with only minimum low-income housing guarantees.”

JACL Pacific Southwest District Youth Representative and JACL National Youth/Student Council member Sebastian Carbajal spoke next. “I grew up going to Little Tokyo my entire life, and [it’s] more than just a tour spot. It’s my community,” he said. “What’s so interesting about this build is that if it could be done right, we could see so many old businesses and people

who used to live in the area come back.”

Speaking last was Greater Los Angeles JACL Chapter President Mitchell Matsumura. “The Fourth & Central megamall will irreparably harm and reshape the character of Little Tokyo, the last remaining Little Tokyo in the United States, for generations to come,” he said. “LTAG wants adequate low-income housing, low rents for Little Tokyo legacy small businesses, zero emission/green construction measures, public green space and a venue for community events.

“There are two more hearings left, which are the City Council Planning and Land Use hearing, and the final one is the City Council. We are asking the Council to oppose this project.”

Asked by *Pacific Citizen*, “What will your organization that you’re representing today do if the City Council does move ahead to officially greenlight the Fourth & Central project?” Monkawa answered, “We’re going to continue on with the campaign. We feel that if we continue to make a statement as Little Tokyo Against Gentrification, that we’re opposed to this mall, that eventually financing for the place may become a little bit more jeopardized. So, we’re going to continue on with our program.”

Asked if there was a mutually amicable solution that LTAG could agree to if Fourth & Central was to proceed, Monkawa answered that his group would be willing to talk as long as the “crucial issue” of affordable housing was addressed.

(See longer version of this article at [tinyurl.com/4a2nesxs](https://www.pacificcitizen.com/4a2nesxs).)

See related P.C. stories:

- *Fourth & Central Plans Spark Concern*, [tinyurl.com/yj62dems](https://www.pacificcitizen.com/yj62dems)
- *Little Tokyo Recalls Its Past for the Future*, [tinyurl.com/4pwk7pn3](https://www.pacificcitizen.com/4pwk7pn3)
- *Small Step for LTCIF ...*, [tinyurl.com/yc5ajtew](https://www.pacificcitizen.com/yc5ajtew)
- *A First Small Step Before a Giant Leap*, [tinyurl.com/yeykbbz](https://www.pacificcitizen.com/yeykbbz)
- *Fast-Forwarding Toward Its Future*, [tinyurl.com/329bnzbx](https://www.pacificcitizen.com/329bnzbx)

JACL EXPRESSES OUTRAGE OVER TWO DEATHS IN MINNEAPOLIS

The organization calls for an independent inquiry over the actions taken by the Department of Homeland Security.

By P.C. Staff

The Washington, D.C., office of the JACL issued a statement on Jan. 26 after a second person in Minneapolis was killed on Jan. 24 by federal officers in a 17-day span.

In its statement, JACL said it was “outraged” by the fatalities that took place during protests and called on the legislative and judicial branches of the federal government to check the executive branch’s “overreach” and “rein in an out-of-control” Department of Homeland Security. Also called for was an independent investigation by the Justice Department’s Civil Rights Division into all “use-of-force incidents involving federal immigration authorities.”

The first of the two Minneapolis fatalities in question took place on Jan. 7 with the shooting death of Renee Good, 37, by Immigration and Customs Enforcement agent Jonathan Ross (see [tinyurl.com/4dxx7ehz](https://www.pacificcitizen.com/4dxx7ehz)).

The second fatal incident involved a Customs and Border Patrol agent who shot and killed Alex Pretti, 37, on Jan. 24. (see [tinyurl.com/y2h-ju88p](https://www.pacificcitizen.com/y2h-ju88p)).

The federal government has sought



to control the narrative of what occurred by calling the victims “domestic terrorists” and claiming the two deceased persons were responsible for their deaths by acting in a violent or dangerous manner, despite re-

corded video and other accounts contradicting those claims.

Twin Cities JACL Chapter President Vinicius Taguchi was quoted as stating: “Yet again, Minneapolis has found itself in the national spotlight for a tragedy at the hands of ‘law enforcement.’ The stories we hear in the news capture just a fraction of the real fear and danger felt every day by people just trying to live their lives. I hope it has become painfully clear that we are all in danger when human rights are violated, and the most vulnerable among us are being rounded up.”

The JACL’s statement contained several bullet points listing its demands and suggestions, as well as several ways to take action with regard to the recent events in Minnesota.

To read the organization’s entire statement, visit [tinyurl.com/3c2jrsr8](https://www.pacificcitizen.com/3c2jrsr8).



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ACADEMY MUSEUM PRESENTS SHORT FILMS FOR DOR

Oscar winner Chris Tashima, Museum's Amy Homma to speak at four-film lineup.

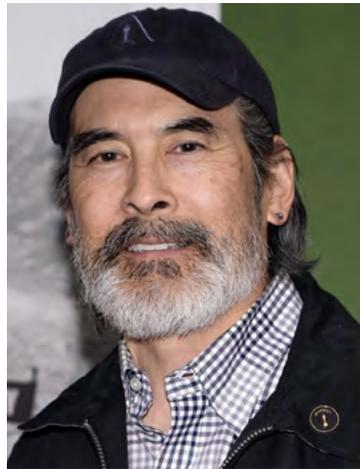
By George Toshio Johnston,
P.C. Senior Editor

Timed to the day to coincide with annual Day of Remembrance events, the Academy Museum of Motion Pictures will present its inaugural "Short Films Honoring the Day of Remembrance: Executive Order 9066" on Feb. 19 in Los Angeles.

The screenings begin at 7 p.m. in the 277-seat Ted Mann Theater at the Academy Museum, located at 6067 Wilshire Blvd. The Academy Museum of Motion Pictures opened in 2021 and is overseen by the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences.

Scheduled to speak at the screenings are Academy Museum Director and President Amy Homma and AMPAS board of governors member Chris Tashima, who won an Oscar in 1998 for the narrative short film "Visas and Virtue" and curated the event's lineup of movies.

The four short films will represent different filmmaking genres — documentary, animation, narrative — all with the common thread of the effects and aftereffects of the mass incarceration of ethnic Japanese in North America during World War II.



Academy Award-winning director Chris Tashima (left) and Academy Museum of Motion Pictures Museum Director and President Amy Homma will speak at the Feb. 19 DOR event screening in Los Angeles.



The four films are 1991's "Days of Waiting" (28 mins.), directed by Steven Okazaki; 1992's "Minoru: Memory of Exile" (19 mins.), directed by Michael Fukushima; 2003's "Day of Independence" (27 mins.), directed by Tashima; and 2023's "Resettlement: Chicago Story" (16 mins.), directed by Reina Higashitani. "Days of Waiting" won a Peabody Award and an Academy Award for best documentary (short subject).

Tashima spoke with the *Pacific Citizen* about how the event came together. "It was, for me, several things kind of just falling into place," said Tashima, who recalled a

key lunch invitation by Homma after being elected to the Academy's then-new short films branch.

In addition to their respective connections to AMPAS, they also both had relatives who had been incarcerated by the federal government during WWII.

"We had a very nice conversation about our families and how they were both incarcerated and immediately had sort of a bond as Japanese Americans," he recalled. In Tashima's case, his mother went to Gila River, and his father went to Poston.

"I mentioned to her that I really wanted

to see shorts featured more prominently at the museum," Tashima continued. "She was very open to that and understood completely and wanted to support short films."

Later, it occurred to Tashima to combine a short films program and Day of Remembrance. "It kind of brings some things together for me," he said. The next time he ran into Homma, he proposed it.

"She lit up and said, 'Yes, that sounds great,'" he said. Homma also agreed to attend and speak. "She was at the very top of my list in terms of speakers we might be able to get because she's a great speaker and just a wonderful person," Tashima added.

General admission for the films is \$10 (\$8 for museum members), \$7 for seniors and \$5 for students/children.

"I would just encourage anybody who is able to come to come early and visit the museum. If they haven't, it's a fantastic museum," Tashima said. "You can have a meal at Fanny's (the restaurant at the Academy Museum) and finish off with our program."

For more information about this Day of Remembrance films screening event and to purchase tickets, visit tinyurl.com/2s-322p9a.

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KAKEHASHI IS MORE THAN A BRIDGE

One participant in the December 2025 program learns that ‘being in-between was also an opportunity to connect people.’

By Nicole Saito

My name is Nicole Saito, and I am half-Korean (second generation on my mother’s side) and half-Japanese (fourth generation on my father’s side). In December 2025, I had the immense fortune of participating in the Kakehashi Program as a member of the Hiroshima group. Because I grew up in a large AJA (American of Japanese Ancestry) community in Oahu, Hawaii, I have always felt connected with my heritage and history — particularly my family’s experiences during World War II.



A photograph of Nicole Saito’s great-grandfather, Haruto Saito, alongside fellow members of the Silver Rain Poetry Society

PHOTO: COURTESY OF THE JAPANESE CULTURAL CENTER OF HAWAII’S OTOKICHI OZAKI ARCHIVAL COLLECTION

My father’s paternal grandfather, Haruto Saito, was born in Yamanashi-ken and immigrated from Japan to Hawaii along with his wife, Sadano, who was originally from Hiroshima. Shortly after the bombing of Pearl Harbor in 1941, Haruto was arrested by the government and imprisoned at Camp Livingston in Louisiana. As a Japanese language school-teacher, he was one of a few thousand Issei interned from Hawaii for holding a position of cultural influence.

At the time of Haruto’s arrest, his oldest son in the house — my grandfather, Harold — was only 16 years old. Harold dropped out of school to find work to support his mother and younger siblings. Later, he volunteered for the Military Intelligence Service to aid the U.S. in the war effort. His fluency in the Japanese language — which served as the basis for his father’s unjust incarceration for nearly four years — was the mechanism through which he proved his patriotism.

During his service in the MIS, my grandfather was tasked with the interrogation of Japanese POWs. Like many other AJA members of the MIS, my grandfather was able to connect with the Japanese soldiers on the basis of shared culture; he even befriended some of them.

I am told that after the war’s end, my grandfather traveled to Japan and visited one former POW with whom he was particularly close: The man happened to be an artist and gifted my grandfather some of his paintings as a symbol of their friendship.



Nicole Saito’s grandfather, Harold (right), alongside her grandmother, Amy, and Amy’s brother, Dale.

My paternal grandmother, Amy, was a third-generation Japanese American, born and raised in Kona on the island of Hawaii. She was one of seven children born to Shuzo and Sueno Ikeda; her grandparents immigrated to the U.S. from Fukuoka Prefecture. At the time of the war’s onset, her eldest brother, George Ikeda, was a premed student at the University of Hawaii.

Shortly after George’s 18th birthday, he volunteered for the military. In 1943, George formally enlisted in the 442nd Regimental Combat Team, dropping out of the university against the advice of military recruiters who emphasized the need for medical professionals in the war effort.

He would go on to become a technical sergeant in the 3rd Battalion of the 442nd and participated in military operations in Italy, including the rescue of America’s “Lost Battalion” (the 141st regiment) from German troops. In April 1945, during efforts to liberate northwestern Italy, George was killed in combat. He was just 20 years old.



George Ikeda (left), photographed in his military uniform. His mother (Nicole Saito’s great-grandmother), Sueno Ikeda (right), stands at his grave, sometime after 1948 following the return of his body back to Hawaii.

My family’s history gave me my first impression of how the U.S. viewed Asian Americans: We were *fundamentally foreign*, despite assimilation and citizenship. This notion further concretized during the explosion of anti-Asian hatred during the onset of the coronavirus pandemic, particularly in the violent hate crimes against elderly Asian Americans.

When the news media reported on an Asian American veteran named Lee Wong — who protested against anti-Asian hate by publicly baring the scars inflicted upon him while serving our country — it ignited deep feelings of grief within me for my Great-Uncle George: a man I’d never met but whose story had shaped my life.

George gave his life for the U.S. when he was just 20. In 2021, he would have been 97. That elderly Asian Americans were becoming victims of callous violence, with many losing their lives to prejudice fundamentally the same as that which ignited the internment of Japanese Americans, felt singularly representative of an exceedingly cruel message. It was as if the nation was telling me that my great-uncle’s sacrifice — his *life* — was utterly meaningless.

Constantly being labeled *Asian* and never *American* generates a misconstrued sense of identity. Yet, the other side of the double-edged sword is that, as the term perpetual foreigner implies, reconnecting with one’s roots can be just as isolating.

Upon my first trip to visit my Korean side of the family with my mother in 2017, I had a rather illustrative interaction with a Korean shopkeeper. She looked at me, and — presumably based off of my features — addressed me in Japanese. When it became clear I did not understand, she paused, then switched to Korean. I threw a helpless look toward my mother on the other side of the store. At this, the shopkeeper must



PHOTOS: COURTESY OF NICOLE SAITO

have realized what I was and finally switched to English.

That trip to Korea, along with my first visit to Japan the following year, complemented my later experiences in the U.S. To be Asian American meant being a perpetual foreigner: always Japanese or Korean or simply Asian in the United States.

But upon visiting the countries from which my ancestors originated, I quickly learned that despite *looking* Japanese or Korean, I was neither. There — and only there — I was an American.

With this understanding came a deep sense of shame, particularly with respect to my Japanese ancestry. My family’s history is saturated by the consequences of anti-Japanese discrimination, yet I had come to realize that I could only ever be a tourist in the country my ancestors were ostracized for.

I was fully resigned to this idea until I participated in the Kakehashi Program in December 2025. The Kakehashi Program, which is coordinated by the JAACL and the Japan International Cooperation Center (JICE) and supported by funding from the Japan Ministry of Foreign Affairs, marked the first time I was led to re-evaluate the Japanese American identity against the notion of the perpetual foreigner. And the way it led me to this realization was embedded deeply in its name — *kakehashi*, or “bridge.”

The first major revelation of the trip came via the program’s construction of an extremely diverse community of young Japanese Americans. I had become somewhat isolated from the AJA community during college in Southern California, and furthermore upon moving to the Midwest to pursue doctoral studies — ironic, given my thesis is centered around the economic impacts of the internment. Perhaps in a way, with my professional career focused on Japanese American history, I had become resigned to viewing the AJA community only as it existed in the past.

The Kakehashi Program was a much-needed glimpse of the Japanese American identity as it exists in the present. I was surprised to see how diverse the program cohort was: geographically, ethnically and professionally.

On the first night in Tokyo, I was elated to meet a fellow Japanese-Korean American: my roommate for our hotel stays during the trip, Emily Taketa, who quickly became a friend. I learned that our cohort spanned California, Colorado, Florida, Hawaii, Illinois, Tennessee and beyond; that we consisted of artists and animators, students and academics, activists, analysts, marketers and more; and we all brought myriad interests and experiences to the table.



Rice from the Morii family’s farm (left). The torii gate leading to the shrine at the top of the mountain in Yuki Town (right).

The comradery of the Hiroshima group made the dive into cultural exchange — and with it, the reality of my own ignorance of Japanese culture and language — less daunting, precisely because I was not alone.

This was most salient during the homestay experience in Yuki Town, roughly an hour from Hiroshima City, where we were assigned by groups to host families. I had the great fortune of being in the same group as Emily Taketa, Akemi Lucas and JoAnne Migaki. We stayed with the Morii family.



The Morii family ryokan in Yuki Town

Our host family owned a ryokan, or traditional Japanese inn, along with a small rice farm. Both had been in their family for 300 years. Although no one in our group was fluent in Japanese, which would have been intimidating on one's own, in a group, navigating communication and the logistics of our daily schedule became a collaborative exercise.

Despite our reliance on Google Translate, it felt very easy to make deep connections with the Morii family, who showed us abundant patience, empathy and kindness, as well as demonstrated a genuine interest in our experiences as Japanese Americans.



Nicole Saito's presentation of her family history at Hijiya University. Behind the podium are Nicole Saito (left) and Sudo-san, a program guide from JICE who translated Saito's presentation into Japanese.



Nicole Saito also gave her family history presentation to her host family, with Emily Taketa assisting with Google Translate.

The Morii family shared with us the history of their ryokan and the Yunoyama onsen in Yuki Town, starting with feudal Japanese history — when Lord Yoshinaga Asano of Hiroshima patronized the Yunoyama onsen — to modernity, when survivors of the atomic bomb sought relief under the cold water from the natural springs at the top of the mountain.

They also taught us about Japanese culture through cooking, explaining to us the ingredients of the traditional meals they prepared for us (such as the differences between red and white miso) and showing us how to make onigiri, takoyaki and handrolls. They also introduced us to cultural pastimes such as the traditional art form of *kagura* and the card game *Hyakunin Isshu Karuta* — and to our enjoyment, guided us to the beautiful temple at the top of their village, followed by a tour of their rice farm.

In the evenings, we patronized the Yunoyama onsen, a short walk upward from the ryokan, where we enjoyed the hot baths followed by a cold plunge of sorts, under the natural water flow from the top of the mountain.



Takoyaki ingredients for Nicole Saito's first meal with the Morii family



Seafood hotpot and handrolls for dinner

Being paired with three other Japanese Americans in the homestay made the experience very meaningful. We were all learning together, as part of a larger group who had similar experiences of isolation from Japanese culture.

In this way, I felt like I had a community, both with my fellow Japanese Americans and in the homestay at Yuki town. This was invaluable in teaching me to let go of the shame I'd harbored for so long: Admitting my own ignorance of Japanese culture was the first step to learning, and learning should never be something to be ashamed of.



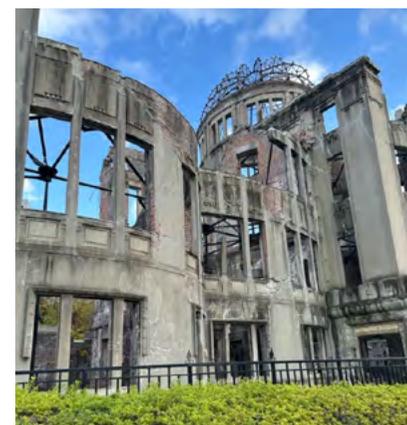
Kakehashi participants and their host family on the final day of their homestay visit. Pictured (from left) are Junko Morii, Akemi Lucas, Nicole Saito, Kazuya Morii, Emily Taketa, JoAnne Migaki and Chiaki Morii.

Following our departure from Yuki Town, our group drove back to Hiroshima City and visited the Hiroshima Peace Memorial and Museum. It was deeply humbling to learn about Japanese civilians' experiences during the war and painful to see the immense suffering brought on by the bombings.

From the tattered scraps of children's school uniforms singed from the blast, to harrowing artwork crafted by survivors of their experiences, to the battered lunchbox left behind by a young boy whose mother was never able to find his remains — the devastating gravity of human suffering conveyed by the museum, even through small glimpses given by material history, transformed the goal of global peace from a philosophical ideal to a pressing imperative. Yet, I was not sure of what individual civilians could do to help achieve this.



Hiroshima Peace Memorial Park



The view under the arch forms a straight-line to the Atomic Bomb (Genbaku) Dome, the only structure that survived the atomic bombing.

On the penultimate day of the trip, we presented our findings from the program and our action plans to Hikari Kobayashi, director of the Youth Exchange Division of JICE. This is where the meaning of *kakehashi* became clear — and seemed to offer an answer to the questions left by the Hiroshima Peace Museum.

The Okinawa groups presented first, and one began the report by overviewing Okinawa's history during WWII: focusing on the poignant story of the Shimuku Gama and Chibichiri Gama caves, where Okinawans took refuge as American soldiers arrived on the island.

Okinawans in both caves feared brutality by American soldiers and contemplated suicide. In Shimuku Gama, two Okinawan civilians who had spent time working in Hawaii assured them that this would not happen if they surrendered peacefully.

But this message was not able to reach Chibichiri Gama, where innocent civilians took their lives in fear. It is hard to imagine more tangible proof of the value of cultural understanding: At its peak, it can prevent the loss of human life.

After our presentations, Kobayashi told us that we should think of Japan as a second home, then went on to say a word of thanks to our ancestors who immigrated to the U.S. It was because of their sacrifice and perseverance that we could be here today as Japanese Americans — an identity between two cultures, with the unique opportunity to form meaningful connections between the people of Japan and the U.S.

Kobayashi also noted that Hiroshima and Okinawa were uniquely known for their painful experiences during WWII, yet they were also uniquely known for becoming champions of peace.



Her thoughtful words, combined with our experiences at the homestay and Hiroshima Peace Museum, convinced me of Japanese Americans' unique and tangible opportunity to affect change.

It's not always a treaty, or a diplomatic visit, or two leaders shaking hands on television that creates meaningful relations between two countries. These are important, of course, but it's rare that these things *alone* can foster long-lasting relations.

Interpersonal connections are key: like the Okinawans of



Reporting session presentation for Hiroshima Group C (left); Kobayashi-san, director of the Youth Exchange Division of JICE, gives remarks following the reports (right).



A group photo of the 2025 Kakehashi cohort along with program chaperones and JICE staff.



Two of the paintings that Nicole Saito's grandfather, Harold Saito, was gifted by a former Japanese soldier and POW, who he had befriended during his service in WWII. Both seem to feature the same writing and perhaps may be companion pieces to be displayed together. The cursive script, or the *kuzushiji* (崩し字), is difficult to make out, but it may be an illustration of Murasaki Shikibu's famous "めぐりあひいて" poem featured in the Hyakunin Isshu anthology that describes a serendipitous yet fleeting encounter between two people who knew each other long ago.



Shimuku Gama, who drew on their experiences in Hawaii to save their fellow civilians' lives, or the *hibakusha*, survivors of the atomic bombing, who went on to advocate for peace and disarmament around the world.

To be Japanese American means being a perpetual foreigner, yes. But it also means being a bridge. Rather than viewing the identity's "in-betweenness" as solely meaning exclusion, not belonging in Japan nor the U.S. — the Kakehashi Program taught me that being in-between was also an opportunity to connect people.

This also led me to reflect once more on my family history. My Great-Grandfather Haruto and my Great-Uncle George's stories exemplify the bleak consequences of being a perpetual foreigner. But the hardships they suffered and the sacrifices they made gave me the freedom and privilege to reconnect with my Japanese ancestry in the present — an opportunity that would be wasteful not to embrace.

Moreover, I have been able to reflect on my grandfather's work in the MIS with a greater appreciation of his accomplishments and how he reconciled his identity as both Japanese *and* American. A picture is worth a thousand words, and the realization from the Kakehashi Program, which has taken me more than a few thousand words to express, are succinctly exemplified by the paintings my grandfather passed down to us, gifted to him some 80 years ago by a friend made on the opposite side of war.

A symbol of peace and of his embodiment of the opportunity to serve as *kakehashi* — a bridge — as a Japanese American.

Nicole Saito is currently a fourth-year PhD student in the economics department at Northwestern University, researching the economic impacts of the Japanese forced incarceration of World War II.

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NVN's 'I Am an American' to Debut Feb. 20-22 in S.F.

The three-day kickoff will launch the traveling exhibition to 11 sites through 2032.

By P.C. Staff

The National Veterans Network has announced that its "I Am an American: Nisei Soldier Experience Traveling Exhibit" will open with a three-day event beginning Feb. 20 in San Francisco.

Three years in the making and in partnership with the National Museum of the U.S. Army with support from the Army Historical Foundation, NVN has described its "I Am an American" program as a means to "to honor the extraordinary service of the Nisei soldiers of World War II."

During WWII, Japanese Americans who wished to serve the United States in its armed forces were initially denied by racist policies and were classified as enemy aliens, ineligible to serve despite being U.S. citizens.

Due to manpower shortages, however, the federal government and Army allowed Japanese Americans to join the war effort. Second-generation Japanese Americans then went on to serve with distinction in Europe as members of the 100th Battalion/442nd Regimental Combat Team and across the Pacific and in postwar Japan as members of the Military Intelligence Service.

The three-day event, which requires registration and an advanced-purchased ticket, takes place at three different venues:



Artist's rendition of the "I Am an American" traveling exhibition

PHOTO: COURTESY OF NVN

Hotel Kabuki (event check-in, hospitality and public programs); MIS Historic Learning Center at the Presidio, site of the "I Am An American: The Nisei Soldier Experience," the 1,500-square-foot traveling exhibition hosted in San Francisco by the National Japanese American Historical Society with the Presidio Trust; and the Palace of Fine Arts Theater (premiere prereception and grand celebration event).

The event begins at 9:30 a.m. on Feb. 20 with a ribbon-cutting ceremony at the MIS Historic Learning Center at the Presidio.

Timed exhibition tours that are a part of the three-day opening weekend will take place on Feb. 21-22.

Also on the weekend are the event's panel discussions, taking place at the Kabuki Hotel. On Feb. 21 is "Japanese Americans and Baseball" at 10 a.m. On Feb. 22 are "Journey of the I Am an American: The Nisei Soldier Experience Traveling Exhibit" at 10 a.m. and "Family Perspective: Personal Stories and Objects in the Nisei Soldier Exhibit" at 2 p.m.

The grand celebration event is at 5:30 p.m.

on Feb. 21 at the Palace of Fine Arts Theater and will feature keynote speaker retired Army Gen. Eric Shinseki; the premiere of KABC News anchor-reporter David Ono's new Nisei soldier tribute; and addresses from National Museum of the U.S. Army Director Emeritus Tammy Call, NVN Executive Director Christine Sato-Yamazaki and retired Army Brig. Gen. Burt Thompson, Army Historical Foundation president. Darrell Kunitomi will give a reading of letters from a Nisei soldier. Serving as mistress of ceremonies will be actress Tamlyn Tomita.

The San Francisco leg of the "I Am an American" exhibition, which will eventually visit 11 sites through 2032, ends July 31. Other locations in its five-year trek include:

- Hawaii (October 2026-March 2027)
- Oregon (April-October 2027)
- Los Angeles (November 2027-May 2028)
- Utah (June-December 2028)
- Colorado (January-June 2029)
- Minnesota (September 2029-March 2030)
- Texas (April-October 2030)
- Illinois (November 2030-May 2031)
- Georgia (June-September 2031)
- New York (October 2031-January 2032)

For details about the event, visit tinyurl.com/246a9fuj.

Portland JACL Conducts 'Know Your Rights' Training

By Portland JACL

The Portland JACL, in collaboration with Tsuru for Solidarity and the Chinese American Citizens Alliance, conducted a "Know Your Rights" training session on Jan. 10 at the Oregon Buddhist Temple.

The training, which informed participants on how to respond to immigration enforcement, featured speakers John Kodachi, attorney and past president of JACL's Portland chapter; Eric Gold of the Immigrant Rights Committee of the Democratic Socialists of America; and Kenneth Kreucher, attorney and director of the Oregon Innocence Project.

"The program helped to educate the audience about our past, present and future immigration laws and enforcement actions," said Kodachi. "With DHS's recent stated goal of deporting 100 million from America, or about one-third of the country, the audience learned the importance of knowing their Constitutional rights, regardless of their immigration status, as enforcement actions ramp up under a well-funded ICE agency. I think the audience was surprised to learn that even citizenship does not necessarily provide refuge from ICE as the government seeks to denaturalize 100-200 U.S. citizens each month."

In addition, the more than 65 participants



Participants were educated on immigration enforcement policies and procedures.

PHOTO: RICH IWASAKI

were educated on the history of immigration enforcement and what is happening across the country today, what the law says your rights are and how you should respond.

Key highlights: "If you are detained and not allowed to leave by ICE agents, you have the right to remain silent and the right to speak to an attorney, regardless of your immigration status. And if ICE agents seek to enter your private home or private work areas, you have the right to refuse them entry unless they have a judicial warrant that is signed by a judge. ICE agents often show an administrative warrant signed by an immigration officer as a way to enter a private area."

Said one participant, "Immigration has become more aggressive in the past year, and we need to be prepared because most of us look like we don't belong."

AMERICAN HOLIDAY TRAVEL

2026 TOUR SCHEDULE

- HOKKAIDO SNOW FESTIVALS TOUR** (Ernest Hida) Feb 2-13
Lake Akan, Sounkyo, Sapporo, Otaru, Lake Toya, Hakodate, Tokyo. Hyobaku Ice Festival, Asahikawa Snow Festival, Sapporo Snow Festival, Hyoto Winter Festival.
- JAPAN SOUTHERN CHARMS HOLIDAY TOUR** (Ernest Hida) Mar 9-20
Fukuoka, Hagi, Suo-Oshima, Hiroshima, Matsuyama, Takamatsu, Shodo Island, Okayama, Kurashiki, Himeji, Osaka.
- GREAT TRAINS-SEDONA HOLIDAY TOUR** (Carol Hida). Mar 15-20
Sedona Tour, Grand Canyon Railway to Grand Canyon South Rim, Flagstaff, Montezuma Castle National Park, Verde Canyon Railway to 2 National Parks.
- JAPAN SPRING COUNTRYSIDE HOLIDAY TOUR** (Ernest Hida) Apr 13-25
Tokyo, Shimoda, Commodore Perry sites, Shizuoka, Mt Fuji, Lake Kawaguchi, Matsumoto, Tsumago/Nagome, Gero Onsen, Toba, Nagoya.
- NEW YORK CITY HOLIDAY TOUR** (Carol Hida) Apr 23-28
New York City Tour, Statue of Liberty, Ferry Cruise of New York Harbor, 9/11 Memorial & Museum, 2 Broadway Shows.
- MT RUSHMORE-YELLOWSTONE HOLIDAY TOUR** (Carol Hida) Jun 17-25
Rapid City, Mt Rushmore, Crazy Horse Memorial, Billings, Little Big Horn National Monument, Cody, Yellowstone National Park, Jackson, Grand Tetons National Park, Salt Lake City.
- GRANDPARENTS-GRANDCHILDREN JAPAN TOUR** (Ernest Hida) Jun 21-Jul 1
Tokyo, Hakone, Atami, Hiroshima, Kyoto. Craftmaking hands-on experiences.
- ALASKA HOLIDAY CRUISE** (Carol Hida) Jul 18-25
Vancouver, Sail Inside Passage, Juneau, Skagway, Cruise Glacier Bay, Ketchikan - "Salmon Capital", Vancouver.
- PANA CONVENTION** (Ernest Hida) Sep
Sao Paulo-Brazil.
- JAPAN AUTUMN COUNTRYSIDE HOLIDAY TOUR** (Ernest Hida) Oct 5-18
Hokkaido-Tohoku. Kushiro, Lake Akan, Sounkyo, Asahikawa, Sapporo, Otaru, Noboribetsu, Lake Toya, Hakodate, Aomori, Lake Towada, Morioka, Naruto Onsen, Matsushima, Mito, Tokyo.
- AUSTRALIA-NEW ZEALAND HOLIDAY TOUR** (Ernest Hida). Oct 26-Nov 11
Sydney, Cairns, Melbourne, Queenstown, Rotorua, Auckland.
- CHRISTMAS MARKET CANADA HOLIDAY TOUR** (Carol Hida). Dec 1-7
Vancouver City Tour, Grouse Mountain Skyride, Shipyards Christmas Market, Ferry to Victoria Island, Butchart Gardens, High Tea at Fairmont Empress Hotel, Victoria Christmas Market & Fair, Van Dusen Festival of Lights.

For more information and reservations, please contact:

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A NATIONAL GUIDE TO NOTABLE COMMUNITY EVENTS

CALENDAR

NCWNP

Northern California Time of Remembrance 2026

Sacramento, CA
Feb. 14; 1-3 p.m.
California Museum
1020 O St.

Price: \$15 General Admission; College Students and Children 18 and Under Free

Join the Florin, Lodi, Placer County and Sacramento JACL chapters as they welcome featured speakers Naomi Ostwald Kawamura, executive director of Densho, and Rev. Duncan Ryuken Williams, as they discuss the work that Densho and the Ireicho Project, respectively, are doing to preserve history.

Info: To register, visit https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSd-DAIURVOU6gT5HS6WS0Af__c7Ps-Fq-QSf5i-k0nZ4SMggYA/viewform.

'Neighbors Not Enemies' 46th Annual San Jose DOR

San Jose, CA

Feb. 15; 5:30-7:30 p.m.

San Jose Buddhist Church Betsuin Annex
632 N. Fifth St.

Price: Free But Donations Welcome

The Nihonmachi Outreach Committee presents this program featuring Richard Konda, executive director of Asian Law Alliance; musician Jake Shimada; and community speakers.

Info: For more information, visit <https://www.sjnoc.org>.

'I Am an American' Exhibit Opening

San Francisco, CA

Feb. 20-22

MIS Historic Learning Center at the Presidio of San Francisco
220 Halleck St.

Price: Registration Starts at \$250.

This three-day event celebrates the launch of the much-anticipated exhibit opening and will feature a special preview, access to various speaker tributes including Gen. Eric K. Shinseki and David Ono, public programs and panel discussions and much more.

Info: Visit <https://nvnvets.org/nisei-soldier-traveling-exhibit/>.

Sacramento Day of Remembrance

Sacramento, CA

Feb. 21; Noon-2 p.m.

Nisei War Memorial Community Center
1515 Fourth St.

Price: Free

This year's program, presented by Sacramento JACL in conjunction with

Sacramento City Mayor Pro Tem Eric Guerra will include guest speakers including the Hon. Charles Kobayashi and Priscilla Ouchida, as well as a panel discussion with WWII concentration camp survivors.

Info: To RSVP, visit <https://form.jotform.com/260193827627161>.

Stockton JACL DOR Program

Stockton, CA

Feb. 28; 1 p.m.

Buddhist Church of Stockton

2820 Shimizu Dr.

Price: Free

This year's program will feature author Susan Kamei who will give a talk and discussion of her book "When Can We Go Back to America?" A candle ceremony and Q & A session will follow.

Info: Call (209) 541-9118.

PSW

'Gila River Connections: A Celebration of Shared History'

Chandler, AZ

Feb. 19-22

Huhugam Heritage Center

21359 S. Maricopa Road

Price: Free

This landmark community event, sponsored in part by JACL Arizona, aims to foster healing and reflection on the shared experiences of displacement, resettlement and forced assimilation and ultimate resilience. Core programming includes film premieres, panel discussions, cultural presentations and community receptions.

Info: Visit <https://jaclaz.org/event/gila-river-connections/>.

2026 Los Angeles DOR

Los Angeles, CA

Feb. 21; 2-4 p.m.

Los Angeles Homba Hongwanji Buddhist Temple

815 First St.

Price: Free

This year's theme, "The Power of Action: Silence Today, Injustice Tomorrow," highlights the current climate where all communities of color are under threat of erasure or censorship.

Info: To RSVP, visit <https://www.janm.org/events/2026-02-21/2026-los-angeles-day-remembrance>.

'Visas and Virtue' Screening

Thousand Oaks, CA

Feb. 26; 6:30-8:30 p.m.

Cal Lutheran University

Preus-Brandt Forum

135 Chapel Lane

Price: Free

Come see "Visas and Virtue," a short film inspired by the true story of Chiune Sugihara, a Japanese diplomat who, for thousands of Jews in 1940, defied Tokyo and the Nazis to offer them visas. This film is from Academy Award-winning director Chris Tashima.

Info: Visit <https://www.callutheran.edu/calendar/event/6525>.

DOR San Diego: 'Loyal American' and 'One Fighting Irishman'

San Diego, CA

March 11; 3:15-5:15 p.m.

Serra Mesa-Kearney Mesa Branch Library

9005 Aero Dr.

Price: Free

These two films will include discussion following their screenings. "Loyal American" features Henry Kaku as he talks about his father and the loyalty questions he refused to answer. "Irishman" is about attorney Wayne M. Collins, who defended Japanese Americans.

Info: Visit <https://jacl.org/events/san-diego-days-of-remembrance-loyal-american-one-fighting-irishman>.

PNW

Portland DOR: 'Farewell to Manzanar' 50th Anniversary Screening and Panel

Portland, OR

Feb. 16; 2 p.m. and 6:30 p.m.

Winningsstad Theatre

Antoinette Hatfield Hall

1111 S.W. Broadway

Price: \$17 Tickets

This special anniversary screening will feature a panel discussion with Gabrielle Houston Neville, Carole Hayashino and Frank Abe, moderated by Hanako Wakatsuki-Chong. "Farewell to Manzanar" is the first major film adaptation to portray the wartime incarceration camps.

Info: For tickets, visit <https://portland5.venue.net/events/FAREWELL>.

'Looking Like the Enemy' DOR

Vashon, WA

Feb. 22; 1-4 p.m.

Vashon Library

17210 Vashon Hwy. SW

Join Friends of Mukai Farm & Garden and the Vashon Library for this event inspired by Mary Matsuda Gruenwald's memoir "Looking Like the Enemy." The program will include an intergenerational book discussion and also storytime for children and families.

Info: Registration not required.

Puyallup Day of Remembrance 2026

Puyallup, WA

Feb. 21; 10 a.m.-Noon

Washington State Fairgrounds

110 Ninth Ave. Southwest

Price: Free

This year's program will include five sessions and a fireside chat, as well as a reading by author Tamiko Nimura and updates from Tsuru for Solidarity.

Info: Visit <https://puyallupvalleyjacl.org/gallery/gallery-events/day-of-remembrance-2026/>.

MDC

'One Fighting Irishman': Twin Cities Premiere Film Screening

St. Paul, MN

Feb. 19; 6-8 p.m.

Minnesota History Center

345 W. Kellogg Blvd.

Price: Free

Join the Twin Cities chapter as it presents "One Fighting Irishman," a film about San Francisco civil rights attorney Wayne M. Collins. A panel discussion follows featuring Collins' son, attorney Wayne Merrill Collins.

Info: To RSVP, visit <https://www.mnhs.org/events/45054565142>.

Chicago Day of Remembrance

Chicago, IL

Feb. 22; Noon-2 p.m. PST

Chicago History Museum

1601 N. Clark St.

Price: Free

The short docudrama "Enough" ask what it takes to confront harm honestly and pursue repair over time, will be featured at this year's Chicago DOR event. Advanced registration is highly encouraged.

Info: Visit <https://7615a.blackbaud-hosting.com/7615a/Partner-Event-Day-of-Remembrance-22Feb2026>.

IDC

'Legacy of Resistance' Mile High JACL DOR 2026

Denver, CO

Feb. 22, 1-4 p.m. MT

History Colorado Center

1200 N. Broadway

Price: Free

This year's event will feature keynote speaker Mike Ishii from Tsuru for Solidarity.

Info: Please register on History of Colorado's website.

CCDC

CCDC's Day of Remembrance

Fresno, CA

Feb. 17; 5:30-7:30 p.m.

Fresno County Historical Museum

Big Fresno Fairgrounds

1121 S. Chance Ave. (Free parking @

Chance Ave. Lot)

Price: \$41 Reception Ticket

This reception and silent auction Day of Remembrance will feature a program that will include speakers Tom Ikeda, founder of the Densho Project, and best-selling author Daniel James Brown.

Info: Email Briant@csufresno.edu or tsnishi@aol.com.

EDC

Film and Conversation: 'Removed by Force' Day of Remembrance 2026

Washington, D.C.

Feb. 19; 7 p.m.

National Museum of American History
1 Center: Warner Bros. Theater

1300 Constitution Ave. N.W.

Price: Free

This screening of "Removed by Force: The Eviction of Hawaii's Japanese Americans during WWII," sheds light on the relatively unknown experiences of 1,500 Japanese Americans from Hawaii who were evicted but not interned during WWII. A panel discussion follows featuring William Kaneko, Ryan Kawamoto, Robert Bratt and moderator Lisa Sasaki.

Info: Seating is limited, and reservations are recommended. To RSVP, visit <https://www.eventbrite.com/e/film-and-conversation-removed-by-force-day-of-remembrance-2026-tickets-1980571915916?aff=trumba#location>.

'Third Act' Screening and New England JACL DOR Program

Boston, MA

Feb. 21, 11 a.m. PST; Feb. 22, 1 p.m. PST

Bright Family Screening Room

Paramount Theater

559 Washington St.

Price: Free

Join the New England JACL for its annual DOR program that will feature a film screening of "Third Act," directed by Tadashi Nakamura.

Info: For free tickets, visit https://purchase.artsemerson.org/ChooseSeats/32001?_gl=1*1t-1pev1*_gcl_au*MTk1MTQ2MDg0LjE3Njg5MjUxNDA.*_ga*MjAxNzc2MjcyOC4xNzY4OTI1MTQw*_ga_43EL-NV638B*czE3Njg5MjUxNDAkbzEkZ-zAkDDE3Njg5MjUzNjQkajYwJGww-

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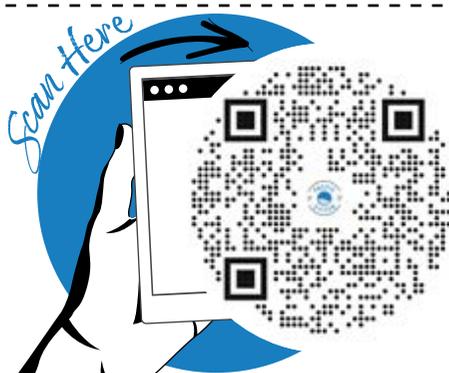
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Sacramento JACL: Matsui Guest at 2026 Installation



Pictured (front row, from left) are Sacramento Mayor Pro Tem Eric Guerra, Rep. Doris Matsui, Sacramento JACL chapter VP Debbie Eto, chapter board member Esther Hokama; and (second row, from left) Assemblywoman Stephanie Nguyen, chapter Secretary Randy Fong, board member Michael Luszczak, chapter President Roger Fujii, chapter Treasurer Kathy Delmendo and chapter President Emeritus Janice Luszczak.

PHOTO: COURTESY OF SACRAMENTO JACL

The Sacramento JACL held its installation and Community Recognition Award event at Fuji Restaurant on Jan. 24, with special guests U.S. Rep. Doris Matsui (D-Calif.), Assemblywoman Stephanie Nguyen (D-10th District) and Sacramento Mayor Pro Tem Eric Guerra in attendance.

The Hon. Charles Kobayashi installed the chapter's officers, who are as follows: Roger Fujii, president; Debbie Eto, vp; Kathy

Delmendo, treasurer; and Randy Fong, secretary.

In addition, Community Recognition Awards were presented by Matsui, Nguyen and Guerra to Asian American leaders Bill Wong and John Yoshikawa, former ACC Senior Services CEO Connie Rusnyk, VFW 8985's Andy Rosenau and longtime restaurateur Russell Okubo.

Matsui concluded the event with a stirring speech. ■

News Briefs

5-Plus Years Prison Sentence for Pasadenan Who Made Bomb Threats

U.S. District Judge Sherilyn Peace Garnett sentenced Nathalie Nguyen, 40, of Pasadena, Calif., to 64 months in federal prison on Feb. 4. Nguyen, who pleaded guilty in April 2025 to one count of stalking and one count of threat by interstate commerce to kill another person and damage and destroy buildings by fire and explosives, had stalked her victim and his wife, then impersonated them to further stalk staff at a U.S. consulate in Vietnam, which she threatened to bomb. Nguyen was also ordered to pay more than \$5,000 in restitution.

Judge Sentences 'Pig-Butchering' Perpetrator to Nearly 4 Years in Prison

U.S. District Judge R. Gary Klausner on Jan. 27 sentenced Chinese national Jingliang Su, 45, to nearly four years in federal prison for his role in swindling more than \$36.9 million from victims. With several partners, Su engaged in a so-called "pig-butchering" scam, in which victims are drained of their financial assets after trust is gained by the perpetrators over a period of time via social media and dating apps. Su was also ordered to pay \$26.9 million in restitution.

Irvine, Calif.-Couple Plead Guilty for Hiding Millions in Cash Transactions

A married couple from Irvine, Calif. — Alex Nguyen, 50, and Sam Nguyen, 52 — owners of Newport Gold Post Inc. in downtown Los Angeles' Jewelry District, pleaded guilty Dec. 19, 2025, to federal criminal charges of concealing millions of dollars' worth of cash transactions from the federal government, failing to maintain an anti-money laundering program, and using the unreported cash at other family businesses, at a casino, and for other personal expenses. After receiving millions of dollars in cash from customers, they failed to file necessary IRS paperwork. Alex Nguyen pleaded guilty to one count of conspiracy and one count of filing a false tax return, and Sam Nguyen pleaded guilty to one count of conspiracy. U.S. District Judge Michelle Williams Court has scheduled June 5 for sentencing hearings for the defendants. Alex Nguyen will face up to eight years in federal prison; Sam Nguyen will face up to five years in federal prison.

— P.C. Staff

In MEMORIAM

(Editor's Note: Boldfaced names in blue in the PDF version of this page are active hyperlinks.)

Choy, Christine, 73, New York, NY, Dec. 7, 2025.

Fukui, June Kazuye, 88, West Hills, CA, Sept. 5, 2025.



Guting, Tara-Marysa, 28, Tacoma, WA, Dec. 19, 2025.

Hada, Calvin T., 71, Louisville, CO, December 2025.



Hamachi, Gladys Keiko, 91, Torrance, CA, Oct. 3, 2025.



Hara, John, 83, Alton, IL, Dec. 26, 2025.

Hotta, Virginia, 99, El Cerrito, Calif., Jan. 5.

Ichinaga, Jon, 70, Torrance, CA, Jan. 1.

Ishimatsu, Dorothy, 98, San Jose, CA, Dec. 10, 2025.

Kimura, Mary Masako, 93, Los Angeles, CA, Sept. 22, 2025.



Masatani, Harry Yoshio, 99, Guadalupe, CA, Sept. 30, 2025.



Nakano, Kraig Koji, 66, Torrance, CA, Jan. 25.

Wong, Kent, 69, Los Angeles, CA, Oct. 8, 2025. ■

TRIBUTE

EMIKO SUYEHIRO

A private Celebration of Life for Emiko Suyehiro, 97-year-old, Tosa-Shi, Kochi, Japan-born Nisei, who passed away on Dec. 10, 2025, in Los Angeles, was held.

She is survived by her daughter, Kim (Michael Thies) Suyehiro Thies; she was also survived by other relatives.

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TRIBUTE

HELEN KIMIKO YAMANAKA

Aug. 19, 1930-Jan. 14, 2026
Resident of Alameda, Calif.

Helen passed away peacefully in her sleep at the age of 95. She was the youngest of five children born to Masaki and Shige Funatsu. Helen is survived by her son Benjamin, Mita Basconcillo, grandchildren Brendan Yamanaka, Brady Yamanaka, Nenita Reyes & Elvie Johnson, Natishae Basconcillo & Carlos Zuniga, Noel & Crisjel Basconcillo, great-grandchildren Sharissa Daquioag, Adrian Zuniga, Hamala Johnson, Camila Zuniga, Naielle Basconcillo and Cristian Basconcillo. Helen is preceded in death by her husband, Ben Yamanaka, son Bruce Yamanaka and siblings Kay Hama, Alyce Tanouye, Harry Funatsu and Betty Funatsu.

Helen was born in Turlock, Calif., and during WWII she and her family were relocated and interned at Amache Relocation facility in Granada, Colo. Helen worked for Marcus Foster middle school in Oakland, Calif.

She loved playing golf with the Alameda Nine Holes Golf Group and volunteering at the Alameda Hospital Gift Shop and Meals on Wheels. She loved visiting Mastick Senior Center in Alameda and playing mahjong. Helen was a loving and devoted wife, caring and supportive mother to her sons, grandkids and great grandkids and a loyal friend to many.

Memorial services to be held on Tuesday, Feb. 10, 2026 at 11:30 a.m. at the Buddhist Temple of Alameda. In lieu of flowers please consider a memorial donation to the charity of one's choice.

PLACE A TRIBUTE

'In Memoriam' is a free listing that appears on a limited, space-available basis.

Tributes honor your loved ones with text and photos and appear in a timely manner at the rate of \$25/column inch.

CONTACT:

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