SPECIAL HOLIDAY ISSUE

# PACIFIC CITIZEN

## JACL




## A Lasting Legacy

#3356 VOL.#169

DEC. 20-JAN. 23, 2020

# Stockton

Happy Holidays
From the Saikis
May, Rod, Heidi & Family

Happy Holidays
**Tad Shibata**

*Happy Holidays!*
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Happy Holidays!
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*Happy Holidays!*
Craig I. Yoshikawa

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The Jack Funamura Family

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Terashita Family

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*The Hoang's*

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From
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Happy New Year
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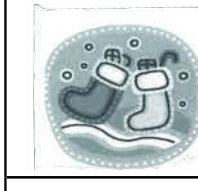
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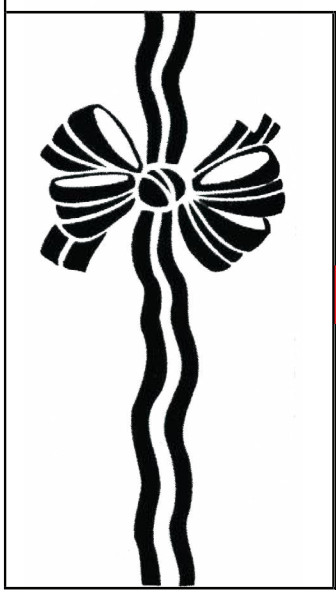
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from
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and
Alex Sakata

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Yukiko Motoyoshi

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Tom & Mayko Horita

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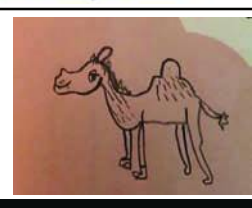
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Season's Greetings
~ Raymond and Yoshiko Uno ~

Congratulations
on the 90th Anniversary of civil
rights advocacy

Happy Holidays!

Yasuko, Steve, Jani, Nathan & Katie
In loving memory of Nobuo Iwamoto

Peace, Joy & Love in 2020!
Jefferson & Linda Itami


# Silicon Valley





Happy Holidays!

congratulations
90th anniversary
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# PACIFIC CITIZEN

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Founded in 1929, JACL is the nation's oldest and largest Asian American civil and human rights organization with a 9,000+ membership base. JACL has 112 chapters nationwide, three regional offices, a Washington, D.C., office and a national headquarters in San Francisco. JACL's mission is to secure and uphold the human and civil rights of Japanese Americans and all Americans while preserving our cultural heritage and values.

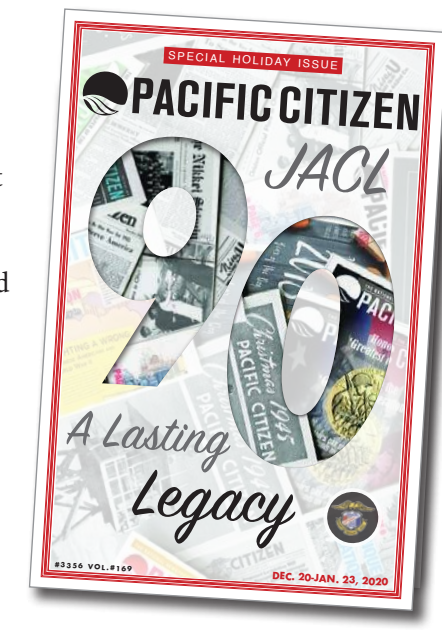

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# Letter From the Editor



Cover by M.Samonte

When I think about what type of legacy I hope to leave one day after I am gone, it's not fame or fortune that matters — it's the little things that count most: a loving heart, good deeds and kind gestures to everyone I've ever known or had the pleasure of helping along the way. A life lived to its fullest, knowing my children will carry forth all that my husband and I have instilled in them to be their best selves.

We all carry on the legacies of our ancestors within each and every one of us, adding to that new parts that continue forth with each successive generation. It's a gift to be able to continue on that privilege, thus ensuring that what has been will never be forgotten.

As JACL and the *Pacific Citizen* celebrate 90 years of existence, its those many layers that have helped to build this organization and allowed it to thrive, even throughout the toughest and most challenging years in our history.

Dedicated board members, national staff, chapters, members and volunteers have advocated and fought for the rights of all citizens since Day 1 — after all, "citizens" is a part of the JACL's name.

On behalf of all those "citizens," JACL has been there every step of the way to ensure that each person receives due process, no matter the color of his/her skin or beliefs. And absolutely adding to that longevity is JACL's commitment to education and knowing how important it is to share that knowledge with young people today, so that what has been forged is never forgotten.

That is what a "Lasting Legacy" is all about and why JACL continues onward to this day. Continue to educate. Continue to make your voices heard. Continue to build those layers. Continue to work together for the sake of all.

Congratulations JACL and *Pacific Citizen* on reaching your milestone 90th anniversaries. It's an honor to be a part of your storied legacy.

***— Allison Haramoto, Executive Editor***

# Story Index


**JACL at 90** ..... 8

**From the Executive Director** ..... 13
*By David*

**A JACL Trailblazer** ..... 16
*By Patti Hirahara*

**Remembering the Nakashima Legacy** ..... 18
*By Rob Buscher*

**Strength Through Stories** ..... 21
*By Ray Locker*

**A Year for the NY/SC** ..... 25
*By Mieko Kuramoto*

**National/Community News** ..... 29

**JACL Chapter Successes in 2019** ..... 32

**George Takei: Life at Warp Speed** ..... 36
*By George T. Johnston*

**Mystery at Long Last Solved?** ..... 38
*By Charles James*

**A Tale of Two Cities in 1988** ..... 42
*By Jefferson Itami*

**The *Pacific Citizen* at 90** ..... 46
*By P.C. Staff*

**Fighting Gentrification With Community-Driven Investment** ..... 51
*By Kevin Sanada and Caroline Calderon*

**Folding for a Cause** ..... 52
*By Nancy Ukai*

**Life as a Peace Corps Volunteer** ..... 58
*By Kako Yamada*

**Legacy and Respect** ..... 60
*By Gil Asakawa*

**A Lasting Legacy** ..... 64
*By Marsha Aizumi*

**Lasting Legacies Into the Future** ..... 65
*By Ron Mori*

**What Is a Lasting Legacy?** ..... 65
*By Judd Matsunaga, Esq.*

**In Memoriam 2019** ..... 68


# JACL Chapter Ad Index


**Alaska** ..... 35
**Arizona** ..... 28
**Berkeley** ..... 62,63,66,67
**Boise Valley** ..... 27
**Chicago** ..... 10
**Cincinnati** ..... 28
**Clovis** ..... 27
**Contra Costa** ..... 30
**Dayton** ..... 7
**Detroit** ..... 26
**Eden Township** ..... 11
**Florin-Scramento** ..... 59
**Fort Lupton** ..... 12
**Fresno** ..... 2
**Downtown L.A.** ..... 26
**Greater L.A.** ..... 35
**Holiday Helpers** ..... 71
**Hoosier** ..... 35
**Idaho Falls** ..... 12
**JACL "Annual Giving"** ..... 61
**Japan** ..... 35
**Livingston-Merced** ..... 28
**Lodi** ..... 27
**Marysville** ..... 49
**Mile High** ..... 14,15
**Monterey Peninsula** ..... 49
**Mount Olympus** ..... 35
**New England** ..... 12
**New Mexico** ..... 59
**New York** ..... 28
**Olympia** ..... 31
**Omaha** ..... 35
**Philadelphia** ..... 28
**Placer County** ..... 49
**Pocatello-Blackfoot** ..... 28
**Portland** ..... 23
**Puyallup Valley** ..... 67
**Riverside** ..... 26
**Salinas Valley** ..... 70
**Salt Lake City** ..... 4
**San Diego** ..... 31
**San Fernando Valley** ..... 40,41,44,45,48
**San Jose** ..... 27
**San Mateo** ..... 12
**Santa Barbara** ..... 28
**Seabrook** ..... 59
**Seattle** ..... 59
**Selanoco** ..... 35
**Sequoia** ..... 49
**Silicon Valley** ..... 4
**Snake River** ..... 59
**Sonoma County** ..... 31
**St. Louis** ..... 35
**Stockton** ..... 2, 3, 4
**Twin Cities** ..... 11
**Venice-West L.A.** ..... 7
**Ventura County** ..... 6, 7
**Spring Campaign Superstars** ..... 70
**Wasatch** ..... 49
**Washington, D.C.** ..... 59
**Wisconsin** ..... 59

**DISTRICT COUNCILS**

**Central California** ..... 10
**Eastern** ..... 59
**Intermountain** ..... 11
**Midwest** ..... 67
**N. Cal Western Nevada Pacific** ..... 31
**Pacific Northwest** ..... 7
**Pacific Southwest** ..... 59

# Ventura County

*Season's Greetings*

**KEITH and SHARON**

**HARADA**

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Mele Kalikimaka

The Miyasaka Family

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HAPPY HOLIDAYS!
FROM
Mark & Anne
Chilcott

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Happy Holidays

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Justin Label

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Kyle Yasui

Ayako Akahoshi Memorial Scholarship
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Masako Miyaska Memorial Scholarship
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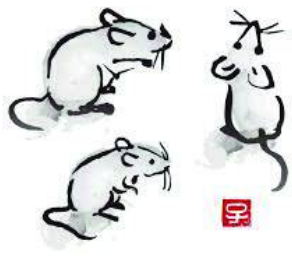
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# HAPPY 90TH ANNIVERSARY JACL

**Since the beginning, the civil rights organization continues to push forward, recognizing the need to educate others so that future members can carry it into the next century.**

*By S. Floyd Mori and P.C. Staff*

The Japanese American Citizens League was established in 1929, and this year's National Convention in Salt Lake City commemorated this historic anniversary. Long touted as the "oldest and largest Asian American civil rights organization in the U.S.," through the decades, it has "advocated issues to benefit the progress of Japanese Americans and Asian Americans in combating prejudice and bigotry."

The Issei pioneers who immigrated to the U.S. from Japan were brave souls who dared to travel across the Pacific Ocean to begin a new life in America. This was a country that was thought to be the "Land of Opportunity," a place where they would surely find riches and success.

The Issei were not from the upper class in Japan. They were mostly young men who felt that their opportunities were limited there, so they came to the U.S. Many later married women from Japan, some being so-called "picture brides." Then, they started to have families. Although they were not well educated themselves, they strongly encouraged their children to attend college.

The Nisei (second generation who had been born in the United States and were citizens) largely complied with their parents' wishes. Many obtained college degrees. There were doctors, dentists, lawyers and teachers among their ranks. Although it was often difficult at that time for them to find meaningful opportunities for employment in their fields of study because of the racism that prevailed, they persevered.

When these young people became leaders within their communities, they started various organizations. They and their parents, however, continued to face prejudice, discrimination and hardship in the larger American society. Several of these young adults joined together to form the Japanese American Citizens League in 1929 as a national organization where they could fight for their civil rights.

The JACL continues to this day to be an important civil rights organization that also provides opportunities to its members for educational, cultural, service and social interactions and possibilities. There have been many changes and improvements to the JACL over the past 90 years. Many people have worked diligently to help the organization grow and continue its work. All leaders and members of the JACL are to be commended for their support.

Key to JACL's future is its members. Mike Masaoka, who was a brother-in-law to the Hon. Norman Y. Mineta and an early leader of the JACL, is credited with most of the civil rights achievements of the JACL in the early years. He stated over 60 years ago that he expected the JACL would grow to 50,000 members. The membership of the organization at that time was around 30,000; now, it is reportedly less than 10,000.

Membership is vital to ensure this organization remains viable into the next century. This year's convention theme was "Inclusion. Advocacy. Action." It is important for JACL to embrace this theme as we move forward. We need to continue our work and encourage others to join us, united as one, fighting for the rights of all.

In recognition of JACL's 90th anniversary, the *Pacific Citizen* reached out to JACL National Presidents to share their insights on the organization's treasured legacy and its relevancy in today's world. ■

## JACL NATIONAL PRESIDENTS

| | |
|---|---|
| 1929-30 | Clarence Arai |
| 1931-32 | Dr. George Y. Takeyama |
| 1933-34 | Dr. Terry T. Hayashi |
| 1935-36 | Dr. Thomas T. Yatabe |
| 1937-38 | Jimmie Y. Sakamoto |
| 1939-40 | Walter T. Tsukamoto |
| 1941-46 | Saburo Kido |
| 1946-50 | Hito Okada |
| 1950-52 | Dr. Randolph Sakada |
| 1952-56 | George J. Inagaki |
| 1956-58 | Dr. Roy N. Nishikawa |
| 1958-60 | Shigeo Wakamatsu |
| 1960-62 | Frank F. Chuman |
| 1962-64 | K. Patrick Okura |
| 1964-66 | Kumeo A. Yoshinari |
| 1966-70 | Jerry J. Enomoto |
| 1970-72 | Raymond S. Uno |
| 1972-74 | Henry T. Tanaka |
| 1974-76 | Shigeki Sugiyama |
| 1976-78 | James F. Murakami |
| 1978-80 | Dr. Clifford I. Uyeda |
| 1980-82 | Dr. James K. Tsujimura |
| 1982-84 | Floyd D. Shimomura |
| 1984-86 | Frank Sato |
| 1986-88 | Harry Kajihara |
| 1988-92 | Cressey Nakagawa |
| 1992-94 | Lillian Kimura |
| 1994-96 | Denny Yasuhara |
| 1996-00 | Helen Kawagoe |
| 2000-04 | S. Floyd Mori |
| 2004-06 | Kenneth Inouye |
| 2006-10 | T. Larry Oda |
| 2010-12 | David H. Kawamoto |
| 2012-16 | David T. Lin |
| 2016-18 | Gary Mayeda |
| 2018-Present | Jeffrey Moy |

# JACL NATIONAL PRESIDENTS



## JEFFREY MOY
JACL National President
2018-Present

'As we come to the end of 2019, JACL's 90th anniversary, I am so thankful for the many people who have shaped this organization over the years. Ninety years of existence means surviving the inevitable ups and downs, learning and growing together and continuing to share in this important space. Changes occur in our membership and programs, some big and some small, but the values we share continue to bring us together as a community fighting for civil rights.

"Ninety years makes me reflect on the incredibly significant ways my relatively brief time with the JACL has impacted me. Through programs like the JACL/OCA Leadership Summit, I met mentors and friends, reflecting a community not only diverse geographically, but also generationally, ethnically, politically and in so many other ways I did not initially expect.

"I think about how these perspectives, seen through our shared Japanese American lens, serve as a microcosm for the United States as a whole, and how in turn our discussions continue to strengthen us as leaders in any of the communities we represent.

"As the national president of JACL, I also reflect on the legacy that this board will leave behind. I am thankful for the time this board commits and the great work we continue to do to make sure our foundation is stronger than ever as we move forward: Improving operations so that our infrastructure continues to evolve and support our work. Improving communications to ensure we can better share ideas across chapters and districts and that JACL truly reflects our changing community. Doing our part to ensure that we not only make it to the 100th anniversary, but that we continue thriving long past our first century.

"Ninety years is a truly incredible achievement. I hope that you all have celebrated, both the accomplishments of those who came before us, as well as the accomplishments you have achieved in the present.

"I thank all of you for your commitment and support of the JACL as we continue to rise to the challenges our communities face, for as long as we are needed."



## GARY MAYEDA
JACL National President
2016-18

'The legacy of JACL is, historically, playing a pivotal role in the passage of the Civil Liberties Act of 1988. It started with the signing of Executive Order 9066. Since then, JACL chapters all over the U.S. hold Day of Remembrance events. We are the only organization that takes the deepest, darkest event of our community and holds remembrances to never forget what happened.

"During my administration, we commemorated the 75th anniversary of the signing of EO 9066 with the opening of the Smithsonian exhibit in Washington, D.C., entitled 'Righting a Wrong: Japanese Americans and World War II.' I had the honor of speaking at this event. It was very personal for me, as my father, aunts, uncles and grandmother were all incarcerated.

"Expressing my personal connection as national president illustrated how connected the incarceration of my family was with redress, and being able to share that story with the many honored guests at the Smithsonian is one of the highlights of my term.

"Celebrating the passage of the Civil Liberties Act of 1988 is not only historical but also aspirational to remind all people that civil rights is worth fighting for. During my administration, we connected with many Muslim, Arab and South Asian communities, as their communities were being unfairly and unjustly targeted with hatred.

"During the final months of the Obama administration, I, along with a few other JACL members, was invited to a White House event entitled 'Generational Experiences of Asian Americans.' We reminded others that what happened to Japanese Americans could happen to other communities, and remaining attentive and engaged is key to ensuring this never happens again.

"Connecting with the JACL membership was more than via quarterly National Board meetings and National Conventions. I wrote directly to the membership so that they felt connected to their representatives.

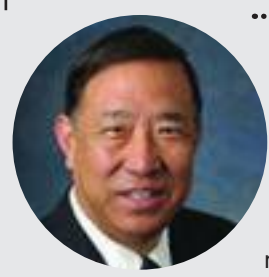
"It was fun and personal writing about events I participated in, as well as having the opportunity to share thoughts of my parents who had passed. I often think of them, and to this day, I do things that will make them proud.

"I joined and became active in JACL knowing that my dad, aunts and uncles received their redress check and benefited in many other ways because of JACL.

"I volunteered not for any personal gains but to give back to an organization that has given communities so much. It is not a perfect organization, but its core tenants are pure. We debate, we deliberate, we vote and we move forward as one organization.

"We hear about unhappy members who quit because of an issue. Celebrating our culture, our history, our legacy is greater than any single issue.

"Our collective future must be strong to ensure our liberties are upheld for future generations. I know my parents have uplifted me in more ways than I will ever realize. We, too, must uplift JACL for all the same reasons."



## DAVID H. KAWAMOTO
JACL National President
2010-12

'In 2010, I had the honor of being elected to serve as the 33rd national president of the JACL. In the 1960s, I was introduced to the JACL through local programs in San Diego and the National Jr. JACL program.

"Although I served in many capacities with San Diego, Pacific Southwest District and National JACL, it was actually quite a move for me to become the JACL's national president. Even at the ripe old age of 58, I was one of the few Sansei to serve as national president.

"I have always been impressed with my Nisei predecessors. Their energy and willingness to serve our community has been an inspiration to me, and I truly appreciated their backing and encouragement. Now, the JACL is fortunate to have a new generation of youthful leaders. These individuals carry on the legacy of JACL and have earned our full support.

"The JACL has had many significant accomplishments throughout its 90-year history. When I was studying law, I remember how proud I was to discover that JACL had taken the lead or filed amicus briefs in many landmark civil rights cases.

"Discriminatory Alien Land Laws, unconstitutional racial restrictive covenants, labor license restrictions based on race, naturalized U.S. citizenship rights and anti-miscegenation laws were just some of the issues that JACL successfully worked on.

"The JACL is a true national organization with over 100 chapters throughout the U.S. This national presence is vital in moving legislature on behalf of our community. I truly believe that JACL's successful work on so many issues is a significant factor in our ongoing vitality.

"During my presidency, there was much concern over the financial challenges facing our national infrastructure. Miraculously, during my presidency, the JACL received several testamentary bequests totaling more than a million dollars. This easily put our organization 'in the black.'

"In retrospect, I believe this outcome was not a miraculous windfall, but more the result of the great past performance of the JACL in providing so many benefits for our community. People appreciate help and will voluntarily repay a perceived personal indebtedness.

"The JACL helps our community in many ways and also works with other communities. During my presidency, a tsunami struck and devastated the Tohoku region of Japan. Many JACL members contacted us to inquire about donating to the relief efforts.

"Thanks to the great leadership of our then-National Executive Director Floyd Mori, the JACL worked with other organizations and raised over $7 million in relief money for Japan. As a result of this work, Japan now includes the JACL in its "Kakehashi Project – The Bridge for Tomorrow" program. And, the JACL established a college scholarship for a student whose family was impacted by the Tohoku tragedy.

"The JACL has a tradition of service, and that service continues. Working for our community and helping others is the legacy of the JACL. I am so grateful for our younger leaders for their service. I am also very encouraged by the dedicated work of our present National Board. I'm confidant they will carry on the proud legacy of the JACL into the future."



## T. LARRY ODA
JACL National President
2006-10

'Looking back on the occasion of JACL's 90th anniversary, JACL's lasting legacy is exemplified by the fight for redress, the demonstration that a small committed group, given the right circumstances, can influence the country's legislation.

"Prior to the 1940s, Japanese immigrants were subject to racial, economic and religious persecution. There were 500 separate laws that prevented Japanese from full participation in pursuing the 'American Dream.' Two of the most egregious were denial of citizenship and property ownership.

"During World War II, they suffered the most blatant disregard of the U.S. Constitution by all three branches of the federal government. We took the time and energy to uncover the fallacies in the reasoning behind the imprisonment of a whole population of people, and JACL was able to substantiate that the incarceration of Japanese Americans during WWII was because of racial prejudice, war hysteria and a failure of political leadership — and not because of 'military necessity.'

"The campaign to achieve redress was almost a 20-year process that took some brilliant strategy and unbelievable luck. With the assistance of some unlikely allies, we overcame the ignorance and prejudice in our country to achieve our goal.

"What we may not have realized was that though the fight for redress was won, the battle for equality was not over. This was made abundantly clear in 2016 when a lying, cheating fraud was able to convince the ignorant masses that he was going to 'Make America Great Again' to save them.

"When we analyzed the results of the election, we realized that we had been preaching to the choir. We had been patting ourselves on our backs for making a difference in the world with all our advances in civil rights and congratulating each other on what a good job our organizations have done to advance the cause of human equality.

"The results of the 2016 election gave us a rude awakening. We had failed to educate Middle America about the Japanese American experience and the Constitutional rights of all Americans despite our best efforts. It's unfortunate that the remedy for ignorance is education, but it takes no effort or exertion to be ignorant.

"During my term in office, I feel we were riding the crest of the wave of civil rights advancement. We were actively pursuing legislation and actions that were protecting the most vulnerable groups in our society, filing an unprecedented number of amicus briefs to assist in advancing our mission.

"We were enjoying a growing recognition and friendship with Japan and making inroads to correct the euphemisms used to describe our unlawful incarceration during WWII. Even though our Nisei were dying, we were an active and viable organization, whose reputation and credibility was highly regarded.

"I had a cabinet of very talented individuals to ensure the positive direction of the organization: Sheldon Arakaki, vp for general operations; Heidi Tanakatsubo, vp for public affairs; Carol Kawamoto, vp for planning and development; Edwin Endow and Larry Grant, vp for 1000 Club, membership and services; and Mark Kobayashi, secretary/treasurer. Michelle Yoshida was our legal counsel, and Gil Asakawa was the *Pacific Citizen* Editorial Board Chair. This was a formidable and effective group that can take credit for the initiatives that were accomplished.

"In the intervening years, once my term as president ended, I volunteered to step in to act as secretary/treasurer, since at that time, there was no one that was willing to take on the responsibility. Having recently vacated the position, I knew that the president could not accomplish the responsibilities of both positions by himself. The organization demanded a separation of powers.

"Since then, I have remained close to the National Board by co-chairing the U.S.-Japan Education Committee with Floyd Mori and Floyd Shimomura, chaired the National Board's Financial Oversight Committee and helped Judge Ray Uno organize a Past National Presidents Council to advise the National Board."



## KENNETH K. INOUYE
JACL National President
2004-06

'As we begin a new decade, my hope is that the JACL will continue to be a national organization that stands up for the civil and human rights of all of those who live in this great country.

"By supporting other communities, we are making a statement that we will not allow other peoples/communities to suffer the injustices suffered by the Issei and Nisei, while at the same time helping to ensure that the Constitution and Bill of Rights continue to protect the rights of all.

"When I first joined the JACL, my hope was to help create a better America for my children/family members and members of the JA community. After working on matters affecting social justice, I now realize that no one will be safe from injustice unless we fight for the rights of ALL. 'Justice is not free.'

» See PRESIDENTS on page 24

# Chicago

**In memory of these and other friends and neighbors who raised their families, contributed to their community, served their country, and enriched our lives.**

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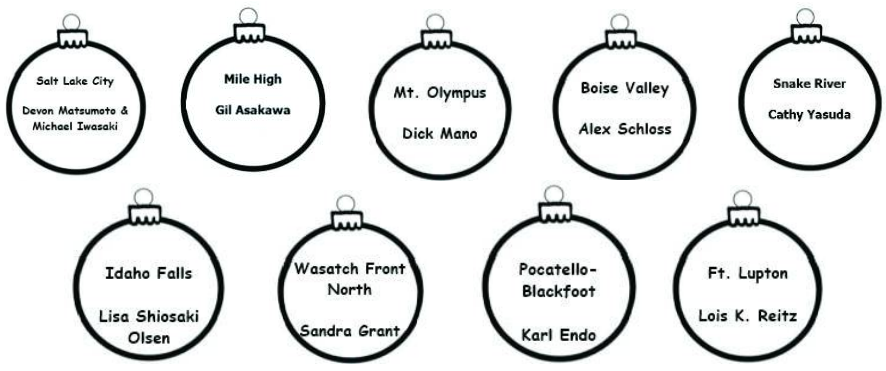
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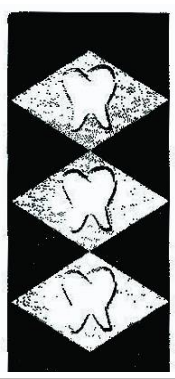
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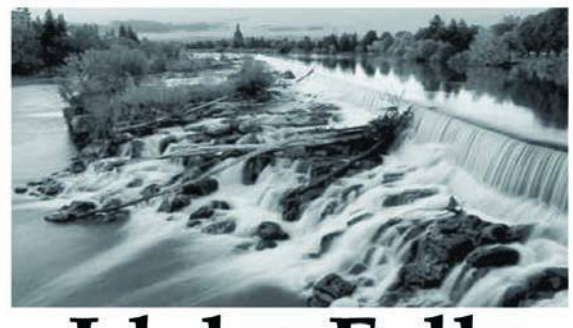

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# LOOKING BACK AND FORWARD



***By David Inoue,***
***JACL Executive Director***

As we come to the close of 2019, we look back on 90 years of JACL. When founded, JACL was a response to the discimination against Japanese Americans and their Japanese parents who were denied the opportunity for citizenship by the immigration laws of the time. Little did they know the depths to which the discrimination they would face in the coming years, which would define their generation and JACL as an organization.

It is without doubt that the incarceration was inevitable for the majority of Japanese Americans. Efforts at resistance through the courts were met with what are now condemned as the worst decisions in the history of the U.S. Supreme Court.

JACL chose to counter the false charges of Japanese and Japanese American sedition and espionage with unabashed displays of patriotism and obedience to our government, regardless of whether the government was perceived as being just or right.

As a result, the Japanese American community is often recognized as exemplary for our displays of patriotism.

The accomplishments of the 100th/442nd have built an immense credit of goodwill and admiration from all Americans, even in the most-fractured political climate.

The achievement of redress just more than 30 years ago was a watershed for our community and our country. That our country would take the step to apologize for the great wrong it had committed was momentous and groundbreaking. It sets a precedent and a model for more work to be done in the area of social justice.

The recent years have been quite challenging for our country and JACL. After 9/11, President George W. Bush was emphatic that the lessons of World War II had been learned, and Muslims would not be subject to unjust detention or suspicion.

Publicly, efforts were made to ensure that the Muslim community was embraced in a way Japanese Americans had not. However, policies such as the Patriot Act have taken their toll.

Just as Executive Order 9066 never explicitly stated it was targeting Japanese Americans, we continue to pass laws and policies that result in the discriminatory targeting of people because of their religion or immigration status.

The Muslim Ban not only exemplifies this round-about methodology, but the Supreme Court's validation of the law perfectly mirrored the court's rulings in the Korematsu, Hirabayashi and Yasui cases that the government's claims of national security outweighed the overwhelming evidence that the real basis of the law was racist in intent.

Our own story is not unique but is one of many stories of discrimination in our nation's historic arc.

The Chinese exclusion act targeted the Chinese, and it was then Japanese workers that came in to work on the railroads that had just been built by the Chinese.

Today, we demonize the immigrants seeking to come across our southern border as Japanese immigrants were once targeted.

Although for many Japanese Americans, our family's immigration story occurred more than 100 years ago, it was not unlike the immigration sought by those crossing the border today.

We must continue to remember our own history and inform others how we treat those who are today in the shoes of our ancestors.

When we speak of injustice, what frustrates me more than most anything are when some use the excuse that they do not discriminate against people, so why should they be made to support programs to address inequality.

Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell stated about slavery reparations, "I don't think reparations for something that happened 150 years ago for whom none of us currently living are responsible is a good idea."

At 77 years old, Sen. McConnell may not have lived during slavery, but he was alive and likely remembers the Jim Crow laws that existed well into the latter half of the last century.

The evils of slavery did not end with the Civil War, the underlying racism and dehumanization continue on even today, whether it is the devaluation of the lives of black men or the caging of brown immigrant children at the border.

Where this leaves us for the future is that the lessons of our past are directly relevant to what happens today. There is a growing recognition in the Japanese American community of the need to bring our experience to bear in the fight for broader civil rights protections for all.

The other lesson to be learned from the incarceration experience is that when no one stood for us, the incarceration was possible.

Redress was possibly only with the support of a broad coalition of communities standing up with us to say what had happened was wrong and needed to be addressed.

Together, in solidarity with other groups, we can be a strong force for change and help other communities achieve the much-needed apology and reparations from our nation.

Elsewhere in this issue, you will read about Tsuru for Solidarity. JACL has also been engaged in forming the Japanese American Confinement Sites (JACS) Consortium.

Both of these groups will be coming to Washington, D.C., in the spring to advocate on behalf of our Japanese American community, and you can be a part of this movement.

The JACS Consortium will be coming to Washington, D.C., from March 31-April 2 to meet with members of Congress to emphasize the importance of the JACS grant program in preserving our Japanese American history and its relevance today.

Tsuru for Solidarity will be in D.C. from June 5-7 in what we expect to be the largest assembly of Japanese Americans and our allies since incarceration imprisoned us together in the camps as we speak out in opposition to our cruel and inhumane immigration policies.

There is much to be done to preserve our history, but with an eye on what is happening in the here and now. JACL can be a force for change. A force for good.

I hope that you will join me in Washington, D.C., to show that Japanese Americans will be a voice for justice — we can and will make a difference going forward into our next decade.

***David Inoue is executive director of the JACL. He is based in the organization's Washington, D.C., office.***

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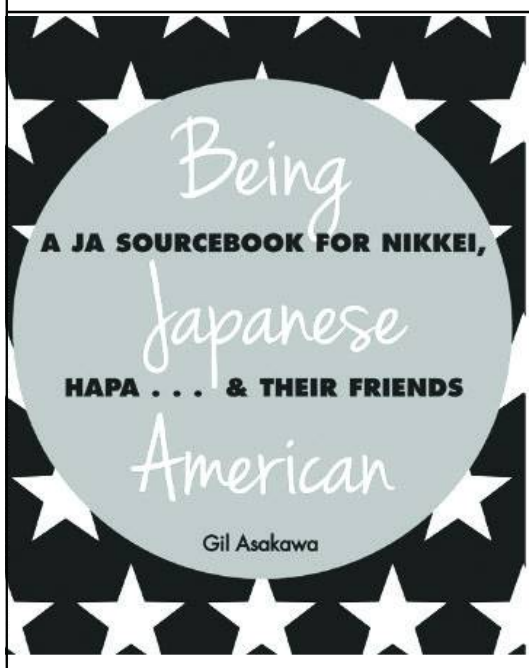
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**Happy Holidays and a wonderful 2020 to one and all!**

**Gil Asakawa and Erin Yoshimura**

HAPPY
*holidays*

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*We miss you both and are thinking of you this holiday season.*

*Love,*
*Linda, Jerry, Jim and Peggy*

# Mile High

*Seasons' Greetings to All!!*

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The 2019 Nisei Week Pioneer Kenneth Inouye with his family. Pictured *(front row, from left)* are Amelia Kawaguchi, Grace Kawaguchi, Kenneth Inouye, David Cowdrick and Shannon Inouye and *(back row, from left)* Eric Kawaguchi, Erin Inouye-Hendrix, Steve Hendrix, Langston Hendrix, May Inouye and Nicole Inouye.

PHOTO: CHRIS EUSEBIO




Ken Inouye served six terms as president of the SELANOCO JACL chapter.

PHOTO: ERIC KAWAGUCHI




Among his many contributions to JACL, Ken Inouye served as the organization's national president from 2004-06 and PSW District governor.

PHOTO: ERIC KAWAGUCHI

# A JACL TRAILBLAZER

Kenneth Inouye, who served as JACL national president from 2004-06, continues to pave the way within the organization.



Ken Inouye *(right)* participating in SELANOCO's annual Mochizuki Fundraiser with Nisei members *(from left)* Jun Fukushima and the Hon. Judge Richard Hanki in 2004.

PHOTO: ERIC KAWAGUCHI

*By Patti Hirahara, P.C. Contributor*

With 2019 being the 90th anniversary of the Japanese American Citizens League, one individual from Orange County, Calif., continues to be a trailblazer as well as an inspiration to the next generation of JACL leaders throughout this country.

Many know him as Ken Inouye, and the legacy that he has built through the years within the organization is very impressive. I first met Ken in 2015 at an event I was doing in Anaheim with the Anaheim Public Library Foundation, and from that first meeting, I knew he and I would work together someday.

With this being a significant year for the JACL, I wanted to find out more about his involvement with the JACL since he was its national president from 2004-06; Ken also has previously served as national vp for public affairs and chair of the *Pacific Citizen* Editorial Board.

"As I look back on my 40 years of involvement with JACL, I am so proud of the fact that the JACL has earned the reputation of being one of the most progressive/inclusive social justice organizations in the country. The JACL has grown from an organization that was created to protect the civil rights of [Japanese Americans] to being an organization that advocates for the civil rights of all of those who live in America," Inouye said.

"My first highlight of being involved with JACL stemmed from the fact that I had the privilege of working with the Nisei members of the SELANOCO (Southeast Los Angeles North Orange County) chapter of the JACL. These Nisei pioneers — Clarence Nishizu, Hiroshi Kamei, Jun Fukushima, Judge Richard and Evelyn Hanki and others — welcomed us Sansei's into JACL and encouraged us and supported us as we became involved at the chapter, district and national levels of JACL," he continued.

Inouye did become involved and served as SELANOCO chapter president for six terms (1983, 1984, 1991, 1997, 1998 and 2014) and continues to be active with the local chapter. He was also a JACL Pacific Southwest District governor, treasurer and board member.

His next vivid memory of JACL was when he served on the National Board




As president of the Orange County Human Relations Commission, Kenneth Inouye speaks on its 2018 "Know Hate" campaign.

PHOTO: 2019 ORANGE COUNTY HUMAN RELATIONS AWARDS

Proud grandfather Ken Inouye with his grandchildren in the 2019 Nisei Week Japanese Festival Parade. Pictured *(from left)* are Amelia Kawaguchi, David Cowdrick, Grace Kawaguchi and Langston Hendrix.

PHOTO: ERIC KAWAGUCHI



Kenneth Inouye with Norman Mineta *(center)* at the 2017 JACL National Convention in Washington, D.C., along with daughter Nicole Inouye and her daughters, Amelia and Grace Kawaguchi.

PHOTO: ERIC KAWAGUCHI

of JACL at a time when the JACL and the JA community sought redress and reparations from the U.S. government for the illegal incarceration of 120,000 Americans of Japanese ancestry following the outbreak of World War II. The successful quest for redress taught him that one can campaign and secure victory for a just cause provided that "justice is on your side."

Inouye said, "From this experience, I learned two valuable lessons: One was from a quote from former JACL National President Harry Kajihara, who said, 'Anything is possible if you have justice on your side,' and the second was from the acknowledgement that 'freedom is not free.'"

It was this redress success that motivated Inouye to campaign for civil and human rights, as well as social justice for other organizations and people.

From the perspective as a past *Pacific Citizen* Editorial Board chair, he said, "The *P.C.* is an important program of the JACL, and as it continues to evolve in the years ahead, I want to thank the current, past and future *P.C.* editors and staff for continuing this vital communication link between the JACL and the greater Japanese American community throughout the United States. I know that both members and nonmembers enjoy the opportunity to receive updates about Japanese American and JACL news through this publication."

Through his involvement with the JACL, Inouye has met some incredible individuals who have become friends and with whom he shares the belief that their community must be there to assist others as they try to obtain social justice for all.

As a result of his JACL experience and training, Inouye has had the opportunity to work with other organizations in Orange County.

In 1997, he had the honor of joining Mary Anne Foo, Michael Matsuda and Alan Woo as the co-founders of the Orange County Asian Pacific Islander Community Alliance (OCAPICA). This organization, which is led by Executive Director Foo, is the largest Asian American social service agency in this area and provides valuable services to the most-underserved communities in Orange County.

As a result of a recommendation by Tricia Murakawa, former JACL vp for public affairs, Inouye was invited to run for the board of directors of the Southern California affiliate of the ACLU. For Inouye, being a member of this group reinforced his respect for the Constitution and reminded him that the Constitution protects the rights of all to have a freedom of expression/belief.

In addition, Inouye was asked by Huntington Beach Mayor Ralph Bauer to be the founding chair of the Huntington Beach Human Relations Task Force. This task force was a true community partnership between elected officials, law enforcement, schools, the faith community and all other concerned residents of Huntington Beach as they strived to create a Huntington Beach that would be free of hatred and bias.

Inouye is currently serving as the president of the Orange County Human Relations Council. This organization works with others to help create an Orange County where all are valued and included. The need for this organization has grown as a result of the increased hostility that has become too commonplace in the tribal environment that has become America in the past few years.

He had previously served for 23 years as an appointed commissioner of the Orange County Human Relations Commission, where he was also elected Commission Chair and had the privilege of working with members of the Orange County Board of Supervisors.

"As a result of my human relations experiences at the city and county levels, I became involved with and was the president of the California Association of Human Relations Organizations (CAHRO), a statewide network of Human Relations Organizations and member of the Orange County Sheriff's Community Advisory Board," Inouye added.

This year, he was selected as a Nisei Week Pioneer for the Los Angeles Nisei Week Japanese Festival and was nominated by the SELANOCO JACL chapter and the Orange County Nikkei Coordinating Council.

"When I read the names of the individuals who had preceded me, I was truly humbled, as I realized that so many people had done so much to help make the Japanese American legacy what it is today," Inouye said.

Born in Alamosa, Colo., Inouye is the only son of George Inouye and Betty (Coddington) Inouye. He moved to California at an early age with his family, including his older sister, Marie (Petrie). He attended public schools in Los Angeles' Crenshaw District and graduated from California State University, Los Angeles, with a degree in accounting.

In 1979, Kenneth K. Inouye, CPA, was one of the founders of one of the first CPA firms in Orange County's Saddleback Valley. In 2013 due to a change in partnership status, the firm is now known as Inouye, Shively & Klatt, CPA's LLP.

But none of his accomplishments would have ever been possible without the support of his wife, May (Kondo), as she has supported all of their family's community activities while at the same time maintaining the Inouye family household.

"My wife is clearly the MVP of our family," Inouye said.

He is also very proud of the accomplishments of his three daughters, as he describes each one here:

"Nicole Inouye (Kawaguchi) is my JACL daughter. As a result of her involvement with the JACL at a very young age, she has served the JACL as the National Student Youth Rep., as a Mike Masaoka fellow and as a three-time SELANOCO chapter president."

"Erin Inouye-Hendrix is my City of Huntington Beach Human Relations Task Force daughter. When the mayor of Huntington Beach asked me to establish a Human Relations Task Force in our city, Erin was selected to become the student representing Huntington Beach High School. She was a frequent guest on the mayor's TV program as she reported on the activities of the HB Task Force."

"Shannon Inouye is my Orange County Human Relations daughter. She has participated in many of the programs that have been sponsored by the Orange County Human Relations Commission/Council, and she has spoken to numerous groups (such as the Orange County Board of Supervisors) about the many programs offered by the Orange County Human Relations group."

For Inouye, there is still much work to be done. What he has achieved to this point is an amazing testament to one man whose conviction is to make Orange County and America a better place for everyone. He and his family's unselfish generosity to the community is something that I have personally witnessed and admire.

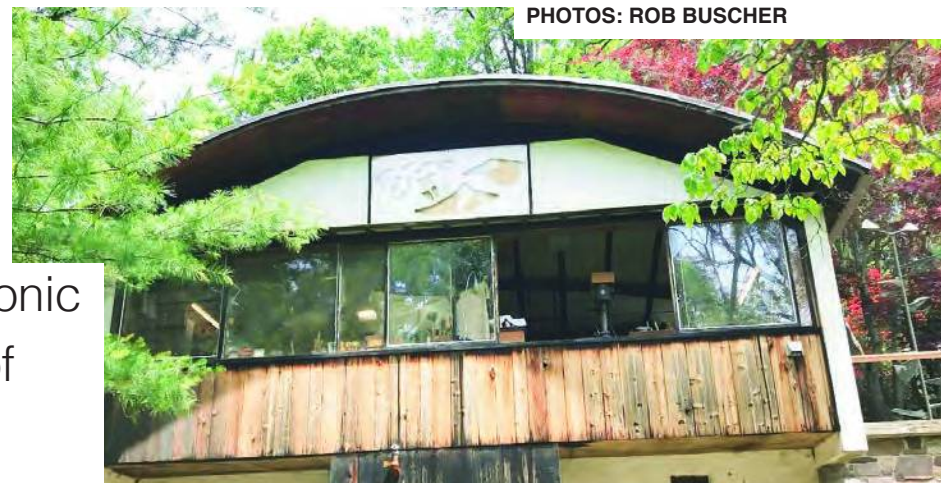
"The fact that the JACL is able to attract young leaders, such as the current members of the National Board, reinforces the reality that Japanese Americans are willing to provide assistance to those communities who might be needing some assistance as they join us in the pursuit of the American Dream. I will always be thankful to the many members of the JACL who have led the fight for a 'Greater America for all Americans,'" Inouye concluded.

With 2020 beginning a new decade for all of us, I look forward to seeing the next chapter of the Kenneth Inouye family story in the years ahead. ■

# REMEMBERING
# THE NAKASHIMA LEGACY

JACL Philadelphia chapter members visit the iconic Nakashima Woodworkers Studio, where some of America's greatest furniture pieces have been designed and created.

PHOTOS: ROB BUSCHER



An exterior shot of the Conoid Studio.

***By Rob Buscher, Contributor***

On the sleepy outskirts of New Hope, Penn., some 40 miles northeast of Philadelphia, lies the Nakashima Woodworkers Studio. Tucked away on a wooded rural road between farms and secluded residences is a complex of buildings that blend modernist architectural techniques with traditional Japanese aesthetics and home to where the Nakashima family has lived and worked since 1945.

The studio's founder, George Nakashima, is perhaps the most significant American woodworker and furniture designer of Japanese descent, who lived and worked in Pennsylvania for nearly 50 years. JACL Philadelphia chapter members enjoyed a trip to the late artist's studio in June.

Amongst furniture collectors, Nakashima's hand-carved wooden chairs and tables are among the most highly sought-after midcentury pieces on the resale market. The unique blend of modern design and traditional materials in Nakashima's work left an indelible impact on the field of furniture design, and pieces crafted at the studio during his lifetime fetch upwards of $100,000 at auction.

Nakashima Woodworkers became famous for its signature model of "Conoid" chairs (an engineering feat unto itself with two legs supporting a cantilever seat) and wooden tables that are either made from a single cut slab of wood or two sections of the same tree cut and book-matched to create a mirror image surface.

Rather than shying away from wood pieces with burls or other imperfections, Nakashima highlighted their natural beauty in a manner that is consistent with the Japanese aesthetic of *wabi-sabi,* which is sometimes described as one of beauty that is "imperfect, impermanent and incomplete."

The Nakashima design process indicates a unique blend of engineering, craftsmanship and profound admiration for materials in their natural state — the latter being a trait that Nakashima adopted from his Japanese woodworking mentor Gentaro, whom he met at the Minidoka Relocation Center.

"The experience in the camp was catalytic," reflected Mira Nakashima of her father's wartime experience. "You had to rely on whatever you had inside you to survive there. For many years, my father wanted to thank the man who taught him so much about Japanese carpentry while he was in camp, a Japanese national trained in Japan as a master woodworker. He wanted to thank him for teaching him all that he taught, but he was gone by the time he found him. Instead, he found some of his relatives, and they said, 'Yes, they remembered somebody named Nakashima who used to work with their grandfather.' Dad was eternally grateful to this Japanese carpenter for working with him, working alongside him."

Prior to his encounter with Gentaro, Nakashima had spent little more than a year working part-time as a furniture maker in Seattle. In his early career, Nakashima had begun making a name for himself as a modernist architect, working in Japan for Czech American architect Antonin Raymond, who himself had apprenticed with Frank Lloyd Wright. Ironically, it was actually Nakashima's distaste for a Wright project that discouraged him from continuing in that field.

"When Dad came home in 1940 just before he got married, he was looking for a job in the U.S. with an architect, and he saw a Frank Lloyd Wright building under construction," Mira Nakashima recalled. "He did not like the way it was being done, did not like the way architecture was being practiced in the U.S. and he decided he would leave architecture."

As fate would have it, the Raymond connection was also what allowed the Nakashimas to leave Minidoka.

After his time in Japan, Raymond bought a small farmhouse in Bucks County, Penn. When a mutual friend alerted Raymond of the Nakashima family's plight, he issued a letter to sponsor George and his family for early release from camp.

The Nakashima family was invited to settle on a section of the farm property

PHOTO: HIRO NISHIKAWA



Accomplished architect and woodworker Mira Nakashima with Rob Buscher



Mira Nakashima shows bitterbrush pieces of the Minidoka monument prior to its unveiling.



In 2018, Mira Nakashima was bestowed the Lifetime Achievement Award as part of Governor's Art Awards.



A photo of founder George Nakashima hangs inside the studio.



The showroom exterior



**Mira Nakashima explains the book-matching technique demonstrated in the two sections against the back wall.**

in 1943, and in 1945, they purchased an adjacent plot of land that would become the grounds of the Nakashima Studio.

Today, the property itself offers valuable insight into Nakashima's design process, which took multiple decades of planning and construction to fully realize his vision.

Although Nakashima stopped working professionally as an architect, he designed and oversaw construction on all of the structures on the property. The result: an incredible study of modernist architecture that fully integrates geometric shapes and poured concrete into the rural Pennsylvania landscape.



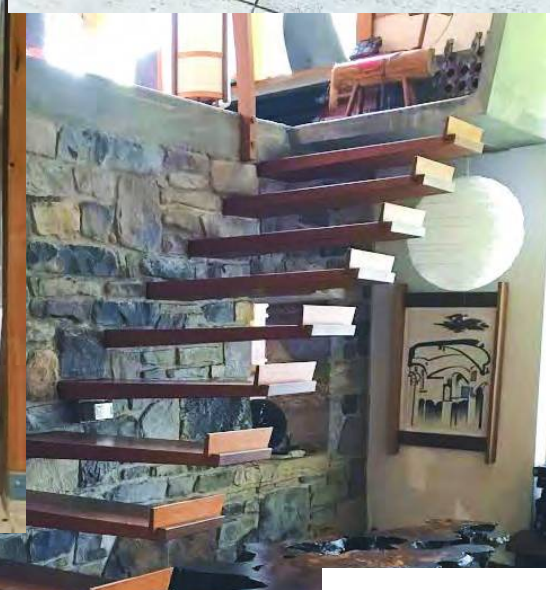
**Nakashima's signature model: a conoid table and chairs**



**Philadelphia JACL chapter members gather for a photo with Mira Nakashima *(pictured in front row, in red)* at the Nakashima Woodworkers Studio.**



**Hiro Nishikawa shoots a close-up photo of the wood pile.**



**A cantilever staircase designed and built by George Nakashima**

PHOTOS: ROB BUSCHER

Indeed, the entire grounds of Nakashima Woodworkers emanates a presence of George Nakashima's lasting impact on the studio. Perhaps his greatest legacy lives on in his daughter, Mira, who followed in his footsteps as a woodworker. Since her father's passing in 1990, she has served as creative director of the studio.

JACL members had the privilege of touring Nakashima Studios with her and other members of the Nakashima family, including Mira's brother, Kevin; daughter-in-law, Soomi; and grandson, Toshi — all of whom are involved with the family business.

Our tour began with Mira giving a brief history of her family's experiences during their wartime incarceration. Musing on her relationship to the incarceration, she explained, "I wrote my book on Dad's life and work, which was published in 2003. There was a book tour that took us to Sun Valley Idaho, and I looked at the map and thought, 'Huh, that's kind of close to where we were during the war,' so I went down and visited Minidoka. They didn't have much there, it hadn't been designated a national monument yet. That was my first awareness of the camp situation. I had this eerie feeling that I had been there before, but I didn't remember a lot. I'm still learning about it. My parents, my grandparents — no one would talk about it."

Our group included several incarceration survivors, who were then inclined to trade their own anecdotes in an informal discussion that helped break the ice. Sharing stories from an experience that only other Japanese Americans could truly relate to, our visit took on a welcoming community atmosphere to it as we felt more like guests than visitors.

Like her father, Mira, too, started her professional journey as an architect.

"When I went to college, I was interested in all kinds of things," she said. "I was thinking that I would major in music or linguistics, and my father said, 'No, you're majoring in architecture,' and I thought, 'OK, well he's paying the bills, I guess I can do this.' It seemed OK because I was interested in both math and art, and it kind of tied the two together."

Mira also had the opportunity to spend time in Japan as she went to graduate school at Waseda University in Tokyo, reliving similar experiences as her father.

"I actually stayed in the same family home that my father lived in when I was at university," Mira recalled. "It was the Iida family, which was my paternal grandmother's family home. She was born in the house that dad stayed in and I stayed in, and my oldest son actually stayed with the same family in Kamata."

Despite these shared experiences, Mira never planned to become a woodworker.

"After Japan, we lived in Pittsburgh for three to four years, and then dad bought this property and said he was going to build a house and asked if I'd like to come home," she said. "I didn't think I wanted to come home; I kind of liked not being home — being independent, but my ex-husband said, 'House and property? Yeah, sounds like a good deal to me!' So, I came home, and I was able to work part-time in the shop. It was kind of a natural transition."

When asked what made her decide to pursue woodworking, Mira answered jokingly, "It was a job. And it was right across from my house!"

Now, she is recognized for her own contributions to the field, having recently surpassed her previous auction record when her walnut dining table and set of eight Conoid chairs sold for $150,000 at Freeman's design auction in Philadelphia.

Pennsylvania Gov. Tom Wolf also bestowed Mira with the prestigious Lifetime Achievement Award as part of the 2018 Governor's Art Awards, an accolade that she shares with her father as the only other Asian American to win this award.

Ever humble, Mira did not bring up these topics during the tour and instead found ways to connect with the JACLers in a shared community experience. The most impactful moment of the tour came when Mira showed a work-in-progress that she was preparing for the Minidoka National Historic Site. The wooden monument that was since unveiled at the 2019 Minidoka Pilgrimage in July was constructed of polished bitterbrush that was foraged during the incarceration.

The pieces carried a tragic history in them as they were found with the body of Takaji Ed Abe, an Issei man who lost his way back to camp while gathering firewood in December 1942. The Dec. 5 issue of the *Minidoka Irrigator* wrote of the discovery, "Hatless, the elderly man lay in a horizontal position, head resting on a pillow of sagebrush, both arms laying on his breast. His hands were clenched and his eyelids were closed as if in sleep, the greasewood, for which he ventured alone into unfamiliar land, was at his side."

Abe perished as the nighttime temperature fell below freezing without shelter in the barren winter landscape. Knowing the Nakashima's connection to Minidoka, a descendant of Abe approached Mira about creating a monument using the wood his family had saved for more than seven decades.

At this year's Minidoka Pilgrimage in July, Mira dedicated the monument that now resides in the visitor center at Minidoka to all those who perished during the incarceration.

It seems a fitting tribute, conceived by a master artist who has not only continued the work that was started by her father, but also built an impressive legacy of her own. ■

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# STRENGTHENING THE U.S.-JAPAN RELATIONSHIP THROUGH STORIES

PHOTOS: RAY LOCKER



Shirley Ann Higuchi speaks to students at Komatsugawa High School in Tokyo during her recent trip to Japan as part of the Japan Up Close program.



Japanese Defense Minister Taro Kono *(left)* shares a laugh with Shirley Ann Hlguchi and Mitch Maki.

The Japan Up Close program brings Japanese American scholars and storytellers closer to their ancestral roots and teaches Japan more about its American counterparts.

***By Ray Locker, Contributor***

**TAKEO CITY, JAPAN —** Sumiko Aikawa remembered the day her aunt, Chiye Higuchi, returned to her hometown in Japan's Saga Prefecture in 1957 with dire accounts of her family's suffering during World War II when they were forced to sell their farm at a major loss before being incarcerated at Heart Mountain, Wyo.

Aikawa, 89, wept while recounting her memories from that night 62 years ago in a meeting last month with Shirley Ann Higuchi, the granddaughter of Chiye Higuchi and the chair of the Heart Mountain Wyoming Foundation.

"Chiye visited me over in Saga, and she told me a lot about her life in the United States and the hardships," Aikawa said through a skilled interpreter. "She talked about all of the harvests from the farm and how they and everything else was taken away from her."

Higuchi visited Aikawa as part of the Japan Up Close program of the Japanese Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Along with Higuchi, three other Japanese American scholars and storytellers visited Tokyo for meetings with high-level Japanese government officials, talks to student groups and visits to their family's ancestral homes in Japan.

For Higuchi, that meant Saga Prefecture on Kyushu, the southernmost of the four Japanese home islands. Chiye and her husband, Iyekichi, left Saga in 1915 for California, where they settled in San Jose. There, they started farming and eventually circumvented California's Alien Land Law by buying a 14.25-acre raspberry farm in the names of their teenage sons.

They had to sell that farm in April 1942 before they were forced from California. They first went to an assembly center at the Santa Anita racetrack in Arcadia, Calif., and then to Heart Mountain, which is now home to a world-class museum at the site of the camp that once held close to 11,000 people.

The Japanese American experience was a key element of the discussions that Higuchi and the three other participants — Go For Broke National Education Center President and CEO Mitchell Maki, University of Hawaii American Studies Professor Dennis Ogawa and Chicago-based storyteller Anne Shimojima — had with students at schools throughout greater Tokyo.

Higuchi, Maki, Ogawa and Shimojima traveled to multiple high schools across the Tokyo region, speaking to students who had heard little about the Japanese American incarceration. Many of the students asked questions that were similar to those from students in the United States – how did the people feel about losing their land? Did they talk about it later? Were they compensated for their losses?

## A NEED TO EMBRACE

Japan needs to get closer to Japanese Americans and their experience, several Japanese government officials told the four storytellers.

"When I look back at my high school days, I knew nothing about the Nikkei (the Japanese Americans)," said Taro Kono, the minister of defense and previously Japan's foreign minister in the government of Prime Minister Shinzo Abe. "Once in a while, a TV station would make something about the Nikkei," but that was basically it.

Kono said his father, Yohei Kono, the former speaker of Japan's House of Representatives, once made a speech in the Japanese House that "we need to know more about the Nikkei and to be much more involved in Nikkei affairs."

It has taken 20 years, but the Japanese government seems to be picking up on the elder Kono's lesson.

The Japan Up Close program is another step in the Japanese government's growing outreach to the Japanese American community, which also included Ambassador Shinsuke Sugiyama's appearance at the July Heart Mountain Pilgrimage with his wife and a team of Japanese diplomats. There, Sugiyama said all Japanese needed to learn more about the Japanese American incarceration during WWII.

Japan's renewed cultivation of the Japanese American experience comes as the country faces the challenges of a shrinking population and risks posed by the economic growth of its neighbors, China and South Korea. Those two countries, as well as India, have strong ties to their diaspora communities in the United States.

A "howdy Modi" event for Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi recently drew 50,000 Indian Americans to Houston's stadium in September, an event that also attracted an appearance by President Donald Trump. Modi also attracted 60,000 Indian Britons to a 2015 gathering in London's Wembley Stadium.

This type of connection between the home country and its overseas community helps both communities, as it increases the flow of money and people from one country to another. Modi, in particular, has used it to bolster his standing with voters in India.

The ties between Japan and the Japanese American community have been damaged by the legacy of WWII, which separated the Nikkei from their ancestors' native land, and the changing nature of Japan itself.

Kono said many young Japanese students no longer seem interested in going to college in the United States,



Sumiko Aikawa at her assisted-living center in Takeo City, Japan



Japanese Defense Minister Taro Kono



Mitch Maki

as he did, because they feel more comfortable at home. He added that a fear of gun violence in the United States has led some Japanese students interested in studying in English-speaking countries to go to Australia and the United Kingdom.

As an undergraduate at Georgetown University in Washington, D.C., Kono said he immersed himself in U.S. politics and history. He worked as a staff member and campaign aide for then-Rep. Richard Shelby, a Democrat from Alabama, during Shelby's 1986 race for the Senate. Shelby won that race and later became a Republican. He is in his sixth term in the Senate.

But when he was preparing to graduate and look for a job in Japan, Kono said he was told by many Japanese companies that his U.S. degree counted for little with them. That is finally changing, he said, as Japan realizes it needs to embrace the rest of the world.

## LONG-TERM INWARD TREND?

The group also met with State Minister Keisuke Suzuki of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Yutaka Arima, head of the North American branch of the ministry. They, along with Kono, asked the delegation whether the inward-looking policies of the Trump administration reflected a long-term change by many Americans or were a temporary phase in U.S. policy.

Suzuki, who is 42, echoed Yohei Kono's call for a deeper relationship with the Nikkei community in the United States. "Many of the next generation of politicians in Japan have an interest and attention for Japanese American society.

"The reason is not just because the United States is an ally," Suzuki continued. "Our Japanese American community is the sister community of Japanese society."

Maki, whose group commemorates and educates the public about the valor of Japanese American soldiers during WWII and their contributions to society, told Suzuki that he and others in the group appreciated the chance to visit Japan and its key leaders.

"We would welcome any opportunities for you and the ministry to know how we can be of support," Maki said.

Suzuki asked if the current administration of President Donald Trump, which seems to be turning inward from engagement with many foreign governments, represented just a blip on the radar or a long-term trend in U.S. affairs.

"Many think the United States will close its society and be tough on immigrants," Suzuki said.

Shimojima called that trend "unfortunate," while Maki said it was too early to tell if it would be a long-term trend, which would have serious ramifications to the U.S.-Japan relationship.

## GOING BACK

Higuchi said the Japanese American community succeeded after the war, despite the long-term mental health trauma suffered by many of its members, primarily the Sansei generation. That, she said, means "we have to use the Japanese American experience to help other people."

She cited the success of former Commerce and Transportation Secretary Norman Mineta, a former Heart Mountain incarceree, as an example of how to take adversity and turn it into a record of caring for others. "It's a good lesson for the future," Higuchi said.

Ogawa has an immediate connection to the Japanese American incarceration. He was born in the concentration camp in Manzanar, Calif., while his parents, Frank and Alice, were incarcerated. The Ogawas lived in Santa Monica, Calif., before and after the war.

Ogawa said his research into Hawaii's Japanese American community has shown its contributions to not just that state but also the nation as a whole. He said Sen. Daniel Inouye and Sen. Spark Matsunaga were "great citizens of America, not just Hawaii."

The ties between both countries is strong for many prominent Japanese Americans, Ogawa said. He mentioned the late astronaut Ellison Onizuka, who died in the 1986 space shuttle Challenger explosion, as someone who made a special effort to visit his ancestral areas in Fukuoka on the island of Kyushu to find closure.

It was through the Japanese government's help that Ogawa and the three other participants in the program were able to connect with family members living in the areas their parents and grandparents left for the United States.

Shimojima said she found a name of her great uncle in her late mother's address book, and the government was able to locate him at his home in Matsumoto Prefecture, which is in the mountains west of Tokyo. Its capital city, Nagano, was the host of the 1998 Winter Olympics.

"I thought our family had lost touch," she said. "I'm so surprised and grateful" that they were able to re-establish the connection.

## REKINDLED MEMORIES

For Higuchi, the trip to Saga exposed her to part of her family's history that she knew little about. For example, she did not know about her grandmother's meeting with Aikawa. She also did not know if her Japanese relatives had heard anything about the incarceration.

The new information was particularly relevant for Higuchi, whose memoir and history of the incarceration will be released next spring by the University of Wisconsin Press. "Setsuko's Secret: Heart Mountain and the Legacy of the Japanese American Incarceration" explores the effects of the mass imprisonment of 120,000 Japanese Americans on not just her family but also the country as a whole.

Higuchi also saw the place where her grandfather, Iyekichi Higuchi, was born in Saga and the temple where members of his family were buried nearby.

It was a connection to a part of her history that she had missed before and was only highlighted by her work on behalf of Heart Mountain and research into the incarceration.

"If the Japanese government had not invited me to Japan, I would have lost this chance to connect with this vital part of my history," Higuchi said. ■

PHOTOS: RAY LOCKER



Dennis Ogawa



State Minister Keisuke Suzuki of the Japanese Ministry of Foreign Affairs



Anne Shimojima

# Portland

*Greetings*
From
**Homer Yasui**

11448 Rainier Av S. # 337
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## Miki Yasui

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## PRESIDENTS » continued from page 9

"So, as we enter the new decade, I would like to invite all JACLers and members of the JA community to stand for the rights guaranteed to us all by the U.S. Constitution and Bill of Rights as we create a more inclusive and just America."



### S. FLOYD MORI
JACL National President 2000-04

'JACL has become a voice of JUSTICE not only for Japanese Americans but also for three generations of Americans of nonwhite heritage. At the same time, generations of younger Japanese Americans have developed a deeper appreciation for their heritage and engaged in the movement to treat all citizens of this country equally under the law. This continues as the main battle cry for the JACL as we celebrate 90 years as a civil rights organization.

"It was a great opportunity for me to serve as a national president as well as a vp on the National Board of the JACL. I also had the rare privilege of serving as its national director after first working on the staff as the director of public policy in Washington, D.C. (formerly the Washington Representative). I was able to work closely with John Tateishi, who served ably as the national director of the JACL for seven years.

"Traditionally a membership-funded organization, the JACL has moved more toward corporate and foundation funding on which I worked.

"During my tenure as national president and later as national executive director, we also added a National JACL Golf Tournament (with the encouragement and support of George Aratani) and a National JACL Washington, D.C. Gala to augment revenue. A Youth Leadership Program for college students was added to development programs.

"On the legislative front, a major milestone was HR1492, the Camp Preservation Act of 2006. This legislation has provided funding up to $38 million for the preservation of the World War II American Concentration Camps in which Japanese Americans were imprisoned.

"Since 2007, the JACL, other institutions and individuals have been able to complete a variety of projects through this bill. Gerald Yamada and Former Congressman Bill Thomas (R-CA) are to be thanked for their efforts in passing that legislation, along with many others.

"The vigorous debate and passage of an apology to the Resisters of Conscience began the closure of an issue that divided the camp communities.

"Under the leadership of Andy Noguchi of the Florin chapter, we were able to hold the apology ceremony in San Francisco in 2002. As national president at the time, I was able to write and present the apology speech.

"Vigorous advocacy for the Congressional Gold Medal to the Nisei veterans of World War II gained its eventual passage. Jean Shiraki and Phillip Ozaki, who were Fellows in the Washington, D.C., JACL office at that period of time, were instrumental in helping to get that bill passed, as they visited the offices of many members of Congress with veterans Terry Shima and Grant Ichikawa. This became the model used by Chinese and Filipino American veterans to also pass similar legislation.

"The shift of having the National Director of the JACL in Washington, D.C., provided the opportunity for the JACL to become a more prominent leader on national issues and participate more aggressively in national civil rights coalitions in the Asian American Pacific Islander community, as well as the broader civil rights advocacy process. This enabled a continual close working relationship with the administration, the White House and Congress.

"We also expanded the fellowship and internship programs to provide additional staffing and stronger ties to Congress with Congressional Fellowships, where JACL young people are able to serve in the offices of members of Congress. This provides great leadership experience.

"These are a few of the issues and events of note that occurred during my tenure. The JACL has been an important organization in the U.S. for the past 90 years. The JACL has a rich legacy to continue into the future as we engage more young people and work together."

***Floyd Mori has published a book, "The Japanese American Story as Told Through a Collection of Speeches and Articles," which covers events and issues presented in this article (www.thejapaneseamericanstory.com).***



### FLOYD SHIMOMURA
JACL National President 1982-84

'In 1982, I was elected National JACL president and became the first Sansei to hold that office. I was 34 years old. It was a time of transition — from Nisei to Sansei, from 'Go for broke' to 'Hell no, we won't go' and from incarceration camps to redress/reparations. It was an exciting time for JACL as Sansei perspectives emerged.

"The recent death on Nov. 27 of Japanese Prime Minister Yasuhiro Nakasone at age 101 reminded me of another transition that was going on in the 1980s – JACL's attitude toward Japan.

"Most Nisei wanted nothing to do with Japan. It was Japan's attack on Pearl Harbor that put them in incarceration camps. Nisei had spent most of their lives proving that they were Americans, not Japanese. A common Nisei view was that 'if we get too close to Japan now, they'll think we were in bed with them in 1941.'

"By the 1980s, Sansei had a more receptive view. Japan had lost the war and become America's greatest ally in Asia. Foe was now friend. Sansei saw Japan as a modern, democratic, industrialized country that exported Sony TV sets, Toyota cars and even ramen and wasabi to the U.S. The Sansei were ready to engage. Most Nisei remained wary.

"So, what does this have to do with Prime Minister Nakasone? This generational difference about Japan came to a head when Ron Wakabayashi, the JACL executive director, and I were invited by the Japanese Foreign Ministry to visit Japan to talk to the media and government officials about trade friction and its backlash on Japanese Americans. (This was after the Vincent Chin attack in Detroit.)

"By coincidence, our visit was set for late October 1983 when the first redress bills were introduced in Congress. Before we left, one prominent JACLer, who felt our visit clashed with our redress effort, admonished us that 'he who chases two rabbits catches neither.' Therefore, Ron and I did not plan to bring up redress in our official meetings in deference to Nisei sentiments.

"However, our meeting with Prime Minister Nakasone changed everything. It was a 'courtesy call' at the prime minister's official residence. After a few photographs, Mr. Nakasone invited us into his office, where we discussed JACL, postwar Japanese American progress and, of course, trade friction.

"Toward the end of our talk, the prime minister turned the conversation toward the upcoming presidential election, which was expected to pit President Reagan against Walter Mondale.

"Mr. Nakasone also asked several questions about the redress campaign because it was in the Japanese news. Then, he announced that President Reagan was going to visit Tokyo in about 10 days to make a speech to the Japanese Diet and that Mr. Reagan would be staying with him at his official residence.

"Nakasone asked whether there was anything I wanted him to request of President Reagan. I answered as a Sansei. 'Yes,' I said without hesitation. 'Ask him to sign the redress bills that are just being introduced in Congress.' Mr. Nakasone grunted his understanding, and the meeting soon ended.

"To me, a Sansei, the chance to get the prime minister of Japan, one of the most powerful persons in the world, to support our redress legislation was an opportunity not to be missed.

"I knew from the press that Reagan and Nakasone had a good personal relationship, which was called the 'Ron-Yasu' friendship. I knew Japan was an important security ally and economic partner to the U.S. I also knew that many Nisei would have been horrified by my answer since I was inviting Japanese involvement in the redress campaign.

"However, after our private meeting, we heard nothing about whether Nakasone had indeed spoken to Reagan about redress. After a while, I concluded that no such discussion had taken place.

"The matter was forgotten.

"It was not until 1999, 10 years after President Reagan left office, that his legislative files became public. Those confidential files revealed that Nakasone and his ministers indeed pressed President Reagan privately to support the redress legislation as 'one friend to another' in the period after the meeting.

"Nakasone said that Japan was revising its textbooks and wanted to include the successful passage of redress as part of the revision. Nakasone felt that it would help strengthen the friendship between the two countries.

"The files indicate that one group within the White House bristled at Nakasone's request as an improper interference in a domestic policy issue and damaging to current relations with Japan.

"Another faction, led by President Reagan's chief domestic policy adviser, Jack Svahn, dismissed the arguments as 'odd' in his memoir, published in 2011.

"This was no doubt because it is 'odd' to characterize the incarceration as a domestic policy issue when it was triggered by one of the most dramatic international incidents in world history — the attack on Pearl Harbor. Also, it is 'odd' to argue that redress would damage relations with Japan when its prime minister said it would strengthen the relationship.

"As we know, President Reagan ultimately signed the redress legislation in 1988 for many reasons and as a result of lobbying from many sources. It is doubtful that Prime Minister Nakasone's support alone made the difference.

"However, it did remind the president that redress was not merely a domestic policy issue and that the world was watching. This is especially so for the U.S. that habitually criticizes other countries for their abuses of civil rights.

"This one incident reveals one of the strengths of JACL — the ability to change and transition with the times while maintaining our basic principles. JACL would not be celebrating its 90th birthday if it had not had this capacity for transition."



### HON. JUDGE RAYMOND S. UNO
JACL National President 1970-72

'Ninety years ago, the nation was experiencing one of its worst depressions, and it was the birth of JACL (1929) and for me (1930).

"Thus, during and subsequent to those years, we had a parallel existence, i.e., suffering through the Depression, Japan's attack on Pearl Harbor, Roosevelt's Executive Order 9066, four years of unconstitutional internment in America's concentration camps, struggling through postwar rehabilitation, fighting discriminatory laws and practices and trying to redeem our lost lives, businesses, property and future.

"When I came to Salt Lake City, I attended a JACL-sponsored event at the Japanese Peace Garden. Fortuitously, I happened to meet Alice Kasai. She asked who I was and what I was doing. I told her I was from Ogden and attending the University of Utah. She said she could use me in JACL — and that was my introduction to JACL.

"She and her husband, Henry, became my mentors, which eventually led to my becoming president of the National JACL in 1970. It became a foreboding year for me because of the tragic slaying of Evelyn Okubo and the cutting of the throat of Ranko Yamada at the Palmer House Hotel in Chicago.

"I have since been involved in JACL in various capacities but have reduced my active participation considerably by primarily being a booster at JACL activities locally and nationally.

"From literally very humble beginnings, I have been richly rewarded by my JACL experience, and I have tried my best to return the experience that has benefitted my life and career.

"Not to be boastful, but I'd like to express my sincere thanks to JACL being responsible for my being awarded an Honorary Doctor of Humanities from Weber State University and an Honorary Doctor of Laws from the University of Utah (the highest award the university gives to one of its graduates), a certificate of commendation from Japan Minister of Foreign Affairs Koichiro Genba and the Order of the Rising Sun, Gold Rays with Rosette, conferred by the emperor of Japan.

"As I reflect on my JACL experience, I can honestly say that it was one of the most important building blocks of my career.

"I learned how to conduct meetings; learned Robert's Rule of Parliamentary Procedure; improved my ability to work with the Japanese community locally, regionally and nationally; learned to network with other groups, primarily ethnic minorities; learned how to form coalitions where JACL initially took the leading role; learned how to lobby at the state legislature, raise funds, run for political office and many other things that made JACL an active and prominent part of the community and a leader in diversity and civil rights and civil liberties in the state of Utah and nationally.

"I consider JACL to be one of the leading organizations locally, regionally and nationally, and even internationally in the area of civil rights and liberties because of its past and current experience and its local and national presence.

"Although many others may disagree, I consider JACL to be one of the most successful social, service and civic organizations in existence. It is comparable to all the Japanese 100th and 442nd, for its size and length of service, the most-decorated unit in U.S. military history." ■

# SUCCESS IN 2019 AND BEYOND:
# A YEAR FOR THE NY/SC

## JACL's youth continues to educate others on civic engagement and encourages all to get involved.

***By Mieko Kuramoto,***
***NY/SC Representative***




**A poster by Caitlin Takeda advertising the EDC-led event**



**EDC Youth Rep Caitlin Takeda moderates a panel discussion on Coalition Building at the Philadelphia Asian American Film Festival.**
**PHOTO: MATTHEW WEISBLY**

This year for the National Youth/Student Council has been a transformative one. In the past 12 months, we saw a Nikkei summit hosted in the Central Valley of the CCDC, the formation of the Pacific Southwest's first District Youth Board in Los Angeles and another successful collaboration with the Philadelphia Asian American Film Festival to bring issues of immigration and coalition building to the forefront of discussion.

While we primarily target youth, summits like these continue to be critical in organizing and activating Nikkei of all generations. We on the NY/SC were eager to use our platform to highlight intersections with other communities, particularly when solidarity is critical to building compassion and understanding between groups.

Youth also convened in Salt Lake City from around the country in August to participate in our Youth Track at the JACL National Convention, which included workshops on leadership and careers in advocacy, discussions of identity and anti-discrimination response training.



**Youth at July's JACL National Convention**

There, we were thrilled to welcome more than 35 youth in positions ranging from volunteer to delegate, one of our highest youth attendances in recent years.

In September, for the first time ever, the NY/SC had the exciting opportunity to represent Japanese American youth in an international context at the Pan American Nikkei Conference (COPANI).

NY/SC Chair Kota Mizutani and I were both in attendance, along with delegations from Argentina, Brazil, Canada, Chile, Colombia, the Dominican Republic, France, Germany, Japan, Mexico, Paraguay and Peru.

Kota, along with Canadian delegate Alex Miki, facilitated a youth identity-building workshop for youth from all over the world. Kota and I also participated in a panel discussion about youth engagement and organizing alongside delegates from Argentina, Brazil and Canada.



**A group photo of the youth workshop at COPANI**

**PHOTO: HIDEKI MANIWA**

In addition, the NY/SC is happy to report that, aside from our two annual retreats, a slate of National Convention programming and various Youth Summits around the country, we also welcomed seven new members, all in the position of District Youth Representative.

We will be ending 2019 with a full council, which includes new members Kendal Takeshita (MDC), Brian Heleker (IDC), Quinn Susuki (IDC), Justin Kawaguchi (PSW), Jenna Aoki (CCDC), Marco Torrez (NCWNP) and Sheera Tamura (PNW).




**COPANI included *(from left)* JACL's Kota Mizutani (U.S.), Leo Uba (Argentina), Alex Miki (Canada), JACL's Mieko Kuramoto (U.S.) and Marisa Sato (Brazil).**

Looking forward with the direction set by NY/SC for 2020, the vision is bright. The team has set the foundation for a new slate of summits hosted by the MDC, PNW and NCWNP.

MDC is looking at collaborating with Tsuru for Solidarity for an early spring event mobilizing youth to get involved with the movement and build momentum for the national caravan to occur on June 5-7, 2020.

On the West Coast, PNW plans to connect with local AAPI organizations to hold a summit centered around what civic engagement looks like in different contexts. Usually, the word "civic engagement" has a connotation that limits activity to voting or running for office, which are reserved for those who identity as American citizens.

The goal of the summit is to reiterate that civic engagement is meant for everyone and will take an intersectional approach toward getting people involved at various capacities. NCWNP is in the process of brainstorming ideas around summit themes and looks to build up more involvement among interested youth in the district. ■

## ADDITIONAL NY/SC DISTRICT HIGHLIGHTS

- EDC organized and facilitated a panel called "Tsuru for Solidarity Coalition Building Panel," which was part of the "Has Asian American Studies Failed?" academic conference at the University of Pennsylvania. It was an enlightened discussion with community members and East Coast youth surrounding the closure of the Berks County Detention Center and the work that immigrant and civil rights community leaders, like the JACL, can do to support communities of color.
- IDC, fresh off of hosting the annual JACL National Convention, is now preparing for events such as the Annual Crab Feed and Auction Fundraiser, hosted by the Snake River Valley chapter.
- PSW welcomed new Youth Rep Justin Kawaguchi, who is working to re-establish the District Youth Board as a means through which engaged youth members across PSW can contribute to community building via supporting the execution of events like the NY/SC Youth Summits. Email *kawaguchi.justin@gmail.com* to become involved in the PSW DYB.
- Beginning in 2020, the *Pacific Citizen* will highlight the NY/SC's new series "Growing Up AAPI." To contribute your story, email the NY/SC at *nysc@jacl.org* or Marco Torrez at *marcoto@berkeley.edu*. ■

# Riverside

*William and Nancy Takano and family*

*Mark Takano*

*Douglas and Helen Takano and Mia*

*Derrick and Judy Takano*

*Riley and Julia Takano*
*Aria and Cadence*

*Nick Takano*

*Gerry and Angela Takano, Erin*

***Happy Holidays***

Gordon & Rei Okabayashi



Social Justice through Unity 2020

CLYDE and KATHERINE WILSON

*Merry Christmas*

*Jennifer & Al Betancourt*




**Happy Holidays!**

**Nikkei Student Union at UC Riverside**

Seasons Greetings
Tony and Beverly Inaba

**Happy Holidays !**

Doug Urata and Alice Roe
djurata@aol.com

***Happy Holidays***

Akio and Helen Yoshikawa

***Happy Holidays***

**The Kamoto Family**

*Peace and Joy*

*Richard and Anne Mikami, Meiko Inaba, Doug and Resa Inaba, Gary and Laurie Oshiro*

*Happy Holiday Wishes*

Tim and Aki Caszatt

***Merry Christmas***

Michiko Yoshimura, James and Yoshie Butler



## Season's Greetings

FROM CONGRESSMAN MARK TAKANO

*Thank you for all that you do. Let's make 2020 a great year!*

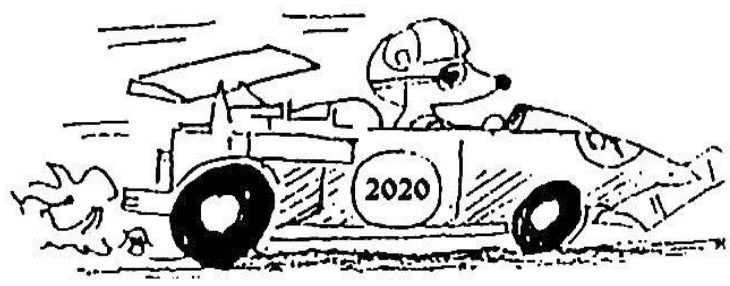
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# Detroit

SEASONS GREETINGS AND BEST WISHES FOR 2020

FROM

DETROIT CHAPTER JACL




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*Toshiki Masaki*

*Ann O'neill*

*Randy & Shinkie Sano*

*Saburo & Anna Sasaki*

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*Kensuke & Pat Tashiro*

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*Happy 90th Anniversary*

*JACL*

From the

Downtown L.A. Chapter

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Marge Tsuji
San Jose JACL

Season's Greetings
*Sharon Uyeda*
San Jose JACL

*Happy New Year!*
*Tom & Terry Oshidari*
*San Jose JACL*

HAPPY HOLIDAYS
HAPPY NEW YEAR
Joyce Oyama
San Jose JACL

## Happy Holidays from

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# Clovis

Happy 90th JACL

*Remember the Reason for the Season*

- Clovis JACL Chapter

# Lodi




Happy Holidays
from the board and
members of the

Lodi Chapter JACL

P.O. Box 2454
Lodi, CA 95241




# Boise Valley

*~ Happy Holidays ~*
*Boise Valley JACL*

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Best Wishes this Holiday Season
Peace & Prosperity to All in *2020*



Philadelphia JACL

## New York

**Happy Holidays**

**from the JACL**

**New York Chapter!**

**Visit us at: www.jacl-ny.org**

NEW YORK CHAPTER
JACL

## Livingston-Merced

Happy Holidays from the Livingston-Merced Chapter

Save the Date:
Come join us at our Day of Remembrance Banquet, Saturday, February 15, 2020
Merced County Fairgrounds

Speaker:
Karen Korematsu




The Merced Assembly Center Memorial

For more information contact:
Janet Fujimoto McCabe
at
janetf127@gmail.com
or (209) 631-1933

## Cincinnati

Happy 90th Anniversary JACL



Cincinnati Chapter JACL

## Arizona

Peace. Love. Unity.

JACL Arizona Chapter

## Pocatello-Blackfoot



Seasons Greetings!

**from the IDC**

**Pocatello-Blackfoot Chapter**

## Santa Barbara



# MAKING, SHARING AND CHANGING HISTORY WITH JACL

Keep making history with a special 90th anniversary gift to JACL during its holiday giving campaign.

***By Phillip Ozaki,***
***JACL Membership Coordinator***

We're very excited about this year's holiday giving campaign and its theme of "Keep Making History With JACL!"

We know you've given to us before: We're very grateful as are those impacted by your gifts. We know you've stood with us through both hard and good times. And we know that you understand the importance of the *Pacific Citizen*.

This 90th year, we've focused on history, showcasing it in these three dimensions:

***We made history.***
***We share history.***
***We change history.***

## We Made History

JACL was founded during a time when Japanese and Asian Pacific Americans lived with terrible direct discrimination. It happened in immigration, housing, marriage, on the street — you name it, and inequality hurt our community.

So, JACL did something. JACL organized our community and made a place for us at local and federal decision-making tables. One by one, we overturned racist policies. And changed the hearts and minds of America.

Some of our major accomplishments include changing the immigration system, winning the long-fought campaign for redress and advocating for the Congressional Gold Medal for Nisei veterans. That's a lot of making history!

Our past is remarkable and important. However, it's our present and future work that makes giving to JACL's 90th anniversary campaign a worthy cause for your considerations.

## We Share History

We share our history in many unique ways, especially these four:

First, we publish education guides called "A Lesson in History: The Japanese American Experience," teaching our history to hundreds of students of all races, backgrounds and geographies. The 150-page guide narrates our history and includes teacher-approved learning activities.

Then, we use our guides to host teacher-training workshops, which have inspired teachers go back to their schools and educate entire classrooms on our history. Through this JACL program, students across America learn about discrimination, the Constitution and reparations so that they become empowered to stop history from repeating itself.

Second, we share our history through events and workshops. At the chapter level, we have local programs like the Day of Remembrance. At the national level, we have leadership summits in Washington, D.C., as well as youth summits all around the country. Even at the international level, we share our story through the Kakehashi Project in Japan.

With grant programs, JACL also shares our history to a wide audience through multidisciplinary projects from arts to field trips to museum exhibits to youth programs. Each year, JACL speaks with stakeholders in Washington, D.C., and around the nation to renew the Japanese American Confinement Sites Grant Program. The program funds about $3 million to restore, preserve and inspire educational projects around the camps. Additionally, JACL's Legacy Grants Program funds local projects to chapters around the country.

Finally, the *Pacific Citizen* is one of JACL's most unique programs for sharing our history. The *P.C.* and JACL's founding go hand-in-hand, and we continue to keep our community updated with the latest news, opinions and ideas.

## We Change History

Finally and most importantly, your 90th anniversary gift to JACL not only helps us share our history but also is your platform to change history through advocacy work.

Right now, more than 15,000 migrant youth have been detained in modern concentration camps. We are working on the Dignity for Detained Immigrants Act to ensure humane facilities, transparency of conditions and keeping families together.

JACL also plays an important role in making sure that America's most popular mainstream TV networks are inclusive of AAPIs. As a member of the Asian Pacific American Media Coalition, JACL stops harmful stereotypes on shows like NBC's "Saturday Night Live." We also issue a "report card" to educate and influence networks to include us.

Once again, we're excited to celebrate 90 years of JACL and the *Pacific Citizen* in making history and changing history. We are the nation's oldest and largest AAPI civil rights group, and our aim is to keep you at the forefront of forging civil rights history.

We have a lot of work to do to fight for justice and educate the world with our story. That said, we hope you join us to keep making history with a 90th anniversary gift to JACL! ■

# Nikkei Progressives Holds *'BACKPACK ASSEMBLY'*



PHOTO: MARTHA NAKAGAWA

**More than 30 volunteers showed up on a rainy morning in Los Angeles' Little Tokyo on Dec. 8 for Nikkei Progressives' "Backpack Assembly," where they sorted through donated toiletries, T-shirts, socks and other supplies and assembled backpacks to be given to detained migrants at the southern border. Much of the funds to purchase the items were raised at a September "We Got Your Back(pack)" concert, held in Little Tokyo.** ■

# NATIONAL JACL ANNOUNCES 2020 SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM

**SAN FRANCISCO —** The Japanese American Citizens League is kicking off its National Scholarship and Awards Program for the 2020 academic year. The JACL annually offers approximately 30 college scholarships for students who are incoming college freshmen, undergraduates and graduates, as well as those specializing in law and the creative/performing arts. There are also student-aid scholarships for those in need of financial assistance in this era of rising tuition costs.

Scholarship Program guidelines, instructions and applications can be found on the JACL website *(www.jacl.org)* by clicking "Youth" on the menu bar.

Freshman applications must be submitted directly by the applicant to his/her local JACL chapter, with a postmark no later than March 2. Freshman applicants may obtain the mailing address of his/her chapter by contacting Membership Assistant Tomiko Ismail at *tismail@jacl.org* or by calling the Membership Department at (415) 921-5225, ext. 26.

Chapters will then have one month to evaluate their freshman applications and forward only the most outstanding ones to the National JACL Freshman Scholarship Committee, c/o Seattle JACL, P.O. Box 18558, Seattle, WA 98118, no later than April 1.

Applications for the "other" scholarship categories (undergraduate, graduate, law, creative/performing arts and student aid) are to be sent directly by the applicant to the National JACL Scholarship Committee, c/o JACL Midwest District Council, 10604 Killarney Drive, Union, Kentucky 41091, with a postmark no later than April 1.

All those applying to the National JACL Scholarship Program must be a youth/student or individual member of the JACL; a couple/family membership does not meet this requirement. Applicants must be enrolled in school in fall 2020 in order to be eligible for a scholarship.

***For more information on the National JACL Scholarship Program, contact Regional Director Patty Wada at pwada@jacl.org or National JACL VP for Planning & Development Matthew Farrells at mfarrells@jacl.org.***

# Contra Costa

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Richmond, CA 94804

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Sachi
Yamasaki

Happy Holidays
Susan
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Satoko
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Greetings
Richard Sekiguchi

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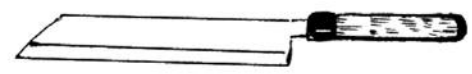
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In Memory of
Joan Matsuoka
Contra Costa JACL Board Member,
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# San Diego

## Season's Greetings
## San Diego JACL

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JAPANESE AMERICAN CITIZENS LEAGUE

# Olympia

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JAPANESE AMERICAN CITIZENS LEAGUE

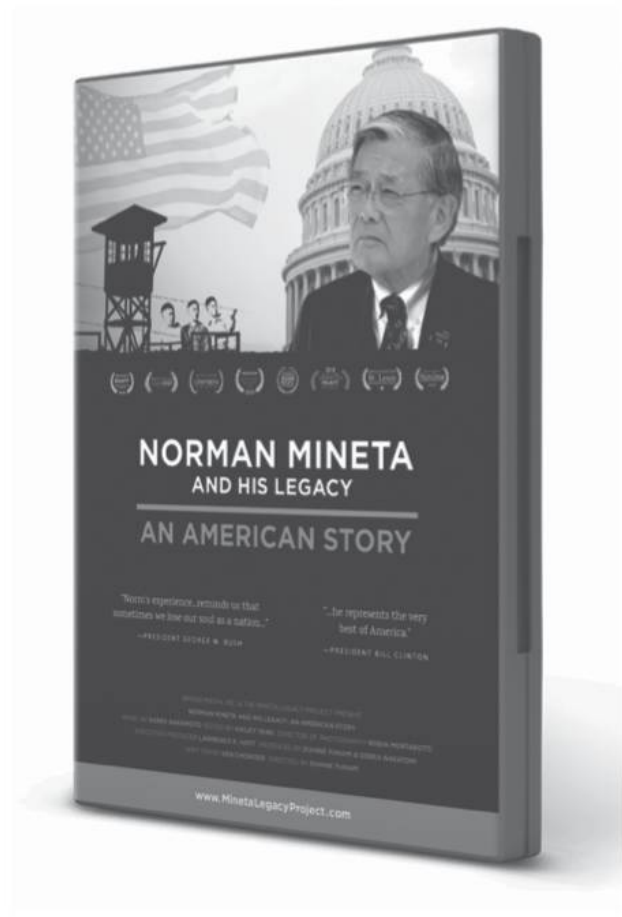
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## CHAPTERS:

**A monumental part in reaching JACL's 90th anniversary is the hard work, advocacy and commitment of its many chapters located across the U.S. The chapters have played an integral role in the organization's success, as each achievement is owed in part to its dedicated members. Following are reflections submitted by JACL chapters on their own roles in JACL's history and the legacies they hope to carry forth into the future.**

# A BIG YEAR FOR THE DETROIT CHAPTER

*By Mika Kennedy*




"The Exiled to Motown" exhibit, displayed at the Ann Arbor District Library

PHOTO: MIKA KENNEDY

This year was a big one for the Detroit chapter: We debuted our exhibit of Japanese American history in Detroit, "Exiled to Motown," showing it at five different venues — we're currently preparing for an even larger exhibition in 2020.

The exhibit is an outgrowth of a book of oral histories the chapter put together over the course of much of the last 20 years. These histories, in many ways, were a race against time. When the book was published, many of those who had shared their rich, unique personal histories had passed on. We believe, however, that a story takes on new life each time it is told, and each time it finds a new audience.

The exhibit was designed to present these stories in new forms and contexts, bringing them clearly into the public eye — both for Japanese Americans in the Midwest who are learning their collective roots and for Midwesterners at large who are discovering new facets of their multiethnic community.




PHOTO: MARY RENDA

**Detroit Chapter President and MDC Governor Toshiki Masaki and Mika Kennedy at the "Exiled to Motown" opening at the Novi Public Library.**

Although the Detroit chapter was established in 1946, it already has more than 90 years of history: This history dates back to the turn of the century when a man by the name of Tadae Shimoura arrived in Detroit, drawn by whispers of America's automobile and the burgeoning Ford Motor Co. While his journey predates the Detroit chapter, the Shimoura family would go on to play a large role in the chapter's development, and so these roots become part of our story, too.

During World War II, Japanese Americans who'd been wrested from the West Coast and incarcerated were then pushed to resettle in cities scattered across the country. Many came to Detroit.

For them, Michigan offered promise and heartbreak in turns, as families sought to rebuild the lives that had been taken to studs in the sparse barracks of the camps — an opportunity that was tempered by the racial tensions already striating the region. In a world where the divide between black and white was often as clear-cut as a city's geography, being Japanese was not always welcome.

Our history as a JACL chapter, however, opens out. We welcome our roots that predate us, and we welcome the ways our history branches into the histories of others. The lives of our members touch the histories of Motown and Hitsville, USA; Dieg an migrations to Detroit; the activist legacy of Grace Lee Boggs.

Our history is the history of the American motor industry and of the racial violences that subtend it. Our voices are those that spoke out against the injustice of the murder of Vincent Chin, marching alongside American Citizens for Justice. They are those that reiterated welcome to our Arab American and Muslim communities after 9/11 and the Trump administration's travel bans. They are those of the children who may have learned this history for the first time this summer, attending an exhibition of "Exiled to Motown."

And the lifelong Detroiter, who feels his/her story has finally been seen. Our story is still being written, from many directions and with many hands. We are still welcoming the last 90 years, for each day we continue to learn and teach our history.

We're ready for our next 90. ■

# DAYTON CHAPTER CONTINUES TO PROMOTE BETTER RELATIONS BETWEEN ALL CULTURES

*By Don Hayashi,*
*Dayton Chapter President*

Following the forced removal and incarceration of Japanese Americans from the West Coast during World War II, many Nikkei decided to relocate to the Midwest to get a fresh start.

For the most part, those who came to Dayton, Ohio, were welcomed into the community. Leaders of the Council of Churches helped Japanese Americans find housing and jobs. In 1949, the Dayton chapter of the JACL was organized. It was important for these folks to come together frequently for mutual support and help with adjustment to life in the Midwest.

Soon, they were befriended by the program director of the Dayton YWCA, who invited the JACL to regularly meet in its facilities. Later, the JACL wished to share their culture and raise funds. They sponsored a "Tea House in August Moon" event at the YWCA, which was well attended. In a few years, JACL joined with several other ethnic groups to co-found an international festival that is now called "A World A'Fair."



PHOTO: FACEBOOK

**Dayton JACL is a co-sponsor of the three-day cultural festival "A World A'Fair," now in its 46th year.**

Today, many Midwesterners are unaware of the history and experiences of Japanese Americans. The Dayton chapter sponsors programs to broaden understanding and appreciation of our cultural heritage and reach out to the non-Nikkei community.

This year, with the support of a JACL Legacy Grant, we brought the exhibit "Connecting the Pieces: Dialogues on the Amache Archaeology Collection" to the Main Dayton Metro Library. Dr. Bonnie Clark of the University of Denver demonstrated that "Culture and Humanity Can Prevail Over Prejudice and Injustice."

In addition, JACL hosted Karen Korematsu, who spoke about "Fred Korematsu and His Fight for Justice" at Wright State University, University of Dayton Law School and Sinclair Community College.

Dayton JACL is a co-sponsor of the annual three-day "A World A'Fair," now in its 46th year, with a total of 34 countries represented. It is one of the largest events in the Greater Dayton community.

We also participate with the Dayton Sister Cities Committee. This year, the City of Dayton and Oiso, Japan, celebrated 50 years of its Sister Cities Relationship with an anniversary dinner and public celebration.

JACL works closely with other Asian American and ethnic communities to promote understanding and appreciation through an Asian American Council. We speak out against hate groups and injustice experienced by Muslims and immigrants. We partner with other organizations that promote inclusion like the Dayton International Peace Museum. We also participate in an Asian American Pacific Islander Legislative Day at the State Capitol in Columbus.

As we look to the future, Dayton JACL will continue to serve a vital role in increasing understanding, fostering better relations, showing appreciation of our cultural heritage and passing these along to future generations.

We educate our Nikkei friends and the wider community of the significant history, contributions and experiences of Japanese Americans. And we continue to address injustice when it lifts its ugly head, joining with others who share our values. ■

# LEGACY OF THE MIS LANGUAGE SCHOOL IN MINNESOTA

*By Carolyn Nayematsu and Cheryl Hirata-Dulas, Twin Citizens JACL Education Committee*




**The MISLS exhibition at Historic Fort Snelling, "Minnesota's Secret Language School"**



**Pictured *(from left)* are Kimmy Tanaka, site supervisor of Historic Fort Snelling; Rosalyn Tonai, executive director of the National Japanese American Historical Society; Karen Lucas Tanaka, TCJACL; Steve Lucas; and Carolyn Nayematsu, TCJACL.**
**PHOTOS: STEVE OZONE**

When the Fourth Army Intelligence School at the Presidio of San Francisco needed to be moved inland during World War II, Camp Savage in Minnesota became the new site for the secret Japanese military language school. With a majority of the class being composed of second-generation Americans of Japanese ancestry, increased racial tension on the West Coast and restrictions of Executive Order 9066 prompted Col. Kai Rasmussen, head of the language school, to conduct a nationwide search for a location outside of the military exclusion zone.

Minnesota Gov. Harold Stassen was the only one who offered a site for the language school, commenting that the state "not only had room physically but also had room in people's hearts." Given that few people of Japanese ancestry lived in Minnesota (the 1940 Census reports that 51 people of Japanese ancestry resided in Minnesota, mostly living outside of the Twin Cities area), the offer was bold.

Renamed the Military Intelligence Service Language School, the school relocated in May 1942 to Camp Savage. When enrollment swelled to beyond capacity, the MISLS moved in August 1944 to larger facilities at nearby Fort Snelling. From 1942-46, approximately 6,000 soldiers, primarily Nisei, received intensive and accelerated training in the Japanese military language.

Nisei linguists served with combat troops in every major landing in the Pacific. Gen. Douglas MacArthur credited these linguists with shortening the war in the Pacific by nearly two years. After the war, the language specialists helped in rebuilding and reorganizing during the occupation of Japan and in the war crimes trials as translators and interpreters.

The critical role they played was not well known at that time because of the highly classified nature of their work. It was years later, when World War II military intelligence documents were declassified in the 1970s, that their contributions to the war effort became public. Unfortunately, the U.S. Navy, Marine Corps and many Army units did not keep detailed records of the Nisei soldiers who were attached to their units.

The generally positive and warm reception Nisei linguists experienced during their training in Minnesota led Nisei soldiers to resettle in the Twin Cities after World War II, in many cases bringing along family members from the incarceration camps.

Other Japanese Americans came to Minnesota through the efforts of the National Japanese American Student Relocation Council, which encouraged institutions of higher learning to accept college-aged Nisei students from the incarceration camps. More than 300 students who had their college educations interrupted by incarceration were admitted to 22 colleges and technical institutions in Minnesota, making this state second only to Chicago in the Nisei student population during WWII.

While there were reports of discrimination in housing and employment, various civic organizations and the War Relocation Authority helped Japanese families get established in Minnesota. The population increased significantly from pre-WWII, with the 1950 Census reporting 1,049 people of Japanese ancestry residing in Minnesota primarily in the Twin Cities metro area. In 1946, the Twin Cities JACL was established, becoming an active organization with social events, educational and cultural activities, as well as a scholarship program, while maintaining its civic responsibilities.

Notable citizens include Chuck Hazama, who served from 1979-95 as mayor of Rochester, Minn., home of the Mayo Clinic, and Rick Shiomi, who established Theatre Mu, one of the first Asian American theater companies in the U.S.

While Fort Snelling holds special meaning for Japanese American MIS veterans, until recently, there was little for the public to learn and experience there related to MISLS history.

Hundreds of thousands of soldiers received military training at Fort Snelling, with WWII being the final use of the facilities for that purpose. Decommissioned in October 1946, Fort Snelling received designation as a National Historic Landmark in 1960 and is now referred to as "Historic Fort Snelling."

A formal connection to Historic Fort Snelling was established about seven years ago when the TCJACL and Minnesota Historical Society, which oversees Historic Fort Snelling, co-sponsored a photographic exhibition on the soldiers who served in the MIS.

This exhibit proved very successful both in attendance and financial support, as well as showcased the presence of an active Japanese American community interested in educating the broader public about the MISLS story.

Over the past six years, the TCJACL has co-sponsored with the MNHS/Historic Fort Snelling four exhibits on the Japanese American WWII experience along with accompanying programs. "Minnesota's Secret Language School," an exhibit created by the TCJACL, was on display at Historic Fort Snelling through summer 2019. This exhibit is currently on display at the Stearns History Museum in St. Cloud, Minn.

Making the public aware of the language school has been helped through other local projects. Filmmakers Steve Ozone of Minneapolis and Bill Kubota of Detroit produced a documentary titled, "The Registry," based on the work of Twin Cities native Seiki Oshiro and Grant Ichikawa, who labored for years trying to compile a complete list of the names of every MIS soldier who served during WWII because no complete list could be found in the U.S. Archives.

As 2020 approaches, marking the 200th anniversary of Fort Snelling, MNHS has embarked on a revitalization project to include and expand on stories beyond those set in the early 1800s. Visitors can now experience a Japanese language lesson in a mock classroom as the Nisei linguists might have received. This added hands-on experience has become one of the most popular attractions.

The current visitor center, which has served as an unofficial hub for TCJACL programs and exhibits, will soon be demolished, to be replaced with a new visitor center housed in a renovated building that served as living quarters for MIS soldiers during WWII.

The TCJACL is taking an active role in the revitalization process. The chapter's efforts to raise awareness of the contributions of MIS soldiers, while their family members were being confined in concentration camps, will continue to be a priority in the coming years. ■

# JACL HIGHLIGHTS FROM A PERSONAL PSW POINT OF VIEW

*By John Saito Jr.*
*President, Venice-West L.A. JACL*



**John Saito *(pictured on left, center)* and his fellow PSW delegates at the 2013 National Convention in Washington, D.C.**

My first recollection of Executive Order 9066 happened about 40 years ago when I was a junior in high school. I was given a term-paper assignment for a U.S. History class. I could write about any subject, but the catch was that the paper would count for two grades. I would receive a letter grade for content and research from my history teacher. I also had to submit the same paper to my English teacher, who would critique it for grammar and composition. It felt like high-stakes poker, so I pushed my chips into the middle and went all in.

I wrote about the Japanese American incarceration during World War II.

I found several books, including "America's Concentration Camps" by Allan Bosworth. I didn't have to go far to find it, since it sat on a bookshelf in our family living room. But until then, I knew little about the sequence of events leading to the run-up of WWII and the signing of EO 9066 by President Franklin D. Roosevelt authorizing the removal of 110,000 JAs from the West Coast.

In my paper, I included an interview with my father, a former internee at Poston, Ariz. It was the first time I had talked to him about the camp experience. Adding a primary source to my bibliography, I thought, would pack an authoritative punch. This was 1980. It was a time when the redress and reparations movement was gaining traction. So, I ended my paper by noting that U.S. legislators and community activists were working on a national campaign that if successful, the U.S. government would issue a formal apology and $20,000 payment to all those incarcerated during WWII.

The next year, you could say that I found myself in the midst of a seminal redress moment. My summers at that time had been spent working at the *Rafu Shimpo* newspaper in Little Tokyo. The early stages of the redress campaign started after the passage of a resolution at the 1978 JACL National Convention calling for the U.S. government to give $25,000 to all former internees. (That figure was later negotiated down to $20,000.) From there, JACL worked with key members of Congress — Sens. Daniel Inouye and Spark Matsunaga and Reps. Norman Mineta and Robert Matsui — who proposed creating a federal commission to examine EO 9066 and its effects on those interned.

That led to nationwide public hearings in the summer of 1981 where former incarcerees testified before the Commission on Wartime Relocation and Internment of Civilians.

By happenstance, I was in the room of the Federal Building in downtown Los Angeles as the commission made its swing to the West Coast. In what became the most dramatic scene during the dozens of otherwise compelling, yet straightforward testimonies, a Nisei man sat in front of the U.S. panel and shared his incarceration story.

An elderly white woman swinging a wooden cane stormed down an aisle shouting, "Lies, lies, lies!" A wild confrontation ensued. She made a beeline straight for the man's typewritten testimony. She tried to pry it from his hands. He refused to let go. The melee continued until law enforcement officials intervened.

(Community leaders were hard-pressed to recruit former incarcerees who were open to sharing the most poignant chapter of their lives, let alone articulating their story in front of total strangers. But they didn't think they would have to add in their pitch that someone's health and well-being would be assured.)

After order was restored, my mind was thinking a million thoughts. My editor had sent me here on a simple assignment to pick up official transcripts of testimonies from the previous day. But what just happened? What do I do? Did someone take photos? This is breaking news. This was a fight perhaps between the two oldest people ever.

But I had no hard facts, and worse, I didn't have the wherewithal to go after them. I didn't know the identity of either the victim, whose name I later found out was Jim Kawaminami, or the perpetrator, a Gardena resident named Lillian Baker. So, I ran out into the lobby, found a pay phone and called my editor. He somehow massaged my sketchy details and inserted a small, but coherent story into that day's paper right before deadline.

***

I got my start in JACL 40 years ago. My father had taken an early retirement from a career with the Los Angeles County and accepted a position as the JACL regional director for the Pacific Southwest District. He started in May and by the next month, he was in search of clerical help. So, he asked me if I wanted a summer job to help him type letters and answer phone calls. The pay was minimum wage, $3.50 an hour. I said, "Sure."

My father stayed on as regional director for the next 12 years. Like the rest of the JACL staff, his singular focus was devoted to the redress campaign. When he saw the first group of the oldest Issei receive their apology and payment in 1990, he said mission accomplished and retired.

I started the second stint of my JACL experience about a decade ago as president of the Venice-West Los Angeles chapter and a member of the *Pacific Citizen* Editorial Board. As chapter board member, it's been part of my duty to represent Venice-West L.A. as a delegate at our National Conventions.

I attended this year's convention in Salt Lake City and witnessed a long, heated discussion before the JACL passed a controversial resolution to issue a formal apology to the Tule Lake Resisters. It was also an honor to see basketball legend Wat Misaka, 95, one last time before he sadly passed away last month. Misaka won two national titles as a starting guard at the University of Utah before becoming the first person of color to play in the NBA.

But the one convention moment that showed the depth and breadth of JACL's 90-year legacy was in 2013 in Washington, D.C. The occasion celebrated the 25th anniversary of the passage of the Civil Liberties Act of 1988. Inouye, Matsunaga, Matsui and Mineta had all played an influential role in the redress movement and were duly praised for their work.

"Very few bills get passed," Mineta said, speaking from experience as a member of Congress for 20 years. But the fate of redress was different, he recalled during the ceremony. "The stars were aligned. It was the perfect storm."

Then came the highlight: a private, afterhours reception held for the JACL delegation in the National Archives.

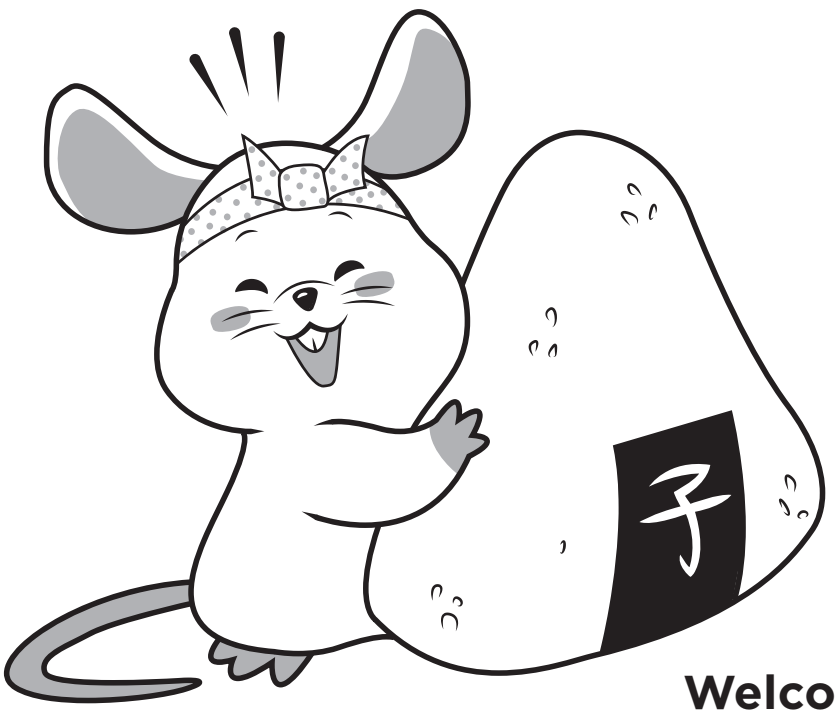
The National Archives is home to the nation's most-treasured documents, including the Declaration of Independence and the Constitution. It also holds hundreds of thousands of documents related to the incarceration, including personal records of those detained, photographs and films of life in the camps.

The original EO 9066 and CLA of 1988 documents sat side-by-side inside a bullet-proof glass case. It was the first time both documents were together on public view. It was such an impressive sight to behold that then-Rep. Mike Honda, who had worked in D.C. since his election in 2000, said it was his first visit to the National Archives. And to have a glimpse of the redress bill, dated Aug. 10, 1988, and signed by President Ronald Reagan, Mineta and Matsunaga, was a slice of JA history at its most-celebrated moment.

Afterwards, I walked out of the National Archives feeling flush to be a JACL member and grateful that the JACL staff and volunteer leadership had made this exclusive event possible because their work certainly deserved an A. Which happened to be the grades I got for my term paper. ■

» See CHAPTERS on page 50


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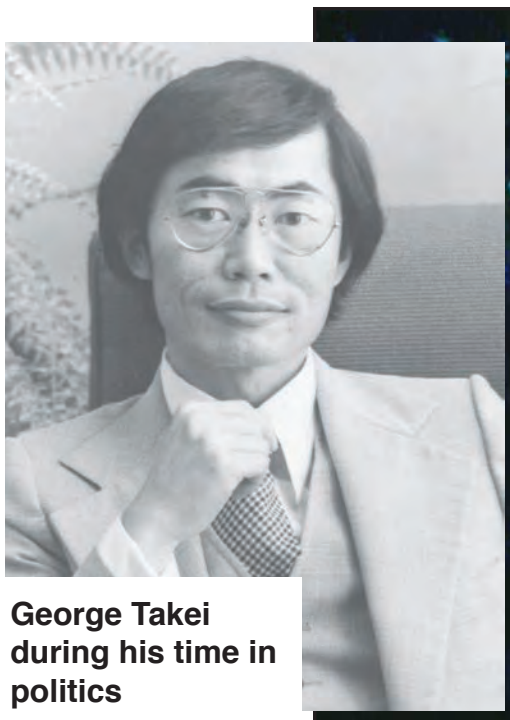
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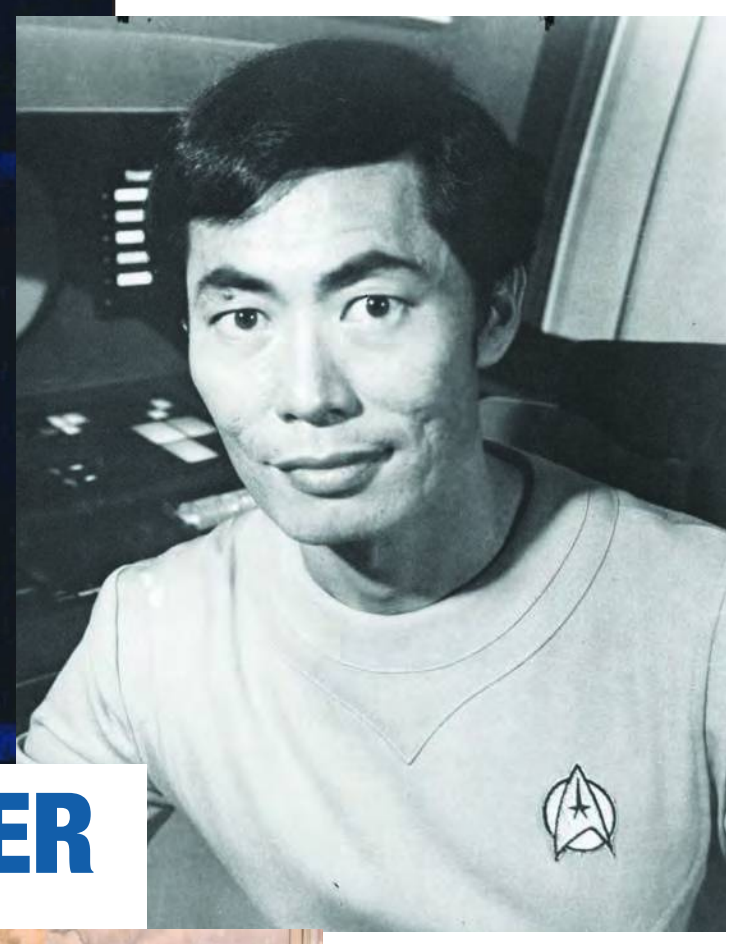
George Takei during his time in politics

PHOTO: PACIFIC CITIZEN



George Takei as the elderly version of Sam Kimura in "Allegiance."

PHOTO: MATTHEW MURPHY



# GEORGE TAKEI'S LIFE, CAREER MOVE AT WARP SPEED

## In his ninth decade, the JA, gay rights and 'Star Trek' icon can't, won't slow down.

*By George Toshio Johnston,*
*Senior Editor, Digital & Social Media*

**'To the moon, Alice!'**
**'Up, up and away!'**
**'How-deeeee!'**
**'Engergize.'**
**'Flame on!'**
**'Hey now!'**
**'Oh my!'**

If you're a pop culture buff, then those catchphrases may evoke a memory, a chuckle or some sort of instant recognition, whether it's of Ralph Kramden, Superman, Minnie Pearl, Capt. Kirk, the Human Torch or Hank Kingsley from "The Larry Sanders Show."

But only that last one is connected to an actual person: George Takei, who without a doubt is the most-recognizable and well-known living Japanese American in the universe. One simply cannot say, "Oh my!" without Takei's stentorian baritone calling to mind. For that, he can thank a years-ago appearance on Howard Stern's radio show.

Funny thing is, "Oh my!" becoming so associated with Takei was never planned. He says it's a phrase he's used all his life. His first Stern show appearance was when he was in New York to plug his role in playwright Philip Kan Gotanda's "The Wash." When Takei heard the show while in the waiting room, he was initially taken aback by the radio flibbertigibbet's raunchy humor.

When they met, Takei was immediately confronted with an outrageous comment, which is par for the course with Stern. Takei asked, "Are we on the air?" Stern said, "Yes," and "Oh my!" was Takei's genuine response. It was a phrase that was singled out as a recorded clip and reused over and over and over until there was no separating it from Takei.

They met again when Takei was promoting his 1994 autobiography, but appearing on Stern's show wasn't something that-Takei was enthusiastic to repeat. When his publicist literally begged him to appear, he reluctantly did, and even though he was initially an object of mockery, by being a good sport and through the force of his personality, Takei became friendly with Stern.

More than a decade later, when the "king of all media" eventually moved from terrestrial to satellite radio, he named Takei as the show's official announcer, a title he still holds even though he appears only sporadically. It was a form of life judo that turned a negative into a positive, a pattern that has recurred many times over in Takei's life.

It's actually the key to understanding why his career, at age 82, is still going at warp speed, while other pop culture figures decades younger have become footnotes and Trivial Pursuit answers.

Instead of running from having been a Japanese American incarceree during World War II, he embraced it, and thanks to his name and fame, put a face to the egregious abrogation of American constitutional rights and reached thousands of people who otherwise might have neither known nor cared about that period of American history.

Being an actor in a Hollywood, which has historically been disinclined toward portraying Asian Americans as real people? Revealing his sexual orientation as a gay man? Being forever associated with a TV show from more than five decades ago? All of those might be negatives for some — but for Takei, being real to who he is and what has happened to him is his brand, his special sauce.

One might even be able to draw a line of his late-in-life career surge to his decision to publicly reveal his orientation in 2005, followed in 2008 with his marriage to Brad Altman, his boyfriend of more than 30 years.



George Takei at home in Los Angeles

PHOTO: GEORGE TOSHIO JOHNSTON

Yet, Takei's fame does undoubtedly result from his role as Mr. Sulu on the original two "Star Trek" TV series (yes, that includes the TV cartoon) and several motion pictures, one of which saw him promoted to captain.

The UCLA grad — with bachelor's and master's degrees — possesses, however, a résumé that goes far beyond acting. While politics and activism have been part of his life for decades, he is busier than many people half his age, with publishing, social media, writing and executive producing movies, TV and plays a part of his quotidian routine.

Takei's achievements over his 80-plus years include serving as the cultural chairman for the National JACL; serving on the board of trustees for the Japanese American National Museum; being appointed by Los Angeles Mayor Tom Bradley to the Southern California Rapid Transit District, upon which he served for 11 years; receiving a star on the Hollywood Walk of Fame; and being honored by the government of Japan with the Order of the Rising Sun, Gold Rays with Rosette.

But one word one won't find associated with Takei: retirement. When the question of "why not retire?" was jokingly broached, Takei responded, "Retire to what? I don't play golf."

But while golf may not be a part of the lifelong exercise buff's routine, Takei, whose health is still very good, added, "I enjoy what I do. . . . The things that I do, I get a visceral pleasure, as well as a sense of fulfillment, from doing it."



George Takei reprised his role as Mr. Sulu in "Star Trek: The Motion Picture," which was released in 1979.

PHOTO: COURTESY OF PARAMOUNT PICTURES



George Takei as Nobuhiro Yamato in AMC Network's "The Terror: Infamy"

PHOTO: ED ARAQUEL/AMC

Although the Takeis are comfortably ensconced in the tony Hancock Park section of Los Angeles, Takei says he and Brad also maintain a residence in New York City, which Takei says is used as base of operations for when he is doing theater work.

As an aside, Takei pointed out that the fact that he, as an Asian American, owns a home in his neighborhood is a debt owed from decades earlier to a renowned African-American musician and vocalist. Said Takei: "We owe it to Nat 'King' Cole."

Turns out that in the 1950s when Cole wanted to buy the house on the next block, the "whites only" housing covenant of the time precluded that from happening. "He made an issue of it, and he fought it intensely in the courts, and he succeeded," Takei said. "Because of him, the covenant




**George Takei, with microphone, discusses the short feature "American" at a Dec. 2 screening at UCLA and the documentary "Proof of Loyalty: Kazuo Yamane and the Nisei Soldiers of Hawaii." Pictured *(from left)* are screenwriter Bart Gavigan, Takei, director Richie Adams and moderator Zoe Hewitt.**



**Richie Adams, who directed George Takei in "American," said the actor was a "consummate professional."**



**George and Brad Takei at their home in Los Angeles**

**PHOTOS: GEORGE TOSHIO JOHNSTON**

was broken."

While retirement holds no appeal to Takei, that doesn't mean he eschews time for relaxation and reflection. The Takeis have a getaway in the town of Show Low, Ariz., elevation 6,500 feet. But even there, time is spent reading TV and film scripts. "It is singular," Takei said. "I love sitting out on the deck, listening to the breeze."

The coming months could also prove to be singular, with Takei posed to swipe Stern's mantle as the "king of all media." There is the very real possibility he may be considered for Emmy Award nominations for his part as an actor and consultant in the AMC horror anthology series "The Terror: Infamy," and Academy Award nominations for the indie pic "American" *(see Pacific Citizen, May 31, 2019),* in which he starred.

Takei also has a graphic memoir, released in 2019, titled "They Called Us Enemy," which retells in comic book form the story of his boyhood in two American-style concentration camps (Rohwer in Arkansas and Tule Lake in California) that he first relayed in his 1994 autobiography "To the Stars: The Autobiography of George Takei."

He is also executive producing the adaptation of the best-selling novel "The Hotel at the Corner of Bitter and Sweet" by Jamie Ford with fellow exec producers Jennie Lew Tugend and Diane Quon and says that plans have been made for "Allegiance," the Broadway play in which he starred and executive produced, to have a run in Tokyo, in Japanese, in 2021.

There are also plans to produce and star in a 30-minute TV series with the working title "The George Takei Show." "It's in the very early stages right now. In this business, many projects become a throw of the dice. It's a risk of money, time, energy and talent. We'll see what happens with it," he said.

As for the best-case scenario of getting considered for Emmy and Oscar recognition, Takei said, "In this game, you approach everything with high hopes, but mindful also of the real prospects of the business."

As an example, he cited the success of "They Called Us Enemy," which was on the *New York Times* best-seller list for more than two months.

"You do everything with those aspirations, knowing full well that it is one in a million of that occurring. So, I'm realistically optimistic."

Also "realistically optimistic" is "American's" director, Richie Adams, who told the *Pacific Citizen* that "we have successfully entered the film into competition and are eagerly awaiting the results once the votes are in!"

After working with him on "American," Adams was highly complimentary toward Takei. "George is a consummate professional. He is incredibly hard-working, was always very prepared and ready to get the job done and a tremendous joy to be around for all involved in the production," Adams said.

Echoing that sentiment was Jay Kuo, with whom Takei collaborated in turning the idea of "Allegiance" into a reality, who described him as "one of the hardest-working people I've ever met."

Kuo also told the *Pacific Citizen,* "The crazy thing about George's public persona and his private one is that they are much the same: He really is the magnanimous, caring, funny and dedicated champion that his fans know him to be. And once you get to know him, he becomes your uncle. It's no wonder they call him 'Uncle George.' He even took time away to be with me and my family when my father passed away and was the officiant at our executive producer's wedding."

Actor Greg Watanabe, meantime, who appeared with Takei in the Broadway production of "Allegiance," said he was "really taken by the fact of how much he considers 'Allegiance' to be a legacy project of his."

Continued Watanabe, "Just that fact that he was so indefatigable about the promotion of that and talking about the ideas of the project, why it was important and what it represented to him personally and how much that that was genuinely his interest. He could talk — and would and will — be willing to talk anyone who would listen to anything about the JA community experience, especially the WWII incarceration experience, redress, everything. He's really well-versed in the community, the different players involved and has very definite opinions about the things that have happened in our community's history."

When Takei was the keynote speaker at the San Diego JACL chapter's annual gala in September, co-emcee and fellow Japanese American actor Tamlyn Tomita introduced him thusly: "He just simply opens up his heart as well as opens up his mind to new things, new things to learn and new things to learn how to love and advocate."

Takei's co-star in "The Terror: Infamy," Derek Mio, recalled Takei's contribution to that production. "He was always so encouraging to the entire cast," said Mio, who admitted to being a bit star-struck by his acting *senpai*. "I had to kind of pinch myself periodically and just remind myself that I am working with George Takei, who is not just a film but also an American icon, a Japanese American icon, just a pillar in the community.

"I remember one time we were shooting a scene in the mess hall of the internment camp — and I think it's the first time me and George have a one-on-one scene — and he's talking to me, and I'm trying my best to stay in character, but I can't help but think, 'This is so crazy, I'm acting with George Takei right now.' I had to fight so hard to remember my lines and stay in the moment.

"I told him after we cut, 'George, this is so surreal," Mio continued further. "I can't believe I'm sitting here acting with you. You're George Takei!' He very kindly told me, 'Well, someday people are going to say the same thing about you. They're going to say, 'I can't believe I worked with Derek Mio.'"

One of the main points that Takei hammers home again and again is the issue of due process, one of the fundamental tenets of American jurisprudence that got pushed aside after the Dec. 7, 1941, attack on Pearl Harbor set the stage for President Franklin D. Roosevelt's Executive Order 9066 and the mass removal and incarceration of thousands of Japanese Americans living on the U.S. West Coast.

"With no charges, no trial, no due process — which is the central pillar of our justice system — we were rounded up and imprisoned in barbed-wire concentration camps. We were innocent Americans who had nothing to do with Pearl Harbor. But we happened to look just like the people who bombed Pearl Harbor," said Takei in his speech at the aforementioned gala in San Diego.

Ironically, Takei as an individual took a hit to his reputation — without due process — when he was accused in 2017 of inappropriate behavior during the feeding frenzy of the #MeToo movement that destroyed the careers of several high-profile executives, celebrities, politicians and media figures.

Although the allegations were subsequently discredited and Takei's career did not get derailed, it's something he wants to "put a big distance behind me." What Takei would say about the incident was that what happened to him affected him "profoundly" on a personal level, especially from actions by some in the Japanese American community who jumped to a conclusion without due process, not unlike what happened to mainland Japanese Americans during WWII.

On a lesser scale of putting something cringe-worthy a "big distance" behind him, Takei did appear on a season of "Celebrity Apprentice 5," where he had an opportunity to interact with the man who would a few short years later become president of the United States: Donald Trump. Even here, Takei managed to turn a negative into a positive.

"When he was campaigning for the Republican nomination, we were on Broadway with 'Allegiance.' He made a statement about 'we've got to have a complete and total ban on having Muslims coming into the country,'" Takei recalled. "He's clearly demonstrated that he is ignorant of history."

» See TAKEI on page 61

# MYSTERY AT LONG LAST SOLVED?

## A skeleton 'found' on Mount Williamson might be 'missing' WWII Manzanar concentration camp prisoner Giichi Matsumura.



Giichi Matsumura worked in the mess hall while incarcerated at Manzanar.

***By Charles James, Contributor***

Nothing demonstrates just how unpredictable or dangerous a mountain can be better than the recent discovery of skeletal remains on Oct. 7 in the Williamson Bowl by two recreational hikers on Mount Williamson, located 210 miles north of Los Angeles in the Sierra Nevada Mountains. The mountain has the second-highest peak in California at 14,375 feet and rises some 9,000 feet above the floor of the Owens Valley. The "find" set off an avalanche of interest across various news media, and there will be more to come when the "mystery" is finally solved.

While mountains are beautiful, alluring and even majestic, they also can be dangerous, life-threatening and, occasionally, fatal to those that venture onto them. Danger from mountains come from sudden, unpredictable and often severe changes in weather. Thunderstorms, lightning storms and even out-of-season snowstorms are always a possibility.

The "find" of the skeleton by the two hikers, Tyler Hofer and Brandon Follin from the San Diego area, was described on the California Mountaineering Group Facebook website. Hofer posted that the discovery was "something truly unique . . . and pretty crazy."

Hofer described how they were "slightly off course" in the Williamson Bowl, just above the fourth lake, looking for a path to the summit, "when I looked down and saw something strange underneath a small boulder. I thought it looked like a bone of some kind, and after closer inspection, it was indeed a human skull. We started to move the rocks aside, and it turns out there was an entire human skeleton buried in the rock field."

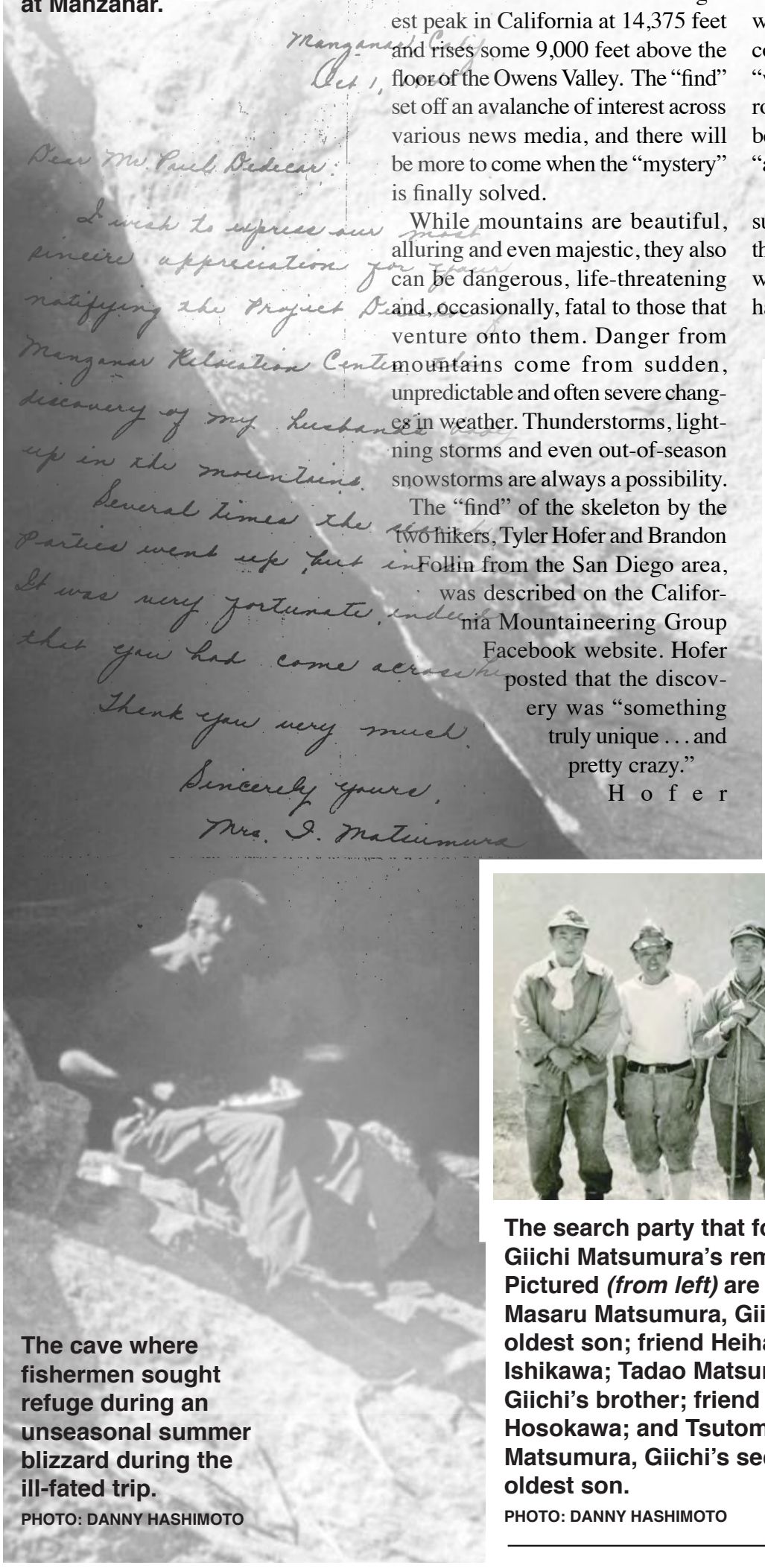
It was clear to Hofer and Follin that "the body had clearly been there a while as all of the clothing had decomposed," and the only things left "were the bones, shoes (which were rock climbing shoes) and a leather belt." He went on to say that the body "appeared to be in a burial pose."

Hofer went on to write that "after summiting Mt. Williamson, we called the Inyo County Sheriff Department," who at first suspected foul play might have been involved; an idea quickly discounted by the Sheriff's Office.

The Sheriff's Office downplayed the idea of foul play because the department had no reports of anyone gone missing from that area for many years, and from the description of the skeleton, it was clear that the bones were quite old, as all of the clothing had disintegrated.

When contacted by the *Pacific Citizen,* the Sheriff's Public Information Officer, Carma Roper, cautioned that "DNA tests were being taken on the bones as part of the investigation, and it is a process that takes two to four months, so it could be February of next year before we have an official finding. Until then, we don't know who it is, nor will we speculate on who it might be. We will wait for the DNA results."

The widely reported news of the skeletal find fueled speculation immediately when posted online and locally with those familiar with the







Potential grave locations are pictured on this map of the various lakes located on Mount Williamson. PHOTOS: MNHS



The search party that found Giichi Matsumura's remains. Pictured *(from left)* are Masaru Matsumura, Giichi's oldest son; friend Heihachi Ishikawa; Tadao Matsumura, Giichi's brother; friend Frank Hosokawa; and Tsutomu Matsumura, Giichi's second-oldest son.
PHOTO: DANNY HASHIMOTO



The cave where fishermen sought refuge during an unseasonal summer blizzard during the ill-fated trip.
PHOTO: DANNY HASHIMOTO



View toward the gravesite, 1945

history of the area. Many recalled that 47-year-old Giichi Matsumura, a prisoner from the World War II Manzanar concentration camp, went missing on Aug. 2, 1945, on Mount Williamson. He was eventually found and reburied on the mountain. The camp, located in the shadow of Mount Williamson, was within a reasonable hiking distance of its lakes, where Matsumura had gone missing.

Mount Williamson was a popular escape destination for fisherman incarcerated at Manzanar during the war, said Cory Shiozaki, the filmmaker of the feature-length documentary titled, "The Manzanar Fishing Club."

The documentary, written by Richard Imamura, is described as the story "through the eyes of those who defied the armed guards, barbed wire and searchlights to fish for trout in the surrounding waters of the Eastern Sierra."

Using personal stories of camp incarcerees, it was the first film to go beyond the confinement itself, and instead highlight values — courage, responsibility and cooperation — that enable the human spirit in which "the simple act of fishing represented freedom and defiance to those that had unfairly taken their freedom from them." *(Note: More information on this 2012 documentary can be found at www.fearnotrout.com.)*

According to Shiozaki, on July 29, 1945, "Matsumura tagged along with a group of six to 10 other fishermen who were looking to catch golden trout, which are only found at very high elevations." Matsumura, who was also a watercolorist, worked in one of Manzanar's mess halls. He was reported missing after separating from the group after electing to stay behind at a lake along the way to sketch or paint, while the others continued up to the next lake to fish.

Although it was still summer, there was a freak blizzard that forced the fisherman to find refuge in a cave to wait out the snowstorm. After the weather cleared, the group went back for Matsumura, only to discover they could not find him.

They searched the area and concluded that he had likely returned to Manzanar on his own. Once back, they discovered that he had not. Two search parties were sent out to look for him over several days. They found Matsumura's sweater, which was positively identified by his wife, Ito. His story was reported on the front page of the *Manzanar Free Press* in its last edition, which was published on Sept. 8, 1945. It reported that he had "died of exposure."

A month after Matsumura went missing, Mary DeDecker of Independence, Calif., a local botanist and avid outdoorswoman, was hiking and picnicking with her husband, Paul, on Mount Williamson when she noticed a tree branch or pole protruding from a pile of rocks. She said that it struck her as unusual because high elevations are typically well above the tree line.

Curious, she went to investigate and discovered the missing Matsumura's remains. She knew immediately who it was, as his disappearance was well-known in the local communities. DeDecker covered his remains with flat rocks to protect them and returned home to report it.

A burial detail that included two of Matsumura's sons was dispatched to the location, and the body was officially reburied on the same spot. Back then, when someone died in a remote location such as in the mountains in difficult terrain, their remains were often buried there.

Executive Order 9066, issued in 1942 by President Franklin D. Roosevelt following the bombing of Pearl Harbor by Japan, allowed the U.S. government to order the forced evacuation of more than 120,000 men, women and children of Japanese ancestry to leave their homes and be forcibly incarcerated inside military-style camps in remote areas around the U.S.

Giichi Matsumura, his wife, Ito, their three teenage sons (Masaru, Tsutomu and Uwao) and young daughter, Kazue, along with a brother, Tadao, and his father, Katsuzo, were forced from their homes in Santa Monica, Calif., and sent to the Manzanar War Relocation Center.

The Manzanar War Relocation Center, as it was then called, was one of 10 American concentration camps where Japanese American citizens and resident Japanese aliens were incarcerated during WWII. All of the Matsumura children were U.S. citizens, as were most adults and children placed in the camps. Today, it is considered one of the most egregious human and civil rights violations ever taken against any American citizen by his/her own government.

Those forced into the camps lost their property, which included their homes and furnishings, businesses, cars and even pets, along with their jobs and source of income. Toward the end of 1945, there were still many prisoners staying at the camp. Although free to leave, many simply had no place to go, having lost everything during the forced removal. Adding to their concerns was the fear that they might become victims yet again of racism and violence from their fellow Americans should they return to their former communities.

It may well be that after 74 years, the remains of Giichi Matsumura may have once again been "found." It is being said that he was "lost once and found twice." However, National Park Service Archaeologist and Cultural Resource Program Manager at the Manzanar National Historic Site, Jeffrey Burton, holds a different view.

Burton says that there were many people working with the California Bighorn Sheep Zoological Project Area on Mount Williamson who knew exactly where Matsumura's gravesite was located. From 1981 until 2010, the project area was closed to the public to safeguard Bighorn Sheep, a federally protected species. Matsumura's gravesite was located within this restricted area, and the gravesite was respected and left undisturbed.

Burton provided the *Pacific Citizen* with several photos from the original search and burial parties, including a photo of the cairn, which had a note attached to it. The note, written in Japanese, read: "He found his freedom in the mountains."

What comes next depends on the official DNA results on the bones. If it indeed proves to be Giichi Matsumura, as suspected by many following this case, his remains will be turned over to family members to be buried alongside his wife, Ito, who died in 2005 at the age of 102. She is buried at a cemetery in Santa Monica, so in that sense, his remains will be returned home.

If it is not Matsumura, the authorities will have another mystery to solve.

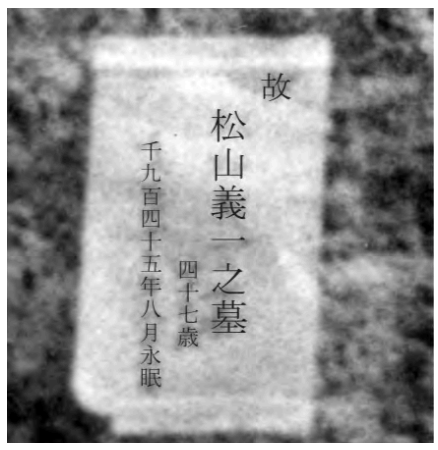
*The Pacific Citizen wishes to acknowledge Cory Shiozaki and Richard Imamura and Manzanar National Historic Site archaeologist Jeff Burton and NPS staff for their time and effort in providing materials for this article.*



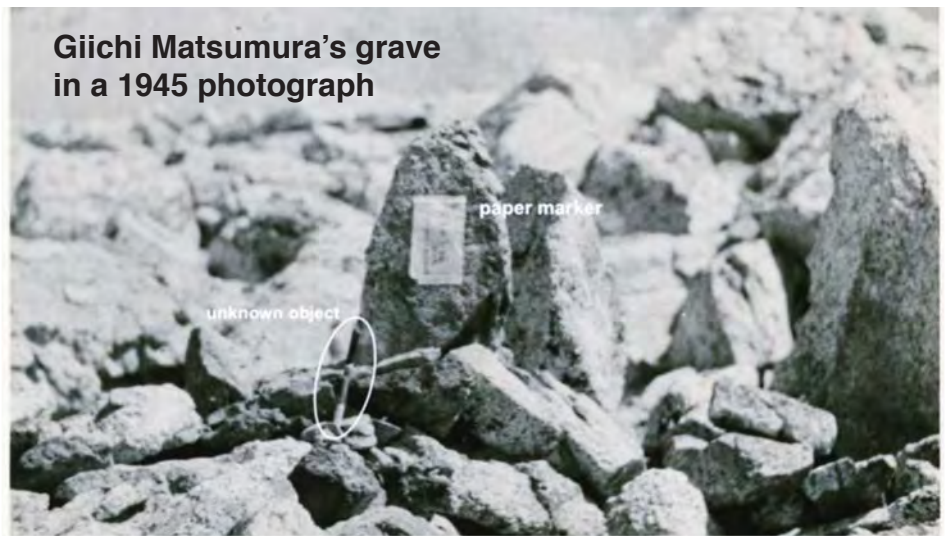
**Giichi Matsumura's funeral at Manzanar**

PHOTO: COURTESY OF MANZANAR FISHING CLUB



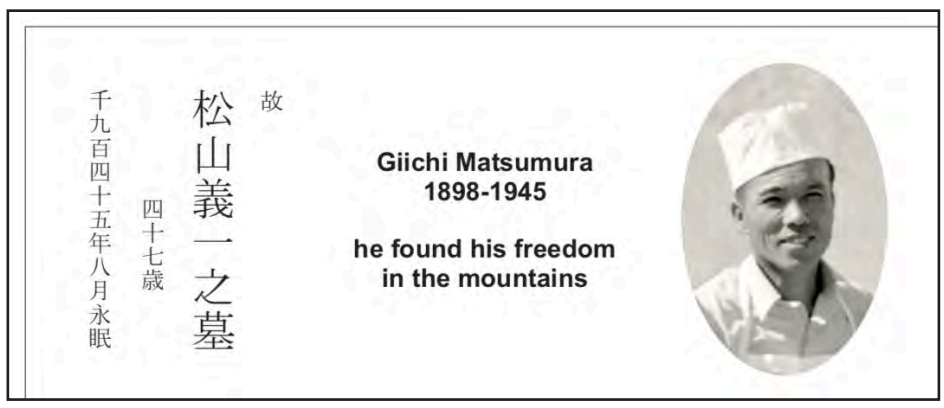




**Translated: Deceased/A Grave for Giichi Matsumura/Age 47/1945 August Rest in Peace**




**Giichi Matsumura's grave in a 1945 photograph**

PHOTOS: COURTESY OF THE MANZANAR NATIONAL HISTORIC SITE




**A proposed anodized aluminum marker to designate the spot where Giichi Matsumura was found and buried.**

# San Fernando Valley

**Happy Holidays**



**Paul Chan, Kim Gohata, Kenyon & Kendall**

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# SEASON'S GREETINGS

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# Best Wishes for 2020

# A TALE OF TWO CITIES — AND THEIR HISTORICAL LEGACY IN 1988

JACLer Jefferson Itami recalls his attendance at the White House for the historic signing of HR442 and S1009 into public law 383-100: The Redress Bill and Letter of Apology for the Wrongful Incarceration of Japanese Americans During World War II.

***By Jefferson K. Itami,***
***Former Incarceree Nr. 37009C***

PHOTO: PACIFIC CITIZEN FILE PHOTO



**President Ronald Reagan *(seated)* signed the historic HR442 on Aug. 10, 1988.**

It began when I was invited to represent the Intermountain District Council of the JACL as one of two Redress Coordinators along with Mr. Hid Hasegawa, Idaho Falls chapter. I am with the Salt Lake Chapter of JACL.

My wife, Linda, and I drove to Seattle, Wash., to attend the August 1988 Biennial National Council of the JACL Convention on the campus of the University of Washington. We were housed in dormitories sharing four-person rooms with colleagues from IDC: Gov. Randy Harano and his wife shared the rooms with Linda and me.

At the Opening Welcome Reception, the National JACL Legislative Education Committee had put up two display boards listing each of the proposed persons who were invited to attend the upcoming Redress Bill signing ceremony at either the Rose Garden (144 persons) or the White House Little Theater (75 persons).

The announcement came the next day while we were in a National Council session — President Reagan had decided to use the White House Little Theater in which to hold the redress combined bill signing ceremony, and therefore, 75 listed persons were invited to this event.

Fortunately for me, I was on both lists, so, when the travel agency set up an office to secure round-trip tickets on a red-eye flight that evening to Washington, D.C., for the signing ceremony, I cleared it with Linda, then went to see our Salt Lake chapter coordinator, Ms. Alice Kasai, and asked her about going. She assured me that the chapter would support my travel, and so I got in line — thrilled with the anticipation of attending the historic (for our group) event.

I went to the Sayonara Banquet dressed in a golf shirt, windbreaker, Dockers and white leather sneakers. We 75 were like special operations troops preparing for a clandestine operation at a distant objective as we took our seats. I rarely cannot recall a meal, but I cannot recall what we had that evening. We were quietly called out and assembled outside at the curb to clamber into waiting busses that transported us to SeaTac Airport. My first trip to Washington, D.C. What a memorable event in our lives!

Our flight had a layover in the middle of the night in Salt Lake City of all places! It was the same on our return flight. I got off of the plane and went into the corridor and used a pay phone to call my pal, Kevin Aoki. He finally answered the phone, and I happily announced I was en route to Washington, D.C., to a White House signing ceremony of the Redress Bill. He asked me, "Do you know *what time it is?*" I said, 'Yep, it's about 3 a.m.,' and he hung up.

My coordinator from IDC, Mr. Hid Hasegawa, Idaho Falls chapter of JACL, was also onboard. I didn't actually see him until after we'd landed in Washington National Airport, changed in the public men's restroom and had taken different shared taxi rides (groups of five) to the Sam Rayburn Building and was seated oddly enough at the same table of 10 with him that I saw good ole Hid! I still remember his cheery, happy countenance!

Congressman Norm Mineta hosted our chopped chicken salad luncheon in the Congressional Dining Room. He came to greet us and gave us words of encouragement, none of which I retained, but, a fellow witness asked him, "Mr. Congressman Mineta, do you know exactly how the signing ceremony will go?" He smiled and replied, "No, this is my first one as well." *That* went over well!

After we'd finished lunch, one of the members of our group from another table informed us that there was a post office inside of the building, and we could get postcards and have them hand-stamped for that historic day as a memento like no other!

So, a number of us went downstairs, purchased postcards for those whose addresses we knew — like my parents, my home address and the like — and mailed them with the "hand-stamped" date and place! Oh, yeah, I don't know where that particular "treasure" is now.

Then, we repeated the fleet of team taxis to the Old Executive Office building, which is across the street from the White House. We were guided into that building, where we entered into a "rite of passage" that included lining up, showing picture identification, being checked in on the preapproved list of 75 by officers of the National Capitol Police, then we were taken to elevators and went down four floors underground, where we were lead through tunnels "into the spaces under the White House" to the Little Theater, where the ceremony took place.

When you hear about "layers" of bureaucracy in the Federal Government, they are speaking literally, as the Sam Rayburn building went down underground 18 or more floors to a large armory and a 50-station shooting range, where I traded police shoulder patches with a lieutenant of the Capitol Police. The "Capitol Police Patches" I obtained will come

PHOTO: ALLISON HARAMOTO




**Jefferson Itami with a historic P.C. issue at August's convention; he was in the audience when President Reagan signed HR442.**




**Aug. 24-Sept. 6, 2018, *Pacific Citizen* edition**

into play a bit later on … just keep them in mind.

So, we were, technically speaking, "in" the White House theater, albeit four floors underneath it. I read an article in the *Pacific Citizen* by another attendee who remembered entering the Old Executive Office building and was confused by it, so they were under the impression we'd never been "in" the White House Little Theater, but they were incorrect. This may clarify their confusion as to whether or not we were "in" the White House.

The theater entryway came right off of the corridor, and the upper back was wide with two sets of stairs descending the steeply raked rows of seats trapped between them.

There was a small stage centered in front of the seats — it was the focal point of attention.

A small, dark wooden table was situated on the front left side of the stage facing us with a chair behind it. A single microphone stand with a white placard lay on the floor behind it. There were other white placards lying on the floor in various places, and when the sponsoring Congressional Representatives and Senators entered from stage left, they looked down at the placards and stood where they were located. Congressman Barney Frank examined the single placard behind the microphone and stepped forward without a word, picked it up and placed it in an inner jacket coat pocket. (Remember this fact!)

We sat pretty well jammed together in various rows facing the silent theater. I was sitting next to Hid Hasegawa on my right and another person I didn't know on my left, about two-thirds of the way up. There were perhaps three or four rows behind us.

So, we had a clear view directly in front as the distance from seats to stage wasn't very much or far.

A man stepped out and announced, "The President of the United States of America!" We stood up and applauded as President Reagan entered the stage, smiling, and he gave us his well-known hand wave. A large rush of domestic and international press corps suddenly filed down both sets of stairs and set up their cameras and microphones, and many still photographs were taken as the president entered onto the stage and stepped behind the podium microphone.

Remember, there were only 75 of us present. If the ceremony had been held in the Rose Garden, the list would've been 144. The press quickly arranged themselves behind us on the upper rail and were very quiet.

President Reagan, after we stopped clapping and sat down, drew a sheet of folded paper from inside his coat and began reading his short speech, recalling that during World War II, a young Army Captain had accompanied Gen. (Joseph) Stilwell to one of the incarceration camps for Americans of Japanese descent housed therein and read the short speech he'd read on behalf of the general at the presentation of a Japanese American Gold Star mother with a posthumous Silver Star medal and Purple Heart medals awarded to her son (Kazuo Masuda), who was buried in France at Biffontaine.

The president paused, then continued, explaining that he was that young Army Captain serving as an Adjutant to the General and recalled the words of President Franklin Delano Roosevelt that "all blood spilled in the service of our nation doesn't recognize the color of the donor, but is blended with their brothers-in-arms and is of the same color, red."

He stopped, folded and replaced his speech and announced that "he would now sign the long overdue apology and redress the wrongful incarceration and deprivation of our Constitutional Rights for those Americans of Japanese descent so incarcerated."

Before he began signing the bills HR442 and S1009 into Public Law 383-100, he acknowledged the 100-year-old Gold Star mother of the Nisei soldier who'd perished during the war. He knelt at the edge of the stage and shook her hand and personally thanked her for the sacrifice of the life of her son. It was a very touching and emotional moment for all of us.

He took his place on the chair at the table as aides set a pile of copies of the bill before him, handing him one at a time, folding each copy to the correct page and discreetly indicating where he was to sign. Each time, President Reagan picked out an ink pen from the tray, which was laden with those special black pens, unscrewed the cap and after signing that copy of the bill, would turn and replace the cap and hand it to one of the congressional delegation behind him. Clerks would set aside each signed copy of the bill for later distribution to those members of Congress invited to the signing ceremony.

After he'd signed the last copy, President Reagan replaced the cap and placed that pen into an inner pocket of his coat and stood up as we applauded. He shook hands with the congressional delegation and turned, waved once more and walked off the stage.

In that moment, the jam-packed press swiftly and silently packed up their gear and left the auditorium as aides appeared and guided us out of the theater and into the corridor for our return walk to the Old Executive Office Building, from which we were instructed to once again take cabs up to the National Capitol Building, East Wing, for a reception with food and drink.

As we walked up to the Capitol building, out of curiosity, I stepped up to a nearby brass door and peered into the interior. I observed plainclothes security officers through the glass doors. They were wearing blue blazers and grey slacks with black dress shoes and red neckties with a tiny pattern — the same as we were, the only difference was that they had Capitol Police round patches on the left front side.

I pulled out one of the new patches I had in my pocket and slapped it on my blazer. It had tiny plastic thread ends projecting on the back that caused the patch to securely adhere to my blazer.

I knocked on the glass, and the security officer looked out at me, saw the uniform patch, came and opened the door for me. I asked where the reception was being held, and he indicated a door midway down the hall just as a guide lead a group into the room. As we entered, I removed the patch, replaced it in my pocket, and we got plates, food and drinks to join Congressman Barney Frank, who pulled out the piece of paper he'd picked up on the stage.

He held it up and said, "I could see from the other pieces of paper with our names that that was where we were supposed to stand, but, gee, he's the president, and they still put this behind the podium!" It had President Reagan's name on it! We all clapped and cheered the humor of that moment.

There were a number of other comments from those congressional members who'd worked so hard to get the bills both in the House and the Senate passed. Many of us individually thanked them for their work. There was a lot of handshaking and smiles, after which we once again got into taxis for the ferrying back to Washington National Airport to retrieve our gym bags from the lockers there. We then flew right back to Sea Tac Airport, where busses took us to Seattle.

Once we'd arrived back, I rejoined Linda, who was staying with Uncle Hisashi and Aunt Margaret Mukumoto, my mom's younger brother, who'd served in the 442nd in WWII and was wounded and decorated for his efforts; his father died in Heart Mountain Incarceration Camp, Wyoming.

One sidebar note: Poor Linda pulled her wrists and had to have an operation after we drove home, caused by lifting and dragging our heavy suitcases, which would've been my job if I'd have been there. Luckily, she was able to call Uncle Hash and Aunt Margaret and ask if she could stay with them until I returned a day later.

We had a very pleasant, fast drive from Seattle via the I-5 down to Portland, catching the turn off to I-80 Eastbound and back to Salt Lake City via Idaho.

Thus ends my tale of two cities: Seattle to Washington, D.C., on Aug. 10, 1988. A day to remember, yes, and thank you, Mr. President — the Honorable Ronald Reagan. ■

**Jefferson and Linda Itami**



PHOTO: GEORGE JOHNSTON

# San Fernando Valley

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*Nicole, Bryan & Jeannette,*
*Kevin, Drew*

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Season's Greetings
***Tom Ige***
*Nikkei Senior Gardens*

# THE *PACIFIC CITIZEN* AT 90

Through the decades, the national newspaper of the JACL has chronicled history's greatest stories — and sets its sights on the future to continue to be there for it all.

***By P.C. Staff***

Over the course of nine decades, the *Pacific Citizen* has changed its office location several times (San Francisco, Seattle, Salt Lake City, various addresses in and near L.A.'s Little Tokyo and even a few years in the L.A. suburb of Monterey Park)

It even changed from its original name, *Nikkei Shimin*.

The *Pacific Citizen* has also changed size from a broadsheet to a tabloid, its page count, frequency of publication and production method from hot metal typesetting to phototypesetting to digital pagination on a desktop computer.

In the Internet age, many readers now get their *P.C.* as a PDF via an emailed link, while others still prefer to receive a newsprint version delivered via the USPS.

To historians and academics, the "glory days" of the *Pacific Citizen* would no doubt be the years during World War II and the aftermath of President Franklin D. Roosevelt's Executive Order 9066, when Larry Tajiri and his wife, Guyo, ran the paper from Salt Lake City.

For Greg Robinson, professor of history at Université du Québec à Montréal and author of the 2012 book "Pacific Citizens: Larry and Guyo Tajiri and Japanese American Journalism in the World War II Era," the continuing importance of a newspaper like the *Pacific Citizen* in 2019 is self-evident.

"America is built on newspapers. A lot of the history that historians chronicle comes from newspapers," said Robinson, who added that the *Pacific Citizen* was "a newspaper that was created out of the need to have a nationwide platform for Japanese Americans to talk to other Japanese Americans and talk to people outside. . . . I was inspired by seeing all of the people, even during just the Larry Tajiri years, who wrote for the *Pacific Citizen* who were not connected with West Coast Japanese communities, whether it was Woody Guthrie, the folksinger, or Elmer Smith, the scholar at the University of Utah.

"Something that has always been true, the *Pacific Citizen* has never been simply a JACL house organ," Robinson continued. "The tensions over how much it's responsible for the rest of the JACL were part of what led to Tajiri's leaving. There are people who read *Pacific Citizen* who are not JACL supporters, who are not primarily interested in the internal politics of the JACL, but in the question of Japanese Americans and America in general."

That question manifested itself with Executive Order 9066, which led to the removal of ethnic Japanese from the West Coast, but also the end — sometimes temporarily, sometimes permanently — of Nikkei vernaculars serving the coast's different Japanese American communities.

Those circumstances dictated that the *Pacific Citizen* was, for a time, the sole Japanese American newspaper that was national (and intercamp) in its reach and coverage.


The Nikkei Shimin

VOLUME 1 — SAN FRANCISCO, CALIFORNIA, TUESDAY, OCTOBER 15, 1929 — NUMBER 1

A BRIEF HISTORY OF THE NEW AMERICAN CITIZENS LEAGUE

WORDS OF CONGRATULATION

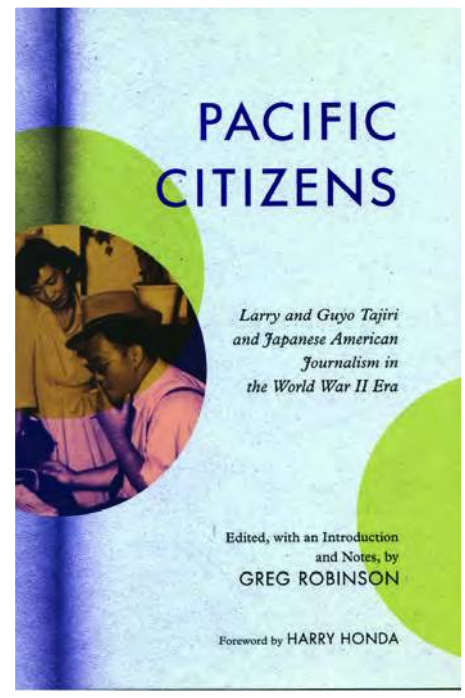
**The *Pacific Citizen* began as the *Nikkei Shimin* on Oct. 15, 1929.**

Being English-only from its inception, the *P.C.* grew with the rise of the American-born Nisei, a generation that learned and used English with an ease most Issei, unseated from their prewar leadership role, could not.

After the Tajiris left the paper in the early 1950s, Harry Honda became the *P.C.'s* editor and began his astounding multidecade association with the newspaper until the early 2010s, as its editor, general manager and editor emeritus.

Then, as now, the *Pacific Citizen* covers issues for a community spread out across the land; 90 years in, even with the Nisei nearly gone and their Sansei scions now the community's elders, that remains the *P.C.'s raison d'être*.

In 2018, the paper again proved its latter-day relevance for its reporting that helped lead to the state of Kansas changing the automobile license plate policy, ending the practice of using the three-letter combination of "JAP" and recalling existing plates with those letters in that order. Larry Tajiri would be proud.




**Grey Robinson's book "Pacific Citizens" chronicles the newspaper throughout the World War II era.**

As for the future of the *P.C.*, it could perhaps best be summed up in the title of a song: "Que Sera, Sera (Whatever Will Be, Will Be)."

And, it likely will be tied into whatever the future holds for JACL itself — still the largest and oldest Asian American civil rights organization — as it faces its own challenges of a shrinking base, thanks in part to having mostly succeeded in its battles for equal rights as it now strives to speak out for today's targets of injustice, remembering the dark times when few spoke up in defense of Japanese Americans.

Robinson noted that even Tajiri "spoke of the coming demise of the ethnic press and people saying in 1950 that it is no longer needed. In the age of Trump, it is needed more than ever." ■

# PAST *P.C.* STAFFERS REMEMBER THE ISSUES

Redress, marriage equality, Watada and going digital are among the memorable stories.



**The *P.C.* used this now-obsolete typesetting equipment to produce the paper.**

PHOTO: COURTESY OF J. K. YAMAMOTO



**Gwen Muranaka at her desk during her *P.C.* tenure.**

PHOTO: COURTESY OF GWEN MURANAKA

***By P.C. Staff***

In celebration of the *Pacific Citizen's* 90th anniversary, the *P.C.* attempted to contact as many former staffers that it could.

For some, there was no current contact information. At least one declined to participate. There were also a couple of people the *P.C.* attempted to reach via social media, but to no avail. At least one is presumed to be dead.

For this article, the *P.C.* did reach former editorial staffers Caroline Aoyagi-Stom (1997-2012; currently at Southern California Edison as a digital content strategy manager), Gwen Muranaka (1991-96; currently at the *Rafu Shimpo* as senior editor), Martha Nakagawa (1998-2003; currently an administrative assistant and a freelance journalist) and J. K. Yamamoto (1984-87; currently at the *Rafu Shimpo* as a staff writer), whose respective stints spanned from the 1980s-2012.

***The P.C.:* Where was the Pacific Citizen's office when you were there?**

***J. K. Yamamoto:*** At first, it was on the fifth floor of the JACCC, next door to the PSW JACL office. In 1985 or 1986, we moved to a building . . . in what is now the Arts District (941 E. Third St.). We were on the same floor as JANM, which only had an office and a staff of three or four people in those days.

***Gwen Muranaka:*** The first couple of years, the *Pacific Citizen* was exactly where I am today (the Neptune Building, 701 E. 3rd St.) and then moved out to Monterey Park. . . . It was huge. I've never had that much office space.

***Caroline Aoyagi-Stom:*** When I got hired, we were in Monterey Park. . . . After being there for a few years, I just felt really disconnected to the community, so we started looking for similar — budget-wise — offices in Little Tokyo. . . . We were actually able to reduce the budget by moving to a

smaller site in what used to be the Sumitomo (Bank) building."

***Martha Nakagawa:*** Monterey Park.

***The P.C.:*** **What outstanding memory or story or overall impression most sticks with you from working at the *P.C.*?**

***Aoyagi-Stom:*** There was always the budget issue. When it comes to the ***P.C.,*** I feel like every board meeting was kind of like, 'Well, how much more can we cut from the newspaper?' . . . That was definitely a regular occurrence for our staff at that time.

I want to give props to the staff that were there at that time because we launched the first website for the *Pacific Citizen* (in 2009). We're the team that brought the *Pacific Citizen* into the digital age.

During that time, we were able to digitize issues of the *P.C.* . . . We ended up getting two CCLPEP (California Civil Liberties Public Education Program) grants. All that money was used to digitize the *Pacific Citizen* so that future generations could have that legacy and see what the paper had done over the years.

We had the exclusive with Ehren Watada (Note: Watada was an Army officer who in 2006 refused orders to be sent to Iraq on the grounds he believed the war to be illegal. His court martial resulted in a mistrial, and his case was ultimately dismissed.) We ran a lot of content around what he did in opposing the Iraq War. In terms of the larger context, because we have a large veterans community, it was a difficult issue for the veterans, too.

I also remember being at the (JACL National) Convention when the resolution to recognize resisters of conscience was passed. We were covering that before the convention, during the convention and afterwards, when they had the ceremony up in San Francisco.

***Muranaka:*** The *Pacific Citizen* has always had this relationship with National (JACL), and there's always going to be these ongoing discussions of what the role of the *Pacific Citizen* was, and I was certainly a part of that during my tenure. Covered a lot of elections.

As far as a National Convention moment, it would have to be when they voted on same-sex marriage (at the 1994 National JACL Convention in Salt Lake City). Norman Mineta gave a . . . kind of dramatic last-minute appeal because it looked like the resolution was going to go down. He pointed out that Barney Frank (an openly gay former U.S. representative for Massachusetts) had supported redress even though there weren't many Japanese Americans in his constituency, that it was the right thing to do. I think that made a big difference in how that vote happened. That was a dramatic moment that I was there to report on.



***(From left) P.C.*** **staffers Bob Shimabukuro, J. K. Yamamoto and Harry Honda in the 1980s**

PHOTO: COURTESY OF J. K. YAMAMOTO



**Harry Honda received the JACL Pacific Southwest District Council's Living Legends award in October 2012. Honda is pictured with his wife, Micki.**

***Nakagawa:*** I was at the *P.C.* when the draft resister resolution was getting hot and heavy. I think what really got it going was "Rabbit in the Moon" (a documentary film produced by sisters Emiko Omori and Chizuko Omori and written and directed by Emiko Omori) came out in '99, and that was really, I think personally, anybody publicly on a wide scale criticized the JACL. I went down to the theater, I think it was the Laemmle in L.A., and the next day, our phones were ringing. People were saying, 'Did you see this? Did you see this?' I think it hit a nerve.

The next year, Frank Abe came out with "Conscience and the Constitution" (a documentary about the Heart Mountain Fair Play Committee), and I know up in Florin, they were coming up with a resolution to apologize to the draft resisters. I contacted the resisters up in Northern California and nobody called me back.

***The P.C.:*** **Do you think that's because you were identifying yourself as being with the *Pacific Citizen?***

***Nakagawa:*** Oh, yes. They were asking around about me. . . . It just so happened that around the time when Gordon Hirabayashi was getting his name on the campground in Tucson, Ariz., where he was incarcerated during the war, on my own dime, I went out there because the Amache-Granada, Topaz and central Utah draft resisters were there. I introduced myself, and Frank Emi and Yosh Kuromiya were the ones who really broke the ice for me. . . . That's really when they started to talk to me. (Nakagawa mentioned that for her reporting on the issue, she "got yelled at" by several high-profile JACL members she didn't want to name, some of whom demanded that she be fired.)

A resolution passed (to apologize to draft resisters of conscience) at the convention in 2000, and in 2002, we had a ceremony in San Francisco at the JCCNC (where the JACL formally apologized).

***Yamamoto:*** The question of how independent we could be as journalists sometimes came up. Certainly, it was our job to cover the JACL, including conventions and national board meetings, but I think the editorial staff also felt obliged to cover criticism of the JACL from within the community. I don't know if there was an actual written policy regarding what we could and could not do.

The years 1984-87 was a critical period for the redress movement, and I got to see history in the making. We received regular updates from LEC (JACL's lobbying arm) on which subcommittees and committees the redress legislation was going to and which members of Congress supported it. I remember covering at least a Senate subcommittee hearing in L.A. where speakers included Sen. S. I. Hayakawa (a redress opponent) and Rep. Norman Mineta.

Regarding redress, I also covered the *coram nobis* cases of Korematsu, Hirabayashi and Yasui (who died in 1986), as well as the NCJAR class-action lawsuit.

Other major stories included the Vincent Chin case. His killers were prosecuted on hate crime charges and were found guilty, but their convictions were overturned on appeal.

I covered astronaut Ellison Onizuka, who spoke at an APA Heritage Month event in L.A. along with two other Asian American astronauts. He had already gone into space in 1985 aboard the Discovery. Of course, we were shocked by his death in the Challenger explosion in 1986, and we covered memorial events such as the renaming of Weller Street as Astronaut Ellison S. Onizuka Street with his wife, Lorna, lin attendance.

I don't know if this is worth mentioning, but when I was at the *P.C.*, we published an essay written by a high school student named Gwen Muranaka. Little did I know that she would later be my boss.

***The P.C.*: Any particular memories of Harry Honda you'd like to share?**

***Muranaka:*** I don't think anything about the *P.C.* could be complete without mentioning Harry and Micki Honda. What I didn't realize about Harry until joining the *Rafu* was his deep involvement in Little Tokyo.

I think one thing about the *P.C.* vs. the *Rafu* is that the readership is all over the country compared to the *Rafu*, whose readership is more specific to Little Tokyo and Southern California. But Harry represented all of that. I remember Henry Mori coming into the office and just hanging out. Harry was still writing things for Maryknoll and all these places. It wasn't until I came to the *Rafu* that I found all that stuff out. But Harry was keeping on top of everything, which was pretty amazing.

***Yamamoto*:** He wasn't involved in day-to-day decision-making. I remember that when we asked for donations for a new typesetting machine, a lot of people wrote checks because of their fondness for Harry.

***Nakagawa:*** I just want to recognize Harry Honda. I didn't always see eye to eye with him. But he had 50 years of service to the *Pacific Citizen*. He was very loyal, and I respect that. He was just like an encyclopedia. He had a lot of information in that head. He was very helpful. I would ask him a question, and I would steer him in the right direction. . . . I know he was getting a lot of flak from the old-timers (for her reporting). He never told me personally, "Don't write this." ■



**Martha Nakagawa's stint at the P.C. ran from 1998-2003.**



**Caroline Aoyagi-Stom was the P.C.'s executive editor from 1997-2012.**

# San Fernando Valley

*Health and Happiness in the New Year.*
*Evie Shigekuni Mitarai*

Best wishes for 2020
*Mary Endo*

**Season's Greetings**
*Hazel Isa*



*Happy Holidays*
Setsuko Sato



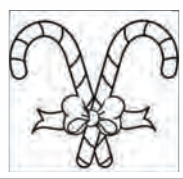
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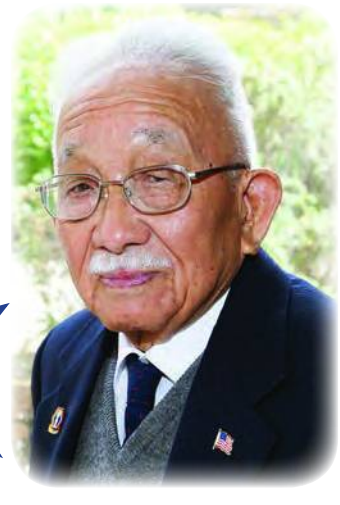
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# Wasatch


Happy 90th JACL
Happy Holidays!
The Wasatch Front North JACL

CHAPTERS » continued from page 34

# PERSPECTIVES ON JACL AT 90 YEARS

PHOTOS: COURTESY OF HIRO NISHIKAWA



William M. Marutani became the first Asian American justice of a court in a major city east of the Mississippi in 1975.



Grayce Uyehara with Massachusetts Rep. Barney Frank and Sen. Spark Matsunaga (D-Hawaii) in 1988

*By Hiro Nishikawa,*
*Philadelphia JACL Board Member,*
*EDC Vice Governor, Speakers Bureau*

At its founding in Seattle in 1929, no one could imagine what ups and downs JACL might experience in the next nine decades. Its involvement in the lives of Nikkei during and after World War II have certainly been monumental.

But as a 4-year-old being incarcerated with his family in Poston Camp 1, I was clueless about the JACL, despite its impact on my life. Growing up in Gilroy, Calif., after WWII and getting a biochemistry degree at UC Berkeley, I finished a doctorate at Oregon State University in Corvallis. This led to a migration to the East Coast for a 30-plus year career in biotech pharmaceutical R&D. During this time, I was oblivious about JACL. Even in 1991 when I filed for redress and received a U.S. government check, I was not aware of JACL's involvement.




JACL participated in the 2010 massive immigration rally in Washington, D.C. Pictured *(from left)* are Floyd Mori, Toshi Abe and Hiro Nishikawa.

It was on the eve of the 1998 JACL National convention hosted in Philadelphia that by chance I became acquainted with some Philadelphia chapter members and got drawn into its activities. For the convention, I made room meeting signs, photographed events and attendees and did miscellaneous grunt work.

Herb Horikawa and Bunji Ikeda headed the convention operations. A year later when I retired from my day job, I got sucked onto the chapter board. This was followed by my election to chapter president and eventually EDC governor. As a late JACL comer, I had lots of reading and studying to do of its history and organization.

The 2000 National Convention in Monterey, Calif., was somewhat intense for a newbie delegate like me. Intense discussion focused on JACL making a public apology to No-No Boys and other Nikkeis who resisted War Relocation Authority camps during WWII.

At that time, the JACL had condemned these "nonloyal" actions, and these Nikkei experienced a lifelong ostracism from the larger Nikkei communities. Despite the contentious debate during the National Council sessions, the resolution passed, and the National JACL held a public apology ceremony in San Francisco the following year.

The issue was revisited at the 2019 National Convention in Salt Lake City, where the National Council passed a resolution that offered a more comprehensive apology to those who were negatively impacted by the actions JACL took during that time period.

America was traumatized in 2001 with the crashing of aircraft by terrorists on the Twin Towers (which had been designed by Minoru Yamasaki) in Manhattan. That day, 9/11, which also included aircraft crashes in Pennsylvania and the Pentagon, panicked Americans like the attack on Pearl Harbor on Dec. 7, 1941.

While there was a "knee-jerk" public reaction to a "new face of the enemy," JACL groups stepped up to support and stand with Arab and Muslim communities against misdirected abuse. JACL vigils took place in Philadelphia and San Francisco, among other places.

In 2007, the National Korean American Service and Education Consortium, based in Los Angeles, funded a massive campaign for comprehensive immigration reform by chartering Amtrak trains from seven U.S. locations to converge on Washington, D.C., in June.

Floyd Mori, upon invitation from NAKASEC, alerted JACL chapters along various train routes to join in. Those of us from Philadelphia got on the train originating in Boston and went to Union Station in D.C. From there, a few thousand participants marched to Lafayette Park just north of the White House and demonstrated for immigration reform.

While long overdue, a comprehensive overhaul of immigration is needed owing to the patchwork nature of laws currently on the books. In 2010, a massive (estimated at 250,000) coalition of immigration reform advocates convened on the D.C. Mall extending from the Washington Monument to the Capitol Building. JACL, OCA and NAKASEC were among the Asian American groups in this massive demonstration. Congressman Mike Honda led cheers of encouragement, as did President Barack Obama via closed-circuit video.

Having to cope for decades with federal government euphemisms related to WRA camps during WWII, the National JACL decided to enable a more accurate accounting and reporting in the future.

The Power of Words project was launched by the National Education Committee, which researched the history of federal vocabulary as well as writings by established historians. In 2013 a booklet, "Power of Words," was published in print and electronic media. I learned that I had been an inmate in Poston prison, not an internee.

Studying American history in high school in the 1950s, I could not imagine that a Nikkei could become third in line to the U.S. presidency in my lifetime. But in 2010 with the passing of Sen. Robert Byrd in the 111th Congress, Sen. Daniel Inouye of Hawaii became "president pro tem" and third in line to President Obama. Inouye passed on Dec. 17, 2012, and had been a longtime JACLer.

I close this essay with notes on two prominent Philadelphia JACL members. One is Grayce Uyehara, who was a chapter co-founder in 1947. She had been retired as a social worker when she was appointed executive director of the Legislative Education Committee of JACL, which was the lobbying arm that worked nationwide for redress. Her lobbying effectiveness in Congress resulted in the Civil Rights Act of 1988, which was signed by President Ronald Reagan.

The other is Judge William M. Marutani, who became the first Asian American justice of a court in a major city east of the Mississippi in 1975. As a JACL lawyer in 1967, he presented an amicus brief to the U.S. Supreme Court in the case of *Loving v. Virginia,* which resulted in the banishment of anti-miscegenation laws across America.

While our community is very small compared to the West Coast, JACL Philadelphia continues to make an impact on the national discourse.

Happy 90th anniversary to JACL! ■

# PUYALLUP VALLEY HOSTS ANNUAL MOCHITSUKI

The Puyallup Valley chapter of the JACL hosted its annual mochitsuki at the Tacoma Buddhist Temple on Dec. 7. The team of 20 included chapter members, community members, past PNW Gov. Sheldon Arakaki and the Puyallup Valley board. During the downtown, the chapter also hosted a mini Tsuru for Solidarity "fold-in," where the group taught the next generation the importance of social justice while folding cranes that will be sent to Tsuru for Solidarity and displayed next year at its 'National Pilgrimage to Close the Camps," which is set for June 2020 in Washington, D.C.



The Puyallup Valley chapter held its annual mochitsuki at the Tacoma Buddhist Temple.



Participating in folding tsuru are *(from left)* Stephen and Leslie Soule and Kai and Max Vu.

# FIGHTING GENTRIFICATION WITH COMMUNITY-DRIVEN INVESTMENT

## To ensure Little Tokyo's legacy in Los Angeles, stakeholders pool their money for community control.




**Construction continues on the Metro Regional Connector at First and Central streets in Little Tokyo.**

**PHOTO: CAROLINE CALDERON**

***By Kevin Sanada and Caroline Calderon***

*"Little Tokyo is really important to me because it's the one place [that] Japanese Americans throughout Southern California have in common. It's a meeting ground for all kinds of organizations. . . . I figured if we don't try to save Little Tokyo, it's guaranteed we're going to lose it. So, making this investment now is really important to me."*

*— Dean Toji, professor and Long Beach, Calif., resident*

Walk the streets of Los Angeles' Little Tokyo, and you'll soon recognize many of the beloved businesses, restaurants and community institutions that have come to define the 115-year-old neighborhood for generations.

Yet, walk a bit further, and you'll also notice signs of change. As Downtown Los Angeles has revitalized, high-rise luxury condos, big chain stores and high-end businesses have moved into Little Tokyo, bringing rising rents and real estate speculation with them.

Small businesses today face rising development pressures and uncertain futures, as an increasing number of Little Tokyo's historic businesses and family owned restaurants have closed their doors.

Unfortunately, this is not a unique challenge. Communities across the country, from Seattle's International District to Downtown Honolulu, are seeing the same trends. While high-end hotels, luxury housing, major infrastructure projects and office space increase economic activity, many long-standing residents and stakeholders are asking, "Who really benefits?"

Many local residents and organizations are seeing the change firsthand. Yet, decisions about the future of the community are oftentimes left to property owners and landlords.

"New and old businesses are challenged with high rents. . . . We've seen several businesses leave in the past months including Baldoria, Karayama and Ai Beauty Salon," shared Megan Teramoto, a small business counselor with the Little Tokyo Service Center.

As one of four remaining Japantowns in the country, Little Tokyo remains a center for Nikkei in Southern California. It is home to a network of community-based organizations, cultural institutions, spiritual centers and family owned businesses that serve a diverse population intersecting race, age, class and gender. Individuals and families visit or return to Little Tokyo for annual festivals and celebrations or to patron the neighborhood's groceries, medical offices, museums, restaurants and small retail stores.

However, according to a 2014 study conducted by the University of California, Los Angeles, from 2001-11, Little Tokyo saw a decline in the number of Asian-owned small businesses and higher rates of construction and property transactions in the area.

Community members today worry about major projects such as L.A. Metro's Regional Connector, a new metro station connecting the Metro Gold Line to the Seventh Street/Metro Center Station that will be among the largest in the Metro system. Once constructed, it will bring another major shift to the community, with thousands of Metro riders passing through Little Tokyo every day.

"It's important to support small businesses because they have a stake in the community, and they stick through the good times and bad times. The community is their family," commented Carol Tanita, manager of Rafu Bussan, a Japanese arts and gifts import shop with a long history in Little Tokyo.

In 2016, Rafu Bussan relocated from its Second Street location to a much smaller space after the building's owner sold the property. Today, the location is occupied by Shoe Palace, a national athletic footwear and apparel retail chain.

While Rafu Bussan fortunately found a new location to support its business, many others may not be so lucky. So, what can be done to ensure that future generations continue to enjoy Little Tokyo's historic businesses, restaurants and institutions beloved by generations past?

In 2018, following a string of major housing and retail developments in the neighborhood, a group of community members began to brainstorm new ways to ensure community businesses and institutions would have the opportunity to stay in the neighborhood. The group went on to establish the Little Tokyo Community Impact Fund (LTCIF), a community real estate investment fund focused on purchasing, leasing and managing commercial real estate in and around Little Tokyo. As a social purpose corporation, the LTCIF is able to make mission-driven investments. It is a unique, innovative solution to address a challenging issue.

"It all came back to the idea that, if you don't own it, you don't control it," noted Bill Watanabe, chair of the LTCIF. "Through this effort, we are working not only to ensure that small businesses and community institutions thrive, but also that community members have an active role in the future of the community."

The LTCIF is inspired by other community efforts in the United States aimed at preserving housing and small businesses in rapidly changing communities.

By attracting local investors, the LTCIF will pool funds and purchase real estate in the Little Tokyo area to guarantee community-based control of properties where there is an opportunity to support existing or new businesses. When the LTCIF acquires a property, it plans to provide affordable rents to culturally aligned businesses, institutions and spiritual centers that help define and shape the spirit of Little Tokyo.

The LTCIF invites California residents to purchase shares of the fund at the $1,000 or $10,000-plus level. In less than four months, the fund has already attracted more than $450,000 in investments; it aims to capture as much as $5 million by next summer.

"We, JAs, have a unique place called Little Tokyo (J-town to some), as well as a unique community. People outside of our community wish for and are sometimes envious of what we have — a space, organizations, a sense of community — that they have not experienced anywhere else. We know that we should have done something like this years ago, but we didn't. Nonetheless, we need to do it now," said Steve Nagano, LTCIF investor and Little Tokyo resident. "The concept is not new to our community, the tanomoshis, Keiro, Little Tokyo Towers, Gardeners' Federation (and building) were all built by a cooperative effort, people contributing their part for the greater community. The difference today is the mechanism (an investment fund). As the Nisei generation pass and the Sansei age, I feel we have a duty, an obligation, to them to do our best to keep Little Tokyo, Little Tokyo."

"[I invested] because the faith that I have with what you guys are trying to do is the hope and faith in the future. It's not to look for money. It's not to look for some investment. It's to hold onto what we did have but in a different way. . . . I know places that have been lost. . . . It's something that needs to be done especially for the future generations to know what Little Tokyo meant to the Nisei and Sansei," shared Pat Aoki at the most recent LTCIF meeting in Gardena, Calif.

"You're sitting here because I think you're more interested not in the highest return but putting money to work that's going to benefit the community, [and] at the same time, you'll get something on your investment," said Watanabe at the Gardena meeting.

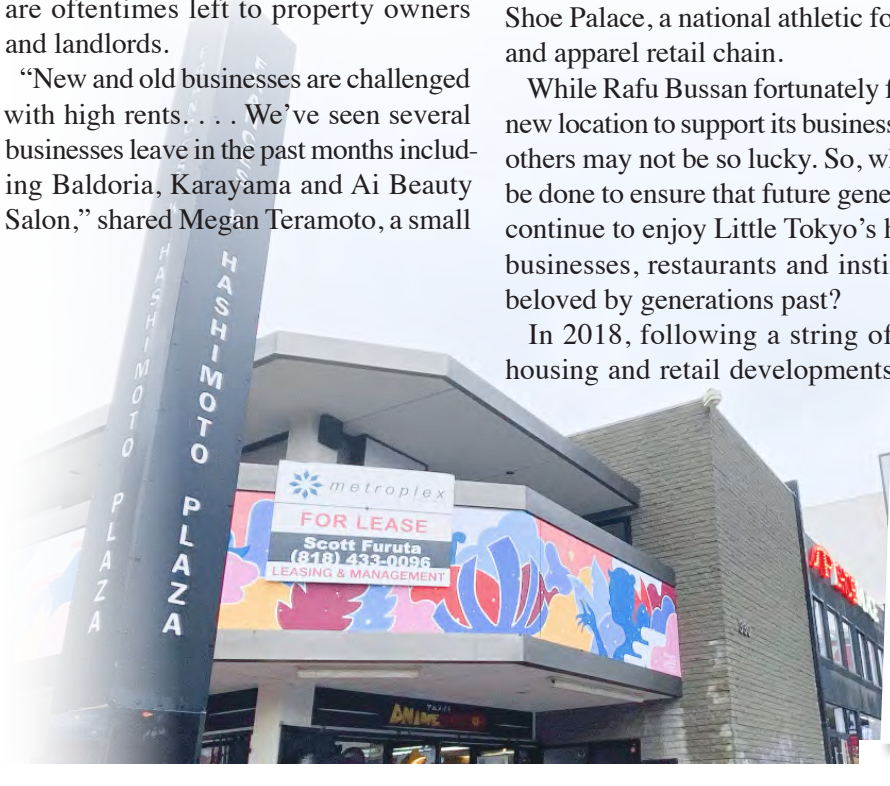
While a real estate investment fund is still a fairly new concept, it is part of a larger community-driven movement to address displacement. LTCIF is intended to complement other community-based strategies.

In 2013, a community-wide campaign led by the Japanese American Cultural & Community Center, Little Tokyo Community Council and LTSC was formed to envision an inclusive and sustainable future for Little Tokyo. The campaign has sparked a series of community events, meetings, workshops and direct action.

The LTCIF is built upon the work of multiple generations of Nikkei and the lived experiences of the many diverse communities who have called Little Tokyo home. Individuals from all walks of life want Little Tokyo to be a place that reflects the neighborhood's history and culture.

Most importantly, investors see the LTCIF as a means to ensure that future generations have a stake in the community. Alan Nishio purchased shares on behalf of his grandchildren with this perspective: "This is what we've passed on to you. . . . We expect you to carry it on."

Prospective investors that are California residents can request an Offering Circular on LTCIF's website *(http://littletokyocif.com)*. Interested individuals and entities are invited to request presentations for their respective community organizations and groups. The fund welcomes volunteers who can share their expertise on community outreach, marketing, finance and real estate. For more information, contact the fund at *info@littletokyocif.com* or call (213) 293-7535. ■




**A view of Second Street showing a "For Lease" sign and the former location of Rafu Bussan, now occupied by Shoe Palace**

**PHOTO: CAROLINE CALDERON**




**A snapshot of investment options available through the Little Tokyo Community Impact Fund**

**PHOTO: LTCIF**



*(From left)* **Stan Umeda, Lauren Sumida and Christine Umeda hold tsuru during the March Dilley Detention Site protest.**



**Tsuru are held during the protest at Fort Sill in June.**

PHOTOS: ERIC KAWAGUCHI

# FOLDING FOR A CAUSE

## Tsuru for Solidarity sets its sights on Washington, D.C., in 2020 as it works to ensure 'Never Again Is NOW.'

***By Nancy Ukai, Contributor***

Christine Umeda, 81, a survivor of the Tule Lake and Topaz concentration camps, bought her plane tickets two months ago. So did her husband, Stan, her brother, Calvin, and her longtime friend, Marielle.

All four were children in U.S. concentration camps during World War II, and all now live in Sacramento, Calif. They're ready to pack their suitcases with origami cranes and fly to Washington, D.C., next year for a historic "National Pilgrimage to Close the Camps" on June 5-7.

There, they will join what is expected to be the largest gathering of Nikkei since WWII: a Japanese American-led march on June 6 to the front of the White House. Camp survivors, descendants and allies from across the nation will carry 125,000 hand-folded paper cranes to protest family separations and the mass detention of immigrants and asylum seekers.

The march and pilgrimage are being planned by Tsuru for Solidarity, an all-volunteer group with regional hubs across the country and supporters that include dozens of JACL chapters and members.

"*Tsuru* means 'crane,' and the crane is a symbol of nonviolence and love," said Mike Ishii, a Tsuru for Solidarity lead organizer and member of the New York JACL chapter. "We want to bring the crane to this struggle against the racial and religious profiling of immigrants. Japanese Americans experienced that during WWII, and it's time to stop repeating history."

Christine Umeda has been rallying the Sacramento community to join the TFS movement. "You should see the enthusiasm at our church," she said.

She and fellow JACL Florin chapter members Josh Kaizuka, Jesse Okutsu and Kaitlin Toyama organized a meeting last month that attracted 120 community members to the Parkview church for a crane folding event, video presentation and informational sessions.

Children and 90-year-olds folded cranes that will be taken to the U.S. capitol.

Such "fold-ins" are spreading. The JACL National Convention committee, which adopted the crane as a theme this year, is donating 4,000 cranes, according to Stephanie Sueoka of the Salt Lake City chapter.

Henry Kaku, an origami master in the JACL Sonoma County chapter, is teaching followers how to fold giant paper cranes that will be held aloft on bamboo poles. To move the march along, Stan Shikuma of Seattle has lined up 80 taiko drums to ship to D.C.

Other events that are being planned in D.C. include a community-wide gathering, visits to congressional offices in the week leading up to the march and "healing circles for change," in which survivors of mass detentions from different communities will share stories of incarceration in small groups.

Satsuki Ina, a psychotherapist from the San Francisco Bay Area who specializes in the treatment of community trauma, will oversee the healing circles.

In addition, a weeklong, cross-country caravan will leave Los Angeles' Little Tokyo in late May and arrive in Washington, D.C., a few days before the march, according to Manzanar Committee Co-Chair Bruce Embrey, a lead organizer for the caravan.

The caravan journey, whose route will be finalized in early 2020, echoes the removal of Nikkei from their homes on the West Coast in 1942 but also provides ways to "create new meaning from trauma" by stopping at historical sites of WWII incarceration and current ICE detention facilities.

Lisa Doi of Chicago reports that many new faces are appearing at TFS meetings that the chapter has been holding with the Japanese American Service Committee and other local groups. She was recently on a call with district members in eight Midwest states and is planning visits to congressional offices as well.

"With many senators and 80 congressional representatives, we can talk to people in Congress and say, 'I'm from Indiana, and we're here to talk to you about indefinite detention and separating families,'" she said. "The JACL is a civil rights organization, and this is the civil rights and human rights issue of our time."

David Inoue, executive director of the JACL, is on the 30-person Tsuru for Solidarity steering committee that consists of nine JACL members, including Carl Takei (NY), Nancy Ukai (Berkeley), Alix Webb (Philadelphia), Holly Yasui (National) as well as Doi, Ina, Ishii and Shikuma.

"JACL has marched in Washington in the past and is proud to be part of this march of our own community, fighting in solidarity with so many others for what is right," Inoue said. "Tsuru for Solidarity is one of many expressions from the Japanese American community in staunch opposition to the incarceration and separation of families coming to our country."

Endorsers and partners of the action include the JACL, Densho, the Minoru Yasui Legacy Project, the Fred T. Korematsu Institute, JCYC, the Oregon Nikkei Legacy Center, the Manzanar Committee, the National Japanese American Historical Society, Minami Tamaki LLP, the Tule Lake Pilgrimage Committee, Detention Watch Network, the Center for Constitutional Rights and many others.

The D.C. action has especially sparked interest among students and young adults.

"The more I learn about the effects of intergenerational trauma, the more I can see how Japanese Americans are still dealing with the trauma from the camps," said Mieko Kuramoto, an undergraduate in Massachusetts and a JACL National Youth/Student Council representative. "We know that's happening now" about children suffering from trauma.

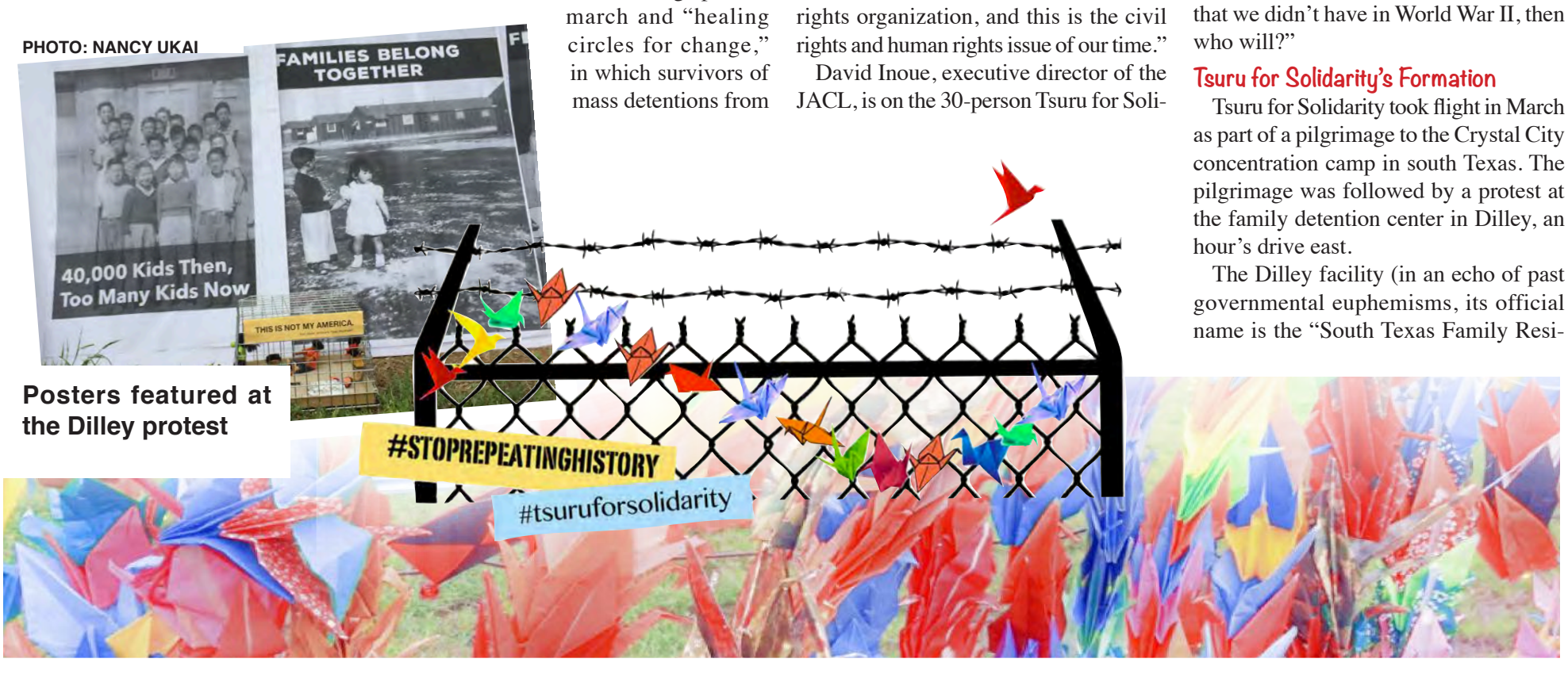
*P.C.* Editorial Board Chair Rob Buscher of the Philadelphia chapter asked, "If we don't speak up now and become the allies that we didn't have in World War II, then who will?"

### Tsuru for Solidarity's Formation

Tsuru for Solidarity took flight in March as part of a pilgrimage to the Crystal City concentration camp in south Texas. The pilgrimage was followed by a protest at the family detention center in Dilley, an hour's drive east.

The Dilley facility (in an echo of past governmental euphemisms, its official name is the "South Texas Family Resi-

PHOTO: NANCY UKAI




**Posters featured at the Dilley protest**

dential Center") was custom-built by a prison company to detain families with children. It consists of multiple barrack-like structures that are surrounded by a high fence.

Dilley can hold a total of 2,400 women and children and is the nation's largest migrant detention center. Ten infants had been released only weeks before the group arrived.

Two weeks before the trip, Ishii put out a call on social media for the community to fold 10,000 cranes that would be hung on Dilley's barbed-wire fence. Within a week, 10,000 cranes arrived in boxes and bubble-wrap envelopes postmarked from Maine, Hawaii and Florida, among others.

By the time the group arrived in Texas, more than 25,000 tsuru had been sent, some with messages written on the wings by schoolchildren. Five thousand had been folded by San Quentin prisoners.

The Seattle chapter alone contributed 12,000 with help from the Puyallup Valley chapter and donations from the Bainbridge Island Japanese American Exclusion Memorial, churches, Densho and families who held their own folding parties.

"The outpouring of support was unexpected and widespread but indicative of how the issue resonates within the JA community," Shikuma said. "The tsuru is a powerful symbol of hope, life, peace and grace. It offers something positive in a world full of negative news."

After the rally at Dilley, the birds had to be removed from the fence. Not long after the demonstration, Ina woke up one morning thinking, "We should fold more and take 125,000 cranes to Washington, D.C."

But not long afterward, the government announced that 2,400 unaccompanied migrant children would be confined in Oklahoma at the Fort Sill Army base.

Fort Sill has a long history of mass detentions, including the imprisonment of Native Americans after the base opened in 1869 and during WWII, when 700 Japanese Issei men were incarcerated as alien enemies, among them 90 Buddhist priests. Two immigrant men, Kanesaburo Oshima from Kona, Hawaii, and Ichiro Shimoda of Los Angeles, were shot to death at the fence.

The tsuru-wielding group showed up at Fort Sill on June 22. Twenty-five Nisei, Sansei and Yonsei from five states held posters and a long rope of cranes to protest the plans for incarcerating children there.

A confrontation with a military officer who ordered the group of protestors off the property was televised and went viral. "You need to move. What don't you understand? It's English. Get out!" he said.

The group's seven camp survivors, who were children while imprisoned at Poston, Minidoka, Topaz and Tule Lake, refused to move and left only after they finished their statements. Days later, the military officer was suspended.

A public rally the same day featured allies from AIM Indian Territory, Black Lives Matter and an Oklahoma dreamers group. This coalition-building led to a second, even larger demonstration at Fort Sill one month later, in 102-degree heat.

Rev. Duncan Ryūken Williams, the author of "American Sutra," led 25 Buddhist priests and lay leaders in a chanting of the Heart Sutra at Fort Sill and held an interfaith ceremony.

Within days after the second rally, the government announced that plans to confine children at Fort Sill had been put on hold.

## The Healing Power of *Tsuru*

The tsuru became a symbol of the international children's peace movement after Sadako Sasaki, a victim of the atomic bombing of Hiroshima, died in 1955 at age 12. She had folded more than 1,000 cranes as a prayer for healing and peace. The act of folding a crane for peace has its roots in a Japanese prefecture that sent the most Issei immigrants to the U.S.

Folding and carrying the paper birds to detention sites has led to new meanings for the tsuru.

Ina has said that "showing up, speaking out and breaking our silence to stand with others has created a powerful healing" for the community, as well as for recipients and witnesses. When such direct actions are combined with healing circles and the sharing of personal stories of trauma, the effects are multiplied.

When Japanese American activists shared stories of their incarceration in Austin and Laredo, Texas, and San Francisco, listeners wept. The wings of the tsuru carry wisdom and compassion, Rev. Williams said. That is how a paper bird can fly.

## Ways to Join the Tsuru Movement

Join the Tsuru movement by 1) folding cranes; 2) making a tax-deductible donation to help defray event costs by writing a check to Densho with a note: "Tsuru for Solidarity" in the subject line *(see website);* 3) plan to come to Washington, D.C., in June. Online registration for pilgrimage activities will begin in January.

Funds are needed to cover the substantial costs of the event, including stage construction, permits, security, Porta Potties and space rental. Thanks to the support of community members, a generous matching grant of $25,000 by Gerry and Gail Nanbu was met in 10 days. A new matching grant of $25,000 is underway now. Please donate at *https://tsuruforsolidarity.org/give/*.

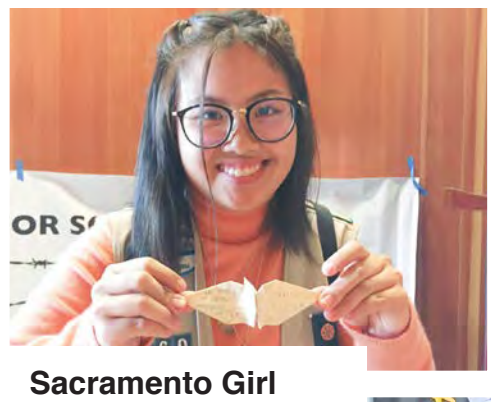
In addition, JACL chapters can become an endorser or a co-sponsor. Endorsers permit the use of their logo and help publicize. Co-sponsors make a financial donation and send members and recruit others to go to Washington, D.C.

The run-up to June is sure to be an eventful one. There are so many ways to help and get involved and be a part of this history-making pilgrimage to make our voices heard!

***For more information on folding, stringing and where to mail the birds, visit the Tsuru for Solidarity website at https://tsuruforsolidarity.org/tsuru-resources/. And visit www.tsuruforsolidarity to learn more about the 2020 pilgrimage. To get on the mailing list, email tsuruforsolidarity@gmail.com.***



**Henry Kaku's giant crane with Bay Area folders *(front row, from left)* Geri Handa, Akemi Ina and Ruth Sasaki and *(back row, from left)* Shoshana Arai, Jun Hamamoto, Nancy Ukai, Kaku and Mari Matsumoto**



**Sacramento Girl Scouts also helped to fold tsuru.**



**Puyallup Valley chapter members at Seattle JACL's Tsuru Fold-In in March**

PHOTO: STAN SHIKUMA



**At the JACL National Convention in July, Sandra Grant shows cranes donated by the convention committee.**



**Eileen Yamada Lamphere, president of the Puyallup Valley chapter, brought her grandsons to help at the March Tsuru Fold-In event.**

PHOTO: STAN SHIKUMA




**Tsuru for Solidarity made its presence known at the Dilley protest.**

# PREPARE TO CARE

*Introduction*



Are you spending more and more of your time tending to your family member or close friend's needs? It may start with driving your mother to get groceries or helping to sort through bills. Later, you may find yourself taking time off work to help prepare meals or go with her to the doctor. As our loved ones age, it's likely a matter of when, not if, they will need our help. Nearly 44 million Americans—1 in 5 adults—are family caregivers for a relative or friend over age 50.[1] According to a nationwide AARP study, Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders (AAPIs) are almost twice as likely to care for their elders than the general population.[2] Respect for one's elders is a value common to AAPIs; as is family togetherness, demonstrated by the fact that AAPIs are also twice as likely as Whites to live in households with at least two adult generations.[3]

Since two-thirds of AAPIs age 50 or older are immigrants, they may have traditional cultural expectations that can be a challenge to meet by their more Western acculturated children who are attempting to balance work-life with raising children of their own. AARP's study found that the vast majority (73%) of AAPIs, more than any racial or ethnic group, believe that caring for parents is expected of them. The study found that AAPIs were more likely to take charge of caregiving for their elders: they are more likely to talk to doctors (54% vs. 36%), contribute financially (51% vs. 27%), and handle paper work or bills (41% vs. 33%) than the total population of the same age or compared to Whites, Blacks, and Hispanics.[4]

Caring for one's loved ones as they age is one of the cultural ways AAPIs honor and show respect for their elders. This guide is a practical tool to help you care for them. You'll find information, resources, and checklists to help you get organized and find the support that you might need.

**Caring for a family member or close friend is one of the most important roles you'll play.**

The guide provides five important actions for you to consider in the care of your loved one:

**Start the conversation.** Many people wait until a crisis occurs before they talk about their values and preferences, wishes for health care or details of their finances. If you wait until a fall, accident, or serious diagnosis, you may be forced to make important decisions without careful consideration.

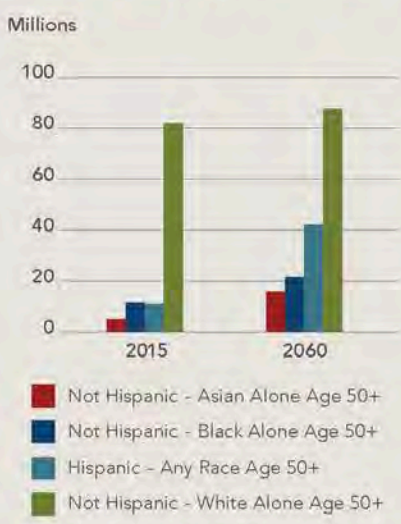
**Form your team.** No one should try to approach the responsibilities of caregiving alone. While other family members are likely sources of support, don't overlook friends, extended relatives and family associations, religious organizations, and culturally relevant social services as resources too.

**Make a plan.** Putting together a family caregiving plan now will help you respond more quickly and effectively should the need arise. It can also provide some peace of mind. A plan helps everyone get on the same page and keeps the focus on what's best for your loved ones.

**Find support.** There will be many issues that arise during your caregiving experience that require additional information and resources. Don't hesitate to reach out to organizations and professionals with experience in caring for older people.

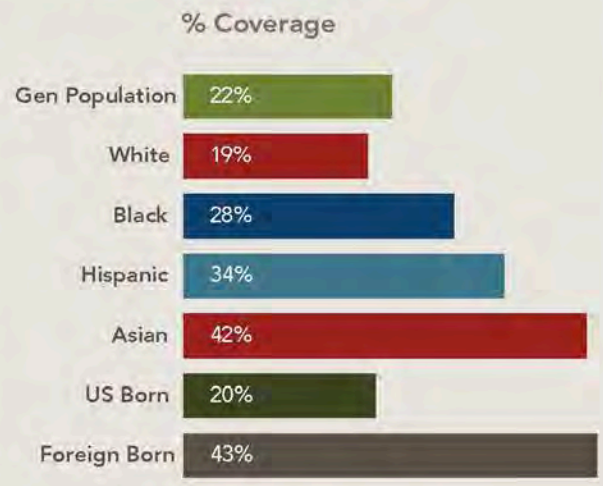
**Care for yourself.** As a caregiver, it's easy to forget about your own needs. Keeping up your energy and maintaining your health are critical in order to care for others. It's just as important to make a plan to take care of yourself as it is to create a caregiving plan for others.

## Growth and Diversity of the 50+ (2015-2060)




Source: U. S. Census Bureau, 2014 National Population Projections, Population Division

## Incidence of Caregiving for elders (Age 45-55)




Source: Belden, Russonello & Stewart and Research/Strategy/Management 2001. "In the Middle: A Report on Multicultural Boomers Coping With Family and Aging Issues." AARP Research Report

[1] Caregiving in the U.S., The National Alliance for Caregiving and AARP 2009.

[2] Caregiving Among Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders Age 50+ Executive Summary. AARP Report. November, 2014.

[3] Hua, "Asian Americans More Likely to Have Multigenerational Households." NBC News, August 25, 2015.

[4] Caregiving Among Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders Age 50+ Executive Summary. AARP Report. November, 2014.

Scan here to download the complete Prepare to Care Guide.

Follow us @AARPAAPI for more stories and resources.

*Asian American Journalist Shares Caregiving Story:*

# "SELF-CARE FOR THE SECRET CAREGIVER"

Each year 40 million family caregivers in the U.S. provide critical support to adults with a chronic, disabling, or otherwise serious health condition. AARP and the Asian American Journalists Association (AAJA) partnered to bring to light personal journeys of AAJA members or accounts of other Asian American and Pacific Islanders who have been impacted by caregiving for a loved one.

Chris Lee's* very personal essay, "Self-Care for the Secret Caregiver," is about her secret struggle to care for her mother battling cancer. When her mother was diagnosed, she didn't tell anyone and only admitted it much later to Chris when she let her accompany her to a doctor's visit. Over a year later, it remains a secret, and Chris often tells others that her mother is helping her care for her young son, even though the bulk of time together is actually spent on her mom's healthcare needs.

## "SELF-CARE FOR THE SECRET CAREGIVER"

*By Chris Lee**

I am a secret caregiver.

I'm a caregiver because I care for my aging mother; secret because no one knows she is fighting for her life.

Like many immigrant Asians from an earlier generation, the word "cancer" strikes fear. It's bad luck to even say the word.

You would think that since my mother went to medical school, she could speak openly, candidly, and rationally about it, and she can—when it's someone else's. Friends seek her medical advice, but she still has not told anyone outside of her primary caregivers (doctors and children) that she herself is preparing for chemotherapy after many surgeries and different types of radiation treatment.

Becoming a caregiver was a sneaky process for me. It began with minor tasks: helping with some translations, making doctor's appointments, and dealing with the pharmacy.

Then she realized there was something serious going on, but she would only drop hints cryptically in Mandarin Chinese like "*wǒ juédé yǒudiǎn qíguài*" (我覺得有點奇怪), "I feel a little strange." After several months of my trying to understand what was happening, I got frustrated and angrily demanded that she allow me to accompany her to her next doctor's visit. She argued with me for a while, before she finally relented.

Her doctor (also her medical school classmate) took one look at me and said in Chinese "*nǐ de māmā bù tīng wǒ de huà*" (你的媽媽不聽我的話), "Your mother doesn't listen to me." He showed me test and biopsy results, lab reports, and images startling even for someone like me, with no medical background.

"Please," he pleaded with me in English, so I would understand the gravity and urgency of his words. "Please help your mother schedule her surgery. I gave her a referral months ago and it's still not done. I didn't know what to do other than to ask you to come in." Out of exasperation, he had asked her to bring a family member to the next appointment. Mom hadn't relented to my badgering, but her doctor's. Sometimes when I can't sleep at night, I wonder if she would have ever told me if it hadn't been for him.

It was probably this appointment I would point to as the day I became her caregiver, but it wasn't until months later—after countless doctor's visits, a major surgery, an unexpected hospital stay, and a pathology report confirming she had cancer—that it dawned on me. This responsibility was mine and not going away. The epiphany came as I was creating a new shared calendar between us so we could better manage her appointments and medications.

I now realize that my Mom knew on some level she had something serious. After all, it was she who discovered the suspicious lump. It was she who demanded the labs and tests showing something to be concerned about. Yet as the facts flooded in, her training switched off and her humanity switched on: fear overtook her and she was too emotionally paralyzed to follow her own advice.

A couple of years ago, I became a parent. I went into the role of caregiving for an infant with joy and eager anticipation. Little did I know that soon, I would also be (much less joyously and not-at-all eagerly) caring for my mother, as well. I unwittingly became a member of the sandwich generation: responsible for bringing up their own children and caring for their aging parents.

I sometimes joke that it's easier to care for a 2-year-old than for a 72-year-old, but it's actually the truth. For one thing, you just can't make an adult do what you want her to do. For another, not only are there various options for child care, but others know how hard it is and offer to help.

When your mother doesn't even tell her sister or best friend she is sick, the burden of care (and worry) falls squarely on you.

It falls on me, her secret caregiver.

I let my mom tell her friends she spends so much time with me because she is helping out with my toddler. And while that is true some of the time, one look at our secret shared calendar would tell you that the bulk of our time together is for her healthcare needs.

Months flew by and my life changed dramatically to revolve around my mother instead of my child or my career. The words "self-care" hadn't entered my mind because I was always worried about "Mom care" or "baby care" first.

One day, while I was waiting for my mother at the cancer center, I noticed a poster for a weekly caregivers support group meeting. I surreptitiously scheduled my mom's next physical therapy session for the same time.

At the first session, I was grateful that I didn't recognize anyone. I felt my burden being lifted as I walked into that room. I gave my secret to strangers whose experiences were so similar, that they did not feel like strangers at all. Listening to their stories made me realize that while my specific journey is unique, I am never alone on this path.

My mom wasn't telling anyone what she was going through. It became my not telling anyone what I was going through.

The biggest piece of self-care I gave myself was permission to talk about my situation with specific friends. These people outside my extended family and my mother's social circles allow me to talk openly, while honoring her wishes for privacy. Many people assume that when you get bad news, you should tell people: people you love and who love you so that they can support you. My Mom comes from a generation and culture where bad news is kept close, so others aren't needlessly hurt by it. She doesn't want support from outside because she is used to being strong for herself.

Sometimes one must protect someone else's secret out of respect, as well as out of love. Sometimes a secret is unwelcome, festering like a cancer. Sometimes its cure is simply to uncover it.

**Chris Lee is a pseudonym used to protect the identity of the writer's mother.*

"Through AAJA's partnership with AARP, we are able to highlight the complexities and challenges of caring for a loved one. This is one of many stories. We hope that these caregiving stories serve as an inspiration and support for other caregivers, and we thank AARP for continuing to provide information and resources for caregivers," said Michelle Ye Hee Lee, AAJA President and Washington Post reporter.

An AARP study found that the vast majority (73%) of AAPIs, more than any racial or ethnic group, believe that caring for parents is expected of them. The study found that AAPIs were more likely to take charge of caregiving for their elders: they are more likely to talk to doctors, contribute financially, and handle paper work or bills than the total population of the same age.

"Caring for a family member or close friend is one of the most important roles one can experience. It can be an extremely challenging and lonely experience as well. To be able to laugh together, to cry together and to be grateful together is important for AAPIs to talk about and share our stories with others. Let's build our personal support network and let AARP help provide information and resources," stated Daphne Kwok, AARP Vice President of Multicultural Leadership, Asian American and Pacific Islander Audience Strategy.

AARP Real Possibilities

# REIMAGINE EVERYTHING

## *Research Finds That Age of First-Time Grandparents Rises from 47 to 50; Number of Grandparents in Workforce Increases from 24 to 40 Percent*

By Ron Mori



AARP released its Grandparents Today National Survey highlighting the latest trends among grandparents in the United States. Since 2001, the number of grandparents has grown by 24%, from 56 million to 70 million. Four in ten grandparents work, contributing to their strength as a significant market force.

The AARP survey revealed that while grandparents make important financial contributions to their grandchildren, they also share wisdom and guidance. Many say they relish giving advice on everything from health to education, thereby providing a moral compass as well as emotional and social support.

Grandparents also contribute to their grandchildren's well-being by babysitting or as their primary caregivers. One in ten live in the same household as their grandchildren and babysit, and 5% of these grandparents provide their grandchildren's primary care, according to the national representative sample.

Currently, one-third of grandparents surveyed have grandchildren of a different race or ethnicity than their own. In 2011, 77% of grandparents had identical-race grandchildren, but by 2018 that number had declined to 72%.

Grandparents who have a grandchild of a different race or ethnicity say it is important to help their grandchildren learn about the heritage they share. In addition, seven in ten make an effort to help their grandchildren learn about the heritage they do not share.

In contrast to former generations, today's grandparents are more accepting of their grandchildren's different sexualities as well, with a majority saying they would support an LGBT grandchild. A strong majority (73%) of the grandparents surveyed enjoy their role and rate their performance as high, up from 66% in 2011.

With four in ten grandparents in the workforce today, their busy schedules as well as the schedules of their children and grandchildren create the second largest barrier to spending time with their grandchildren. However, many feel it's vital to connect with their grandchildren because it gives them a mental and emotional boost. To overcome time constraints, grandparents increasingly adopt new technologies, such as group texting and video chats. As grandparents' use of new technologies increases, however, their use of phone calls to contact their grandchildren decreases. Only 46% say they reached out to their grandchildren by phone in 2018, while 70% did in 2011.

Other key findings of the research include:

- 94 percent of grandparents provide some sort of financial support to their grandchild(ren)
- 87 percent would accept an LGBT grandchild
- 34 percent have grandchildren of mixed or different race/ethnicity
- 71 percent say their health status is very good or excellent
- 89 percent say their relationships with their grandchild(ren) is good for their mental well-being
- 29 percent live more than 50 miles away from their closest child, up from 19 percent in 2011
- 11 percent have a grandchild living with them, consistent with 2011 results
- 5 percent of those in multigenerational households are primary caregivers of a grandchild living with them.

Just remember that the more emotional support grandparents and grandchildren give each other, the happier and healthier they all will be. One day, I look forward to being in the ranks of grandparents teaching and learning new things with my grandchildren.



Follow us @AARPAAPI for more stories and resources.

DID YOU KNOW?

# ASIAN AMERICAN AND PACIFIC ISLANDERS ARE BICULTURAL & BILINGUAL

Over **1/2** of AAPIs 50+ gather news and information through ethnic media.

**87%** of AAPIs 50+ are **foreign-born**

**64%** have become **naturalized citizens**

**86%** speak a language other than English at home

AAPIs are the **2nd fastest growing segment** of the 50+ population

Over the next 40 years, **50+ AAPI Americans are projected to grow from**

**4.3MM** TO **13.2MM**

**AARP has tailored resources** to service the AAPI community as they age.

For more AAPI 50+ resources, visit **aarp.org/aapi**

# ASIAN AMERICAN AND PACIFIC ISLANDERS 50+ LIVE INTERGENERATIONALLY

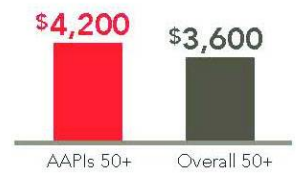
AAPIs 50+ tend to live in

**3-generation households***



*17% AAPIs 50+ vs 7% of total population 50+

**HOME IMPROVEMENT EXPENSES**




**TOP CONCERNS OF AAPIS 50+**

Cost of college

Cost of senior care

**CAREGIVING**

**42%** of AAPIs are caregivers vs. **22%** of general population

**AARP has resources for both caregivers as well as care recipients.**

Visit **aarp.org/caregiving** to download your free, comprehensive Prepare to Care Guide.

# ASIAN AMERICAN AND PACIFIC ISLANDERS 50+ ARE MORE FINANCIALLY VULNERABLE

**AAPIs age 65 and older are at more risk for economic insecurity in their later years**

compared to those in the total U.S. population of the same age.

**UTILIZE FOOD STAMPS**

| AAPIs 65+ | | Total pop. 65+ |
|---|---|---|
| 14% | vs. | 9% |

**LIVE IN POVERTY**

| AAPIs 65+ | | Total pop. 65+ |
|---|---|---|
| 13% | vs. | 9% |

**DO NOT RECEIVE SOCIAL SECURITY INCOME**

| AAPIs 65+ | | Total pop. 65+ |
|---|---|---|
| 32% | vs. | 14% |

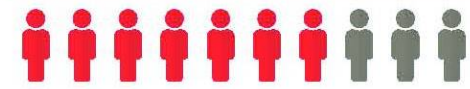
**DO NOT HAVE RETIREMENT INCOME***

| AAPIs 65+ | | Total pop. 65+ |
|---|---|---|
| 78% | vs. | 63% |

*Including from pensions and various retirement plans

AND DID YOU KNOW?

**7 in 10** AAPIs 50+ are **targets for fraudulent crimes**



**AARP has a dedicated Fraud Watch Network** to help keep your community safe.

Visit **aarp.org/aapi** for resources on how you can protect yourself against fraud and financial crisis.


Sources:

AARP. (2014, May 13). 10 Facts about Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders 50+ [Press release]. Retrieved from https://www.aarp.org/content/dam/aarp/home-and-family/asian-community/07-2014/news-release-AARP-10-Facts-about-Asian-Americans-and-Pacific-Islanders-50%2B-05-13-2014.pdf

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AARP Real Possibilities

Reflections



The market is filled with vendors selling tomatoes, mangoes, pineapple, fish, bread, clothes and much more.



High spirits on the last day of class. At the Mahad, or religious public middle school, students have a dress code.

PHOTOS: COURTESY OF KAKO YAMADA





Kako Yamada is shown here with her host moms from Pre-Service Training, a three-month training period conducted near the capitol.

# MWENDA HAMBAPVI TSI IREWE:
# One Who Goes Slowly Won't Be Hurt

## Life in Comoros as a Peace Corps Volunteer and why this service is life-changing in more ways than one.

***By Kako Yamada***

The Fajr prayer echoes through the concrete alleyways of Mitsamiouli. The roosters cock-a-doodle-doo, cuing the sun rays to peek into my room. It is 4:30 a.m. My host mom, host dad and I make our way into the dawn. As we mount up to the next village, the forest of palm trees and blue beach present themselves in front of us. My pregnant mom pants as my dad teases and pulls her along. Some days we go down to the beach for a polar plunge — me and my mom screaming as we enter the water, an expression that doesn't necessitate translation. These are some of the fond memories from the beginnings of my time now as a Peace Corps Volunteer.

Peace Corps was a program started by President John F. Kennedy in 1961 to promote world peace and friendship. Since then, it has sent more than 235,000 volunteers to more than 141 countries with the mission to (1) "help the peoples of interested countries and areas in meeting their needs for trained men and women," (2) "promote a better understanding of the American people on the part of the peoples served" and (3) "help promote a better understanding of other peoples on the part of Americans."

I am a part of the smallest Peace Corps post at the moment with a total of 25 TEFL volunteers and two Peace Corps Response Volunteers. Each one of our experiences are different, coming from various backgrounds and living in different villages in Comoros, an island archipelago in the Indian Ocean made up of Grand Comore (Ngazdija), Moheli (Mwali), Anjouan (Nzouani) and Mayotte (Mawore).

While the country declared independence from France in 1975, Mayotte voted to remain a French region, which, along with the numerous coup d'états and unstable governance, remains a point of contention. The country of about 814,000 people is 98 percent Sunni Muslim and is considered to be one of the poorest countries in the world.

That is the kind of macro-level information one might find on the Internet. And while I hesitate to write a piece only six months in-country, I hope to provide a snapshot and share some of my developing thoughts, observations and remaining questions.

In addition, I hope that we can also recognize our global positionality as we reflect on 90 years of the JACL and the ongoing fight to protect civil rights. For example, it is significant to me, as a child of immigrants, to be able to potentially help Comorians who are looking to immigrate to an English-speaking country.

Behind this lies my family history and the fact that in 2019, my American citizenship is valid enough as a Shin-Nikkei to participate in a program started by an Executive Order. Even more, the existence of my job as an English teacher and the motivation for Comorians to learn English for work and education-related reasons cannot be untangled from a history of political and economic power play, where English has become the global language.

Comoros is separated from the rest of the world by sea; however, it is connected to the world through the movement of people and engagement in a global system. As global citizens who also navigate in this complex web, I hope that my reflections of life 10,000 miles away can feel close to home and add to conversations already being had.

### A DAY IN THE LIFE

The picturesque northern capital of about 9,000 residents that I now call home is decorated with a beachside market, restaurants, food trucks, a stadium, a library, multiple banks and schools.

My days here consist of teaching, tutoring, playing sports, shopping at the market, strolling through the village, spending time with family and eating. My primary assignment through the Peace Corps and the Ministry of Education is to teach English to sixth-, seventh- and eighth-graders at two public middle schools.

One reality of schooling here is that many parents have opted to enroll their children in private schools that are not affected by teacher strikes. Public school teachers strike, for they are often unpaid by the government, sometimes for as long as three months or more. Albeit the dwindling retention, I thoroughly enjoy our classes of 10-25 students, who are excited to participate in between their groany "teacher, I'm hungry" and "teacher, *gestures going to pray.*" Lesson planning and teaching for 16 hours takes up most of my weekday mornings, followed by washing the dishes for the family or hand-washing my clothes.

My afternoons consist of learning the local language, attending soccer practice for one of three teams, practicing taekwondo, going to the market to chat and barter with friendly vendors, eating from a large plate with my family of six and watching Mexican telenovelas dubbed in French when there is electricity. I am lucky to be able to say that the days fly by; it is my understanding that boredom and loneliness can be difficult parts of many people's service experience.

### SERVICE AS A TASK VS. LIFE AS SERVICE: AVAILABILITY, TENACITY AND DISCIPLINE

Being placed in a bustling village has provided me with activities to interact with many new people, but it also came with the challenge of balancing the needs of the community and my own capacity.

The importance of meeting the needs of a community rather than forcing ideas upon them, creating sustainable projects through partnerships and respecting the exchange of cultures in order to stay away from neocolonialist tendencies have become repeated pillars in recent development work. While these ideas are crucial bases, I have found that the interactions are at the person-to-person level, and people are more complicated than ideas or entities and therefore necessitate time, patience and availability to understand.

With abundant requests for secondary projects, including English clubs for adults and children, radio shows and work with the National Parks, I considered putting aside the things that make me happy, such as playing sports, in order to teach more English. I wondered if I would be serving "better" if I used the two hours that I work out to teach the countless adults asking for English lessons.

However, what is special, complex and realistic about Peace Corps is that service cannot just be from 9-11 a.m. on a Monday. I am not just a two-dimensional English teacher; I am a person with multitudes and service here is life itself.

It engulfs the hours I spend as the only woman in the whole stadium playing soccer, the time I spend discussing my family's Japanese background and the late-night girl talks I have with my host mom.

This is different from the way I conceptualized service in the States. For example, my job as an English teacher to refugees at the Nationalities Service Center was confined to my work hours. In my engagement with organizing the protest against the Berks Family Detention Center, I wasn't even able to meet a detained family.

Amongst the business of life in America, service was another task in a day; something to be checked off of a to-do list. And no matter how genuine the intention and passion, I was looking to yield something: perhaps a certain turnout at the protest, a change in legislation or a wage.

When my life is service instead of service being a part of my life, it is much harder to try to define things. Certainly there are projects with intended outcomes and measurable impact; at the same time, it is exciting and challenging that the other things I do in my day could have positive or negative ripple effects.

This keeps me on my toes and calls for me to be better by being responsible for more than just myself. For example, I realized that the time I use scrolling through Instagram could otherwise be used singing English songs with my sister. Procrastination remains one of my worst habits, but I am more motivated to kick it now that I understand my time is also other people's time. To be available is a part of my job, and it is refreshing to say, "Yes," to helping people without looking for anything in return.

I have also learned *ya uzisa ye tsi djinga,* or "the one who asks is no fool." I learned this saying when I was hesitating to ask to practice with the women's national team and in joining the men's soccer team. In Comoros, the one who asks, the one who tries, is the one who will be happy because the response is often a warm *karibu* or "welcome."

In addition to getting me out of my shy shell, the experience of representing Americans, women or a person of color can give me extra strength. For example, I felt extra wind under my wings when doing sprints amongst 30 men on my soccer team because me giving up wouldn't just be Kako giving up but would reflect and may impact the experience or image of girls or Americans. This awareness has ingrained in me a sense of tenacity.

I hope that my actions in the classroom, at the stadium, in the streets, at home, sometime in my life could possibly positively impact someone. It could be a student who learned to study with flashcards, a girl who feels more comfortable participating in sports or, well, I don't know, and that's OK.

While I know that I will learn much more in my coming months of service, I will continue to interact, connect, listen, attempt to share, learn, smile, laugh and do what I love, find new things I love and push through the times when I may feel useless and, above all, stay here.

***Kako Yamada is a member of the New York JACL chapter. She is currently working in Comoros as a Peace Corps Volunteer in the education sector. Follow her story on Instagram at @ka_ko.mo_sava.***

A view from above

# Wisconsin

Seasons Greetings
from the
Wisconsin Chapter!

JAPANESE AMERICAN CITIZENS LEAGUE OF WISCONSIN
JACL WI FIND US ON:

President----------Ron Kuramoto
Vice President----------Margaret Igowsky
Secretary----------Christine Kuramoto
Treasurer----------Carole Shiraga
Membership---------- (vacant)
Programs----------Cheryl Miyazaki Lund
Education Liason----------Christine Kuramoto
Appointed Board Members--Cheryl Miyazaki Lund, David Suyama
Communications---------- David Suyama
Newsletter Editor---------- Kevin Miyazaki
Scholarship---------- Miyako Mukai
Sunshine---------- Miyako Mukai, Lucille Miyazaki

# PSWDC

Happy Holidays from the
JACL Pacific Southwest District

**Executive Board**

| | |
|---|---|
| Nancy Takayama | Governor |
| Andrew Gruhn | Secretary |
| Alayne Yonemoto | Treasurer |
| Justin Kawaguchi | NYSC Rep. |

**Board at Large**

| | |
|---|---|
| Kenneth Inouye | Kent Kawai |
| Michelle Komatsu | Ryan Yoshikawa |
| Carol Kawamoto | Immediate Past-Governor |

# Snake River

## HAPPY HOLIDAYS

from members & friends of
SNAKE RIVER CHAPTER
Ontario, Oregon

**Board Members**

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|---|---|
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| Janet Komoto | Howard Matsumura |
| Mike Iseri | Danielle Hiramatsu |
| Teresa Fetherolf | Morgan Bruton* |

* student board members

# Seabrook

On behalf of the Seabrook JACL, we extend our sincere best wishes & holiday greetings to the Pacific Citizen and fellow JACL members.

Seabrook JACL

*May 2020 be a year filled with peace and prosperity*
*Happy New Year.*

# New Mexico

Congratulations to JACL on 90 amazing years!!

90TH ANNIVERSARY

Happy Holidays

Happy Holidays from the New Mexico Chapter!

# Florin-Sacramento

Happy Holidays
from the
Florin -Sacramento Valley Chapter

# EDC

*The Eastern District Council withes you a*

JOYOUS HOLIDAY SEASON
AND A
PROSPEROUS NEW YEAR

# Seattle

Season's Greetings!

Seattle JACL

www.SeattleJACL.org

# Washington, D.C

JAPANESE AMERICAN CITIZENS LEAGUE
JACL
DC CHAPTER

*The DC Chapter congratulates JACL on its 90th anniversary and wishes everyone a healthy and prosperous New Year!*

# LEGACY AND RESPECT




**Tom Koshio served with distinction in the Military Intelligence Service during World War II.**

***By Gil Asakawa***

It feels like I've attended a lot of funerals and memorial services this year — more than in the past. I can sense the JA community's combined generational memory fading with each ceremony. But in this holiday season, I'm hopeful that the legacy of our members can be preserved, as a fitting tribute to our forebears' experience.

I recently attended a service for 91-year-old Tom Koshio, a wonderful, kind man who was a constant presence in Denver's Japanese American community. My wife, Erin Yoshimura, knew Tom's family growing up, and she and I had some great conversations with him. He joined the U.S. Army near the end of World War II and served in the Military Intelligence Service during the U.S. Occupation of Japan because he could speak Japanese.



Well, sort of, anyway. He loved to tell the story of how he was recruited into the MIS: He was interviewed by an officer for his ability to speak Japanese, who then pointed to a pencil and said, "What's that?" *"Kore wa empitsu desu* (this is a pencil)," Tom said in basic Japanese. He passed the test, as far as Uncle Sam was concerned.

After his military service, Tom raised a family in Denver, and most folks in the community remember him as someone who placed family first. Tom's family members told moving stories about his deep sense of decency and kindness. He was always smiling at every event when we saw him. I mentioned his genial nature to one of his kids, who replied that Tom knew when to be a "dragon dad."

Outside of his family, we knew Tom as a proud veteran. He always attended the annual Nisei Memorial Day Service in full uniform (he helped with lowering the flag to half-mast and raising it after the ceremony), even as he became more frail over the years.

To pay tribute to his service to the country, his funeral, which was held at the Tri-State Denver Buddhist Temple, featured a presentation of colors by a military honor guard. It occurred to me that this was the first time I had seen a military presentation at the Buddhist temple.

Then, I remembered my first-ever Buddhist funeral, which was the first time I had seen the U.S. military pay tribute to the deceased: my dad.

I was already an adult and had not even attended many Christian funerals, when my father died of cancer. His service wasn't at the Denver Buddhist Temple, though. It was at a funeral home, and both the Buddhist minister and military officers were there. That was in 1992.

He was not even 59 years old. Like Tom Koshio, he was a veteran who served in Japan during the post-war Occupation in the Counter Intelligence Corps. His job was to interrogate Japanese soldiers returning to the country who had been prisoners of war and ferret out Communist sympathizers and spies.

Like Tom, he could speak Japanese. His story will fill a book someday; it's a project I started researching before he died.

Growing up, my dad never talked about his youth. I didn't even know that he and his family had been stuck in Japan during the war, and he became a houseboy for American troops afterwards until he was old enough to enlist. He went on to serve during the Korean war and met my mom when he was stationed in Hokkaido.

The men who served in the MIS and CIC seldom spoke about their role during and after the war against Japan. Unlike the 442nd Regimental Combat Team, they were told their mission was secret, and they kept it that way for decades. No headlines during the war celebrated their efforts helping the Allies advance in the Pacific like the media coverage of the "Go For Broke" troops battling across Europe.

When my dad was diagnosed with lung cancer (he began smoking when he was a teenager because the U.S. Army gave him a free carton of Lucky Strikes every week — he smoked Lucky Strikes until he died), I finally asked him, "Hey, dad what was it like being at Pearl Harbor?" "I don't know," he said.

That's when I squeezed out the story that he and his Hawaii-born brothers and sisters had been taken to Japan by my grandfather in 1940, and they were stuck there during the war.

When my dad died, he had served in the Army Reserves for decades, yet we had no idea that he was very involved in negotiations between Japan and Russia over disputed territories in the north. An officer from D.C. pinned a Legion of Merit medal on his chest that day at the funeral. Tom Koshio was given the Congressional Gold Medal for his service along with other Nisei veterans, and he was always modest about the honor.

That's the kind of legacy that the generations before us have held on to. Some have passed their stories on to younger generations, but others haven't. I'm glad I learned my father's story — much of it from my relatives both in the U.S. and in Japan after he passed away — and feel the responsibility to keep it alive.

Our community does a pretty good job of holding on to both the ups and downs of our shared past experience. I for one am committed to making sure the legacy of our parents and grandparents is given the respect they deserve.

Happy holidays, everyone. See you next year!

***Gil Asakawa is former chair of the Pacific Citizen Editorial Board and author of "Being Japanese American" (Second Edition, Stone Bridge Press, 2015). He blogs at www.nikkeiview.com.***




**U.S. military medals conferred upon George Asakawa**

PHOTOS: GIL ASAKAWA

TAKEI » continued from page 37

To Takei, it was an echo of the same "sweeping generalization" toward Japanese Americans that "we were potential spies, saboteurs, Fifth Columnists" after Pearl Harbor. "I thought he would learn something from 'Allegiance,'" he said. "I sent him a personal invitation as my guest to come see 'Allegiance.'"

But Takei made that invitation public by talking about it on the sundry talk shows, and when the day came, he made sure there was a big sign on an aisle seat that read: This Seat Reserved for Mr. Donald Trump.

While Trump never showed up, Takei said during intermission that people were lining up to take photos and selfies with the sign, helping to both promote the show — and stick it to Trump.

If there was one area where Takei appears to wish he could have acted sooner was in the area of gay rights. But he had seen the negative effects what had happened to the careers of other gay Hollywood actors — he cited Tab Hunter as an example — whose homosexuality was revealed. To him, it was the tough choice between being able to work in his chosen field or be publicly true to himself.

"I stayed closeted all these years, actively campaigning on these other social justice issues — the civil rights movement, the peace movement during the Vietnam War, redress — 50 years ago, Stonewall happened and the gay liberation movement began, and I wanted to participate in that, but I had a career to protect, and I had to remain silent," Takei said. " So, the guilt that overlaid my silence while speaking out on these other issues was enormously heavy."

It was that, plus then-California Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger's veto of the state's marriage equality bill that helped push George and Brad to go public. "We decided, 'All right, we're going to come out' and commit myself to activism there,'" Takei said.

Having helped produced "Allegiance" and with him taking an executive producer role on "The Hotel on the Corner of Bitter and Sweet," Takei took an admonishing tone regarding who the onus is on to get projects like that made.

"Asians need to be on the production end," Takei said. "We need more Asian Americans taking the leadership in getting projects initiated. . . . Asians need to start taking the initiative.

"There are many people in the Asian American community that should be, that are in a capacity where they can take that initiating role. But they don't. So, we who advocate that have to be the ones to do that, to serve as the groundbreakers."

Noting that "African-Americans support their artists," Takei also lamented how Japanese Americans need to support their fellow Japanese American artists who take that initiative.

"I don't want to see a Philip Kan Gotanda play with a Japanese American cast being attended by a only a sprinkle of Japanese American faces," he said.

"Society is changing. What an arc my life has had," said Takei, reflecting on a life of growing up in a barb wire-enclosed



**Fumiko Takei with her son, George**

PHOTO: PACIFIC CITIZEN

camp to becoming a celebrated actor to being in a legally recognized marriage to another man.

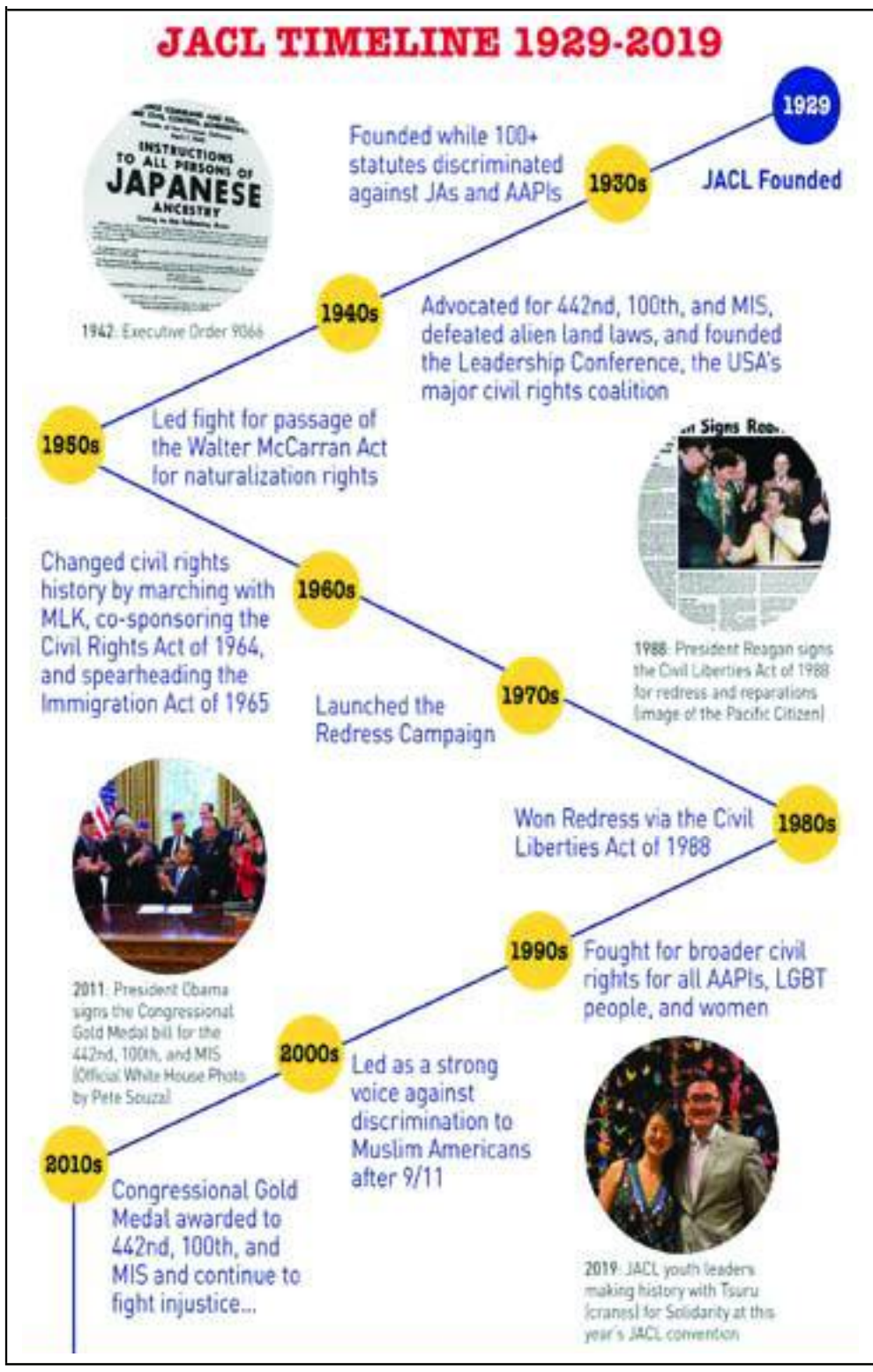
Asked what he might have done differently or what sort of advice he wished an older, wiser mentor could have given a younger George Takei, he said, "I've enjoyed my life. I've enjoyed discoveries that I've made. I've enjoyed what I've learned and I've enjoyed the challenges that I've had. You can't live life saying, 'I shoulda, woulda, coulda,'" Takei said.

"Life is rich because you deal with the challenges, the disappointments, the horrors, and you overcome and find new things to engage you. I've had a challenging life. I've had a fulfilling life. I've had an enjoyable life. I don't have those regrets of 'If someone had done something for me' or 'If I had done this or that.' I'm looking forward to the rest of the challenges.

"I know that I've celebrated more birthdays than I will be having," Takei continued. "I'm mindful of that. I'm not living with 'The end is coming.' I'm enjoying the challenges that I'm having today and some of the successes and maybe some of the disappointments. That's all part of the game. But that's what makes life worth living."

It was at this point where Brad Takei interjected, "If George had had that wise mentor, he would have said, 'George, make sure that at some stage in your career, you get a Brad in your life that can make sure you can stay on schedule.'"

"That's true," George Takei said. "I can do what I do better because of Brad." ■


KEEP MAKING HISTORY WITH THE

90 YEARS 1929-2019

JAPANESE AMERICAN CITIZENS LEAGUE

LET'S KEEP MAKING HISTORY!

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YES! I/we will KEEP MAKING HISTORY with a 90th anniversary gift to JACL!

❍ [ $100 ] ❍ [ $250 ] ❍ [ $500 ] ❍ [ $1,000 ] ❍ Other $ _____

❍ [ $1,929 ] in honor of our founding year

❍ [ $5,000 ] to invest $500 each year until our 100th anniversary

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❍ My employer _____ will match my contribution.
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To make a gift over the phone, or if you have any questions, please call us at **(415) 921-5225**

90 YEARS 1929-2019

# Berkeley



*The Berkeley chapter congratulates JACL on its 90th anniversary!*

*In 1953, the Berkeley JACL sponsored a citizenship class for the Issei. After living in a country for decades that did not give them the right to become naturalized, the Issei still persisted. This citizenship graduation class photo was taken on the steps of Berkeley High School on May 1, 1953 (Utsumi Photo, Oakland).*

*We honor our ancestors who laid the groundwork for our chapter's work today.*

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**BEST WISHES FOR THE NEW YEAR**

Roy & Alice, Lance,
Mona & Brandon,
Scott, Sheila,
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Erin, Bill, Kenneth & Kira Rice
***Berkeley, CA***

*In memory of the Hirota Family:*

*Tadashi, Mamoru, Susumu, Masako and Akira*

*Warm Wishes For a Happy Holiday Season*
***Jean Nakazono***
*Berkeley, Ca.*

*Happy Holidays from the Morenos*
*Steven, Meridith, Soleia and Esai*

Japanese-American K-6 Summer Program

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Season's Greetings
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*Wishing you a holiday season full of run, rest and time with loved one's!*
*Best, Tara, Berkeley Chapter*




**Best Wishes for a Happy New Year 2020**
**Al and Maxine Satake**
**And the Grandchildren**
**Kai, Kotomi, Soleia and Esai**
**Orinda, California**

*Best Wishes*
Kenji & Nancy
TOGAMI
Berkeley, CA 94706

*Season's Greetings*
*Kiyoshi & Emiko Katsumoto*
*2615 Brooks Ave.*
*El Cerrito, CA 94530*

*Happy Holidays*
Kosakura Family
4488 Hock Maple Court
Concord, CA 94521

HAPPY HOLIDAYS FROM KAT THE CAT



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A Mother's Take

# A Lasting Legacy

*By Marsha Aizumi*



**Loving with our whole hearts = pure joy.**
PHOTO: DAN HOPKINSON




**Tad and I speaking our truth.**
PHOTO: NQAPIA/ASIAN PRIDE PROJECT





**Some of those who invest their heart for Okaeri**
PHOTO: SCOTT OSHIMA

In the beginning, I thought my legacy would be family, my LGBTQ activism and my work in the Nikkei/Asian community. But as I sat and thought about the things that have most deeply impacted my life, I realized it wasn't things I had done that I want to define my life, but who I have been within those areas. And so I came up with the following three areas that I hope will be my legacy, even if people don't remember my name.

## Telling the Truth

A few months ago, I rushed my husband to Emergency. He had spiked a fever from an infection that caused him to shake uncontrollably and struggle to breathe. While we were there waiting for the doctors to confirm a diagnosis, I called both of my kids to let them know what had happened.

Aiden was at Knott's Berry Farm with his wife, Mary, and my niece. They were prepared to leave immediately. I told Aiden I would keep him posted, so he didn't have to come to the hospital yet.

Stefen, who was still in the area, agreed to bring some things Papa asked for, but also called Aiden to discuss how they could best support their father and me. There was a discussion about whether Aiden and Mary should leave even when I said it was not necessary. Aiden's reply struck deep in my heart when he said, "Momma always tells the truth, so if she wanted me to leave now, she would have said so."

Some people call me transparent, others say, "You can't hide your feelings," but Aiden's comment about me telling the truth really lingered in my heart. In that one sentence, what he was saying was that he trusted me to be honest with him, and that trust is what I want my legacy to be.

As Aiden and I travel around the country to share our story, I want others feel that same authenticity and integrity. Being real and telling the truth breeds not only trust in my family, but also I hope it breeds trust within the work I am doing in the LGBTQ and Nikkei community.

But telling the truth can have a double edge to it, so I hope that I tell my truth with directness, compassion and empathy for others, rather than meekly, bluntly or carelessly without concern for how it is received.

Some people have said that I cannot control whether people are hurt or not by my truth no matter how carefully I word it. To this I reply, "Yes, you are right." But what I can do is make sure my reasons for telling the truth come from the best of intentions and not to raise myself up or put others down. If I can strive each day to speak my truth from that place, then I hope my words will not hurt, but be seen as a gift to the person I am speaking to.

## Courageous Humility

All of my advocacy has taken courage. I remember in the beginning, I was so afraid that I wondered why I agreed to speak at an event, or do an interview or travel so far from home. But I have chosen to focus on the possibilities and not the potential failures. I have chosen to see what positives could come out of my work and not what challenges might stand in my way. This has pushed me through some of my deepest fears and made me stronger.

I remember pulling up my courage to speak to large groups of people. I was glad to stand behind a podium, so people couldn't see my legs trembling or how my hands were wringing a Kleenex to shreds. I was scared to travel to China by myself to speak about LGBTQ issues in a country that wasn't supportive and where I didn't speak their language. And I really had to reach deep inside for courage to speak to a Mormon church last year, but I had Aiden by my side and Emerson, a Mormon leader, at my back. When I focused on making the world safer for Aiden and the LGBTQ community, it made me braver that I ever thought I could be. Love can do that. . . .

It has also taken courage to stand up and say, "We need to bring more visibility and voice to the Asian and Pacific Islander LGBTQ+ community." But today, "Okaeri: A Nikkei LGBTQ Gathering" is having its fourth biennial conference in 2020. PFLAG San Gabriel Valley has been supporting API LGBTQ families for over seven years. Our book "Two Spirits, One Heart" has been read by people in the United States and Asia.

I am so proud of my courage, but the courage to make things happen must be balanced with the humility that it takes to know I didn't do it alone. There were others working so hard with me. There were others investing their heart into this work. And there have been others whose shoulders I have stood on to be successful.

I want people to say that I was courageous, but I also knew that it wasn't all about me. It was about organizations who went before me with courage, like PFLAG and JACL. It was about Tad, Aiden and Stefen's courage allowing me to be visible and cheering me on along the way. And it is about the courage of Nikkei, Asian Pacific Islander and LGBTQ+ individuals who live each day authentically and their families who proudly and lovingly stand by their children and family members.

Courage with humility can be a powerful magnet for others to get involved. And it can be the perfect formula for a lasting legacy because it is all about doing what is right and just. We need more of that in our world today.

## Loving With My Whole Heart

Finally, I want people to say that I loved with my whole heart in all that I did. I spoke and wrote from my whole heart. I connected with others with my whole heart, but most of all, I loved my family and my communities with my whole heart.

To me, loving with my whole heart really encompasses the first two qualities: telling the truth with kindness and courageously being myself while honoring others. But it is also about believing in a better world and knowing that my voice can make a difference.

It is understanding that we are all on our own personal journeys, which have different timelines. It is recognizing the choices that others make might be different than my choices, but that is their journey. I cannot understand the history they may be carrying, and so I must respect the decisions they make. And it is always seeing the best in people who have good intentions, even if we differ in our opinions.

I want to leave a legacy of good deeds, actions and words, and that all comes from working to the best of my ability on being a good person myself. One day, we will all leave this world. . . . I hope when I do, my legacy will remain through the work I have been involved in and the people who I have touched.

It is not important that they remember my name, but it is important that they remember the value of truth, trust, courage, humility and love. If that is what endures, then my legacy will truly live on. . . .

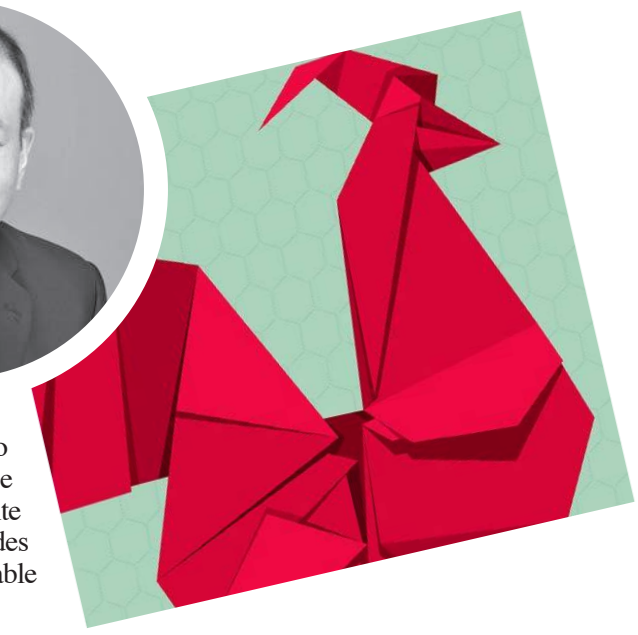
***Marsha Aizumi is an advocate in the LGBT community and author of the book "Two Spirits, One Heart: A Mother, Her Transgender Son and Their Journey to Love and Acceptance."***

## Reimagine Everything . . .

# Lasting Legacies Into the Future

***By Ron Mori***





In JACL's 90th year, it is appropriate that we reflect back and celebrate accomplishments and also look ahead to the future. As the oldest and largest Asian American civil rights organization in the United States, the JACL has been an advocate on issues that benefit the progress of Japanese Americans and Asian Americans. It continues to be an honor to be able to contribute relevant articles to the *Pacific Citizen* and JACL readers.

As we celebrate JACL's 90th year, at AARP, we are celebrating our 60th anniversary as a social mission organization.

AARP is the nation's largest nonprofit, nonpartisan organization dedicated to empowering people to choose how they live as they age. With nearly 38 million members and offices in every state, Puerto Rico and the U.S. Virgin Islands, AARP works to strengthen communities and advocate for what matters most to families — with a focus on health security, financial stability and personal fulfillment. We also work for individuals in the marketplace by sparking new solutions and allowing carefully chosen products and services to carry the AARP name.

It was a startling case of poverty — a retired teacher, homeless and living in a chicken coop — that inspired AARP's creation 60 years ago. What our founder, Dr. Ethel Percy Andrus, saw was not OK. Dr. Andrus was a visionary and retired principal of Lincoln High School in Los Angeles. The shocking discovery of a distinguished former teacher living in a chicken coop because she could not afford proper housing, health care or food inspired our founder to devote the rest of her years to improving the quality of life for older adults.

Since then, we have fought to ensure that all older Americans can age with dignity, independence and purpose, and we do so as collaboratively as we can. As Dr. Andrus has said, "What we do, we do for all."

Nearly 60,000 volunteers contribute their time, skills and energy to AARP activities, improving the lives of countless Americans. I have met JACL members that are also AARP volunteers over the years, and I always enjoy hearing about their experiences as an AARP volunteer.

With staffed offices in all 50 states, Washington, D.C., Puerto Rico and the U.S. Virgin Islands, we are a powerful force for positive change in local communities, and we could not do our work without volunteers.

Below are several key areas of focus for AARP:

### Supporting Family Caregivers

Caring for an adult relative or friend is a labor of love that can be stressful. AARP is here to help you sort it out. Family caregiving can be complex. It's hard to know where to turn for help. The online AARP Family Caregiving site *(www.aarp.org/caregiving)* provides information about resources available in each state.

### Battling High Drug Costs

AARP has advocated for affordable, accessible drug prices since our founding. Backed up by AARP research that tracks drug prices, we urge Congress to protect people, not drug company profits. Our online tools *(www.aarp.org/health/drugs-supplements)* help you learn about various drugs, check interactions and tell one pill from another.

### VIBRANT COMMUNITIES FOR ALL AGES

Creating age-friendly, livable communities helps people live where they choose and remain independent for as long as possible. AARP is teaming with hundreds of communities to keep people of all ages connected and safe.

### NEIGHBORHOOD 'LIVABILITY' TOOL

Does your community have everything you need to be independent as you age? Are there mobility options for people who don't drive? Is housing affordable and accessible? How's the access to health care? Find out by plugging a city name or ZIP code into the online AARP Livability Index *(www.aarp.org/livabilityindex)*.

Like the JACL, we look to our future and are focused on empowering people to choose how they live as they age. In this 90th anniversary year, AARP celebrates the many milestone accomplishments of the JACL. Happy anniversary!

***Ron Mori is a member of the Washington, D.C., JACL chapter and manager of community, states and national affairs — multicultural leadership for AARP.***

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# WHAT IS A LASTING LEGACY?

***By Judd Matsunaga, Esq.***

At this year's Thanksgiving dinner, I found out that the Thanksgiving turkey stuffing my sister had prepared was from a recipe that Grandpa had made up decades ago. It reminded me of some Tamale Pie we enjoyed at another family gathering that my cousin had made from a recipe handed down from Grandma.

According to Webster's Dictionary, a "legacy" is something transmitted by or received from an ancestor or predecessor or from the past. It means putting a stamp on the future and making a contribution to future generations. Intentional or not, families all over town are passing down "legacies" to their children and grandchildren.

To be clear, all legacies aren't as tasty as the family recipes mentioned above.

Some common examples of legacy are:

- She left us a *legacy* of a million dollars.
- He left his children a *legacy* of love and respect.
- The war left a *legacy* of pain and suffering.
- Her artistic *legacy* lives on through her children.

As you can see from the above examples, a legacy can be very good to very bad — and everywhere in between. For example, we have all seen the TV news reports where some families leave legacies of drug abuse, alcoholism and domestic abuse. You see, it all depends on how we live our lives.

There are parents who have blessed their children with greatness and parents who have ruined their children's fragile minds and hearts. What we do affects others. Our lives have the power to create good or provide for evil. For the sake of the children, i.e., *kodomo no tame ni,* it is important that we choose to do good.

Wealthier people can create a charitable foundation or a trust that provides ongoing distributions, so the gift has more lasting value. For example, you can endow a scholarship to your alma mater for future students. If you were fortunate enough to attend UCLA, you might remember walking into Ackerman Union, Powell Library or Royce Hall.

But that is not the kind of legacy we are talking about. We are talking about legacies that make life better for those who come after us, not about our own fame or recognition, but about helping others. Your legacy is not about what you acquire — it is about what you leave behind. It's not what we leave FOR others that matters; it's what we leave IN them that matters most.

For most of us, passing down your family's history to your children and grandchildren is the best way to preserve a lasting legacy. Take the time to sit down with your children and grandchildren. Teach them about your childhood, your parents' and grandparents' lives. Hopefully, each generation will have an appreciation for the family's history and legacy.

"But Judd, I don't have any children or grandchildren." Well, you can still leave a positive legacy by supporting organizations and causes that are important to you. Think of it this way: Your passions and interests and causes, if not acted upon, if merely cared about, are worthless. It is an act of responsibility to leave a positive legacy.

To my knowledge, there are several organizations in the Japanese American community dedicated to preserving our legacy for future generations. For the past 30 years, the Go For Broke National Education Center *(www.goforbroke.org)* has educated the public on equality and justice through the courageous and patriotic example set forth by the Japanese American World War II veterans.

Its Mission: To educate and inspire character and equality through the virtue and valor of our World War II American veterans of Japanese ancestry. By supporting GFBNEC, you enable us to honor their legacy and empower others to continue to take action in following their same spirit.

Another organization that is dedicated to preserving the Japanese American legacy is the Manzanar Committee *(www.manzanarcommittee.org)*. "We need to teach the history of evacuation and place it in historical perspective so that the Sansei may have the necessary tools to protect themselves against discrimination and racism, which are inherent in American society."

Its Mission: The Manzanar Committee is dedicated to educating and raising public awareness about the incarceration and violation of civil rights of persons of Japanese ancestry during World War II, and to the continuing struggle of all peoples when Constitutional rights are in danger.

Last (but certainly not least), the Japanese American Citizens League *(www.jacl.org)* is a national organization whose ongoing mission is to secure and maintain the civil rights of Japanese Americans and all others who are victimized by injustice and bigotry. The leaders and members of the JACL also work to promote cultural, educational and social values and preserve the heritage and legacy of the Japanese American community.

The JACL publishes the Pacific Citizen newspaper *(www.pacificcitizen.org)*, which is committed to delivering the most incisive coverage of important APA stories that are often ignored by other media outlets. Said Allison Haramoto, executive editor of the *Pacific Citizen*, "Especially for our elders, it's so important to preserve their stories, ensure that they are taken care of, because we owe so much to what they have endured in order for us to have the life we have today."

***Judd Matsunaga is the founding attorney of Elder Law Services of California, a law firm that specializes in Medi-Cal Planning, Estate Planning and Probate. He can be contacted at (310) 348-2995 or judd@elderlawcalifornia.com. The opinions expressed in this article are the author's own and do not necessarily reflect the view of the Pacific Citizen or JACL. The information presented does not constitute legal or tax advice and should not be treated as such.***

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**2020 TOUR SCHEDULE**

**HOKKAIDO SNOW FESTIVAL HOLIDAY TOUR** (Ernest Hida) **Waitlist** . . Feb 2-12
Abashiri, Sounkyo, Sapporo, Otaru, Lake Toya, Tokyo. Hyobaku Ice Festival, Asahikawa Snow Festival, Sapporo Snow Festival, Hyoto Winter Festival.

**HAWAII 3-ISLAND HOLIDAY TOUR** (Carol Hida) . . . . . Mar 3-11
Honolulu, Big Island Hawaii, Maui.

**JAPAN SPRING COUNTRYSIDE HOLIDAY TOUR** (Ernest Hida) . . . . . Apr 2-14
Tokyo, Shimoda, Lake Kawaguchi, Takayama, Kyoto. Geisha Show in Kyoto.

**NEW ORLEANS GETAWAY TOUR** (Elaine Ishida) . . . . . Apr 15-19
Walking tour of the French Quarter, City tour, Louisiana swamp cruise, enjoy Jazz club, beignets at Café Du Monde, New Orleans Cooking School.

**TULIP FESTIVAL & GREAT LAKES ADVENTURE TOUR** (Carol Hida) . . . May 7-15
Chicago, Grand Rapids, Holland Tulip Festival, Mackinac Island, Green Bay, Milwaukee.

**GRANDPARENTS-GRANDCHILDREN JAPAN TOUR** (Ernest Hida) . . Jun 21-Jul 1
Tokyo, Hakone/Atami, Hiroshima, Kyoto. **Waitlist**

**CANADIAN ROCKIES-GLACIER NATIONAL PARK TOUR** (Carol Hida) . Jul 28-Aug 3
Calgary, Glacier National Park, Kootenay National Park, Lake Louise, Columbia Icefields Parkway, Moraine Lake, Banff.

**KENYA WILDLIFE SAFARI HOLIDAY TOUR** (Carol Hida) . . . . . Sep 4-16
Nairobi, Amboseli-Nakuru Lake-Masai Mara National Parks, Mt. Kenya Safari Club, Sweetwaters Tented Camp, Jane Goodall Chimpanze Sanctuary.

**CLASSICAL JAPAN HOLIDAY TOUR** (Ernest Hida) . . . . . Oct 7-19
Tokyo, Lake Kawaguchi, Nagoya, Gifu-Cormorant fishing, Hiroshima, Kyoto.

**DANUBE RIVER CRUISE** (Carol Hida) . . . . . Oct 8-19
Prague, Passau, Linz, Melk, Vienna, Bratislava, Budapest. AmaWaterways Cruise.
**Early Bird discount ends Jan 31, 2020.**

**PAINTED CANYONS OF THE WEST TOUR** (Elaine Ishida) . . . . . Oct 4-12
Denver, Grand Junction, Bryce-Zion Canyon National Park, Springdale-Utah, Arches–Canyonland-Capitol Reef-Grand Staircase National Parks, Las Vegas

**OKINAWA HOLIDAY TOUR** (Ernest Hida) . . . . . Nov 11-20
Naha, Onnason, Islands of Ishigaki, Iriomote and Taketomo.

For more information and reservations, please contact:

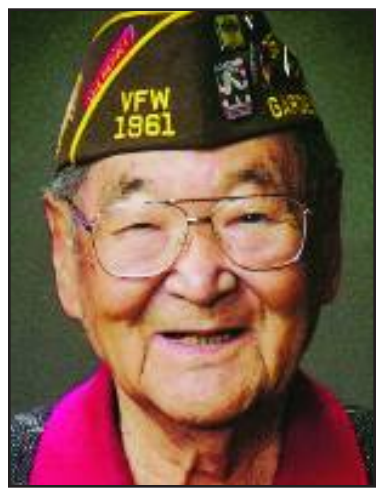
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# NOTABLE 2019 DEATHS of Japanese Americans



## JEFFREY GORDON ADACHI
Aug. 29, 1959-Feb. 22, 2019

Adachi, 59, was at the time of his death serving as San Francisco's public defender, an elected position for which he was re-elected four times and held for 17 years, beginning in 2002. Adachi's parents and grandparents were incarcerated at a War Relocation Authority camp during WWII as a result of Executive Order 9066. Prior to receiving his law degree from the University of California, Hastings College of Law, the Sacramento-born Adachi was involved in the movement to free from prison South Korean immigrant Chol Soo Lee for a murder he did not commit; Lee was eventually freed as a result of the activism and news coverage that uncovered flaws in the prosecution. Adachi joined the San Francisco Public Defender's Office in 1986. During his tenure as public defender, he was known as a fervent watchdog of police misconduct and clashed with the San Francisco Police Department and San Francisco Sheriff's Department. In addition to a law career, Adachi founded the Asian American Arts Foundation, which produced the Golden Ring Awards in the 1990s. He also was a musician, author of several books and a filmmaker, with the documentaries "The Slanted Screen: Asian Men in Film and Television" and "You Don't Know Jack: The Jack Soo Story" — the former an examination of racist Hollywood stereotypes about Asian men, the latter about the life of actor Jack Soo, aka Goro Suzuki. He was also the past president of the San Francisco chapter of JACL. After his death, there was a proposal to rename San Francisco's Gilbert Street to Jeff Adachi Way, which remains unresolved. His survivors include his widow, Mutsuko Adachi; daughter, Lauren; his parents; and brother, Stan Adachi.




## PAUL TAKEO BANNAI
July 4, 1920-Sept. 14, 2019

Bannai, 99, served in the California Assembly from 1973-80 and was the first Japanese American to serve in the legislative body. The Colorado-born, Gardena, Calif.-resident was incarcerated with family members at the Manzanar WRA Center in California and later during WWII was in the Army's 442nd Regimental Combat Team (serving with its artillery arm) before being assigned to the Military Intelligence Service in the Pacific Theater. Prior to becoming an assembly member, he was a city council member for Gardena. Bannai was active in veterans issues and was appointed by President Ronald Reagan as chief memorial affairs director at the VA. Prior to that, he served as the first director of the Commission on Wartime Relocation and Internment of Civilians. Among his Japanese American community activities were participating in Nisei Week and as vice chair of the Japanese American National Museum's board of trustees. For his Nikkei community activities, he received from the government of Japan the Order of the Sacred Treasure, Gold and Silver Rays "for contributions to the social welfare and prosperity of Japanese Americans." He was predeceased by his wife, Hideko Bannai, and son-in-law Robert M. Miura. He is survived by his children, Don, Lorraine, and Kathryn; siblings, Rose and Ted; and five grandchildren.



## HITOSHI HARRY KAJIHARA
March 12, 1928-Dec. 3, 2019

Kajihara, 91, a resident of Camarillo, Calif., was born in Oyster Bay, Wash., to Umeko (Katayama) and Sahichi Kajihara. After Japan's attack on Pearl Harbor, followed by President Franklin D. Roosevelt's Executive Order 9066, his parents and he were removed to the Tule Lake WRA Center in California. After his release, Kajihara was accepted at UC Berkeley with the goal of becoming a mathematics professor. Instead, he became an electrical engineer, after which he was drafted into the Army during the Korean War, serving for two years in the Signal Corps at Ft. Monmouth, N.J., later transitioning to the civil service. While on the East Coast, he met his future wife, Itsuko Nishizaka of Coney Island, N.Y., in 1955. After he secured work at the Naval Civil Engineering Laboratories in Port Hueneme, Calif., he and Janet and their two daughters, Claudia and Julia, left the East Coast; third daughter Alicia was born in California. Harry helped change the stereotypical depiction of Asian children in textbooks, became active within the Oxnard Buddhist Temple and later, the JACL. Upon learning in 1982 that the National JACL's still-nascent redress effort might have to be abandoned due to a lack of funds, Kajihara, as the PSWDC's redress chair, helped raised $75,000 from 1982-84. After his appointment as the JACL-LEC's National Fundraising Chair in 1984, he raised nearly $500,000. In 1986, he was elected as national president of the JACL and was immortalized as one of those photographed witnessing President Reagan signing the Civil Liberties Act of 1988 on Aug. 10 of that year. After a 35-year-long career as an electrical engineer, he finally achieved his goal of becoming a math teacher at Ventura College, where he taught for 13 years. Kajihara is survived by his loving wife, Itsuko Janet Kajihara; daughters, Claudia Kajihara, Julia Miyamoto and Alicia Mashiko. He is also survived by sons-in-law, Alan Miyamoto and Kenji Mashiko; and grandchildren, Kevin, Kimberly and Kari Miyamoto, and Richard and Mitchell Mashiko, and by other relatives. His memorial service will be held at 2 p.m. on Jan. 11, 2020, at the Oxnard Buddhist Temple, 250 South "H" St., in Oxnard, Calif. The family requests no flowers.



## HIROSHI KASHIWAGI
Nov. 8, 1922-Oct. 29, 2019

Kashiwagi, 96, of San Francisco, died just days short of his 97th birthday. The son of Fukumatsu and Kofusa Hai Kashiwagi, he was born in Sacramento, Calif., and grew up in Loomis, Calif. He would attend high school in Los Angeles. Before achieving recognition as a playwright, poet, book author and actor, Kashiwagi, his siblings and their mother were original incarcerees of the Tule Lake WRA Center after the U.S entered WWII and subsequently removed thousands of Japanese Americans living on the West Coast to remote inland concentration camps. (Kashiwagi's father, who had contracted tuberculosis, was hospitalized and not incarcerated during the duration of the war.) Hiroshi signed "No-No" on the infamous Questions 27 and 28 of the so-called Loyalty Questionnaire and would renounce his U.S. citizenship as an act of protest for his treatment by the federal government. Kashiwagi earned his bachelor's degree from UCLA and earned a master's degree from UC Berkeley. He also formed a theater troupe, Nisei Experimental Group. In 1957, he married Sadako Nimura, and they would have three sons: Toshiro, Soji and Hiroshi. Two years later, thanks to the efforts of ACLU attorney Wayne Collins, Kashiwagi's citizenship was restored. After the formation of the Commission on Wartime Relocation and Internment of Civilians, he publicly testified in 1981 in San Francisco. His memoir, "Swimming in the American," won the American Book Award in 2005. Kashiwagi is survived by his widow, three sons, nieces and nephews.



## GREGORY M. MARUTANI
March 14, 1947-Nov. 27, 2019

Marutani, 72, had a long history with the JACL, culminating with the presentation of the JACL Ruby Pin — the organization's highest service recognition — in August at the JACL National Convention in Salt Lake City. His pet project was education, and as the longtime chair of the JACL's National Education Committee, Marutani's efforts meant teachers were instructed on how to utilize the story of Japanese American incarceration into their civil rights curricula. A member of the San Francisco JACL chapter who served on its board of directors, he was also a supporter of the Power of Words initiative to use more accurate words instead of euphemisms to describe the treatment of West Coast Japanese Americans during WWII.



## DEAN HOJO MATSUBAYASHI
March 28, 1970-Sept. 4, 2019

Matsubayashi, 49, a longtime staff member of the Little Tokyo Service Center who rose to become its executive director, died after being diagnosed with an aggressive brain tumor in May 2018. Under his leadership, the Terasaki Budokan in Little Tokyo began its long journey toward completion, set for the spring of 2020. The son of Kay and George Matsubayashi, Dean grew up in the Venice-Culver City area of Los Angeles County, participating in Boy Scouts and basketball. At Venice High School, he was played varsity point guard and one year was named the team's MVP. He graduated *magna cum laude* from UC Irvine, where he double-majored in political science and sociology before attending the John F. Kennedy School of Government at Harvard University, where he earned his master's degree. He met his future wife, Kim Kawaratani, while both of them were attending Harvard. He is survived by his wife, Kim; their daughter, Emma and son, Sei; siblings, Erik, Craig and Tina; his parents; and his parents-in-law, Lilian and Yukio Kawaratani.



## WATARU MISAKA
Dec. 21, 1923-Nov. 20, 2019

Misaka, 95, the Utah-born Nisei and the first nonwhite and first Asian American professional basketball player in the U.S., regained the spotlight in 2012 when Jeremy Lin became an international sensation as a member of the New York Knicks. Well before "Linsanity" made Asian American basketball players a topic, Misaka was drafted to the Knicks in 1947 when it was part of pre-NBA BAA (Basketball

Association of America). While his professional basketball career was short — he played only three games — Misaka was a pioneering athlete who broke racial barriers and stereotypes. Born in Ogden, Utah, to Japanese immigrant parents, he was the oldest of three boys. His father was a barber, and his mother became a barber after her husband passed away. Misaka lived in Utah his entire life except for the period when he served in the Army Military Intelligence Service (MIS) in Japan. He attended Ogden High School where he was a leader on the basketball team, which won a state championship title in 1940 and a regional championship title in 1941. He then attended Weber Junior College in Ogden, Utah, where he became a star on their basketball team when they won two championships. He was named the Most Valuable Player of the 1942 junior college postseason tournament and was named Athlete of the Year in 1943 at Weber Junior College. Later, Weber State University would establish a scholarship in his name. After transferring to the University of Utah, Misaka became a star on their basketball team. They finished the 1943-44 season with an 18-3 record. They were invited to both the NCAA Tournament and the National Invitation Tournament (NIT). They made the trip to New York City and did well. After his Army service and his return to the University of Utah, Misaka again joined the basketball team. They won their second national championship in four years and were invited to the NIT championship tournament in New York City where they won. Misaka was offered a chance to play with the Harlem Globetrotters. He chose instead to return to the University of Utah to finish his engineering degree. He had a successful career as an engineer working well into his later years. He was an avid golfer and a championship bowler as well. Upon learning of Misaka's story, President Barack Obama invited him to a ceremony at the White House, which he attended with his son, Henry. He was recognized by the JACL at its National JACL Gala in Washington, D.C., when Christine Toy Johnson was given an award for her work on the documentary about Wat. The JACL also honored Wat at another JACL Gala for his sports legacy. He was given a President's Award in Salt Lake City last summer at the National JACL Convention. And he was recognized in 2000 in an exhibition of sports pioneers at the Japanese American National Museum, which displayed his University of Utah jersey and shorts as well as his Knicks shoes. He has been awarded honors by JANM and OCA National, as well as many local awards in Utah, including induction into the Utah Sports Hall of Fame. In 1953, Misaka married Katie Inoway, who predeceased him. He is survived by their children, Henry Misaka and Nancy (Cary) Umemura; and grandchildren, Joel Umemura, Kennah Misaka and Erin Misaka. *(Floyd Mori contributed to this report.)*

# In MEMORIAM

.**Asari, Yoichi, 76,** Rancho Palos Verdes, CA, Oct. 16; he is survived by his wife, Carolyn; children, Lisa and David; siblings, Kayo Nakatani and Shunji Asari; he is also survived by many nieces and nephews.

**Emi, Susie Tsukayo, 97,** Los Angeles, CA, Oct. 16; she was predeceased by her husband, Arthur; she is survived by her children, Erik (Amy) Emi, Aprille (Joe) Hogg, Roderick Emi, Lance (Linda) Emi and Stephanie (Glen) Nakamura; gc: 11; ggc: 11.

**Endo, Betty Haruye, 99,** Kaneohe, HI, Aug. 6.

**Hamasaki, Roland Sadayoshi,** 99, Hilo, HI, Oct. 21.

**Hiyama, Duke T., 73,** Honolulu, HI, Aug. 31; he is survived by his wife, Cynthia Fukunaga Hiyama; children, Gina P. (Chris) Hiyama-Ashby, Jamie T. Hiyama and Daniel T. (Charisse) Hiyama; stepsons, Keith Au Hong and Ryan S. Uyehara (Anny); brother, Roy (Carole) Hiyama; gc: 3.

**Ikegami, Rex Iwao, 76,** Sacramento, CA, Oct. 12; he is survived by his siblings, Anne (Richard) Tsukuda, Billie Ikegami and Glenn (Janet).

**Iwasaki, Chizuko, 94,** Tacoma, WA, Oct. 3; during WWII, she was incarcerated at the Puyallup Assembly Center, then the Minidoka WRA Center in ID; she was predeceased by her husband, Sam; and 1 adult offspring; she is survived by her three adult children and spouses; 1 sister; gc: 5; ggc: 3.

**Kada, Dorothy Suyeko, 95,** Los Angeles, CA, Oct. 15; she is survived by her children, Carl Kada and Jeanie Mitsunaga; gc: 1.

**Kita, Ume 'Helen,' 98,** Los Angeles, CA, Oct. 17; she was predeceased by her husband, Misao Ed Kita; she is survived by her children, Ben Kita and Ruby Kita; sisters-in-law, Sanaye Kita and Sue Murata; she is also survived by nieces, nephews and other relatives.

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**Mashita, Stanley Masami, 85,** Huntington Beach, CA, Sept. 20; he is survived by his wife, MaryLou; sons, Daryl (Karen) and Chad; sister, Gladys; he is also survived by many nieces, nephews and other relatives; gc: 5.

**Matsumoto, Masaru, 80,** Monterey Park, CA, Oct. 5; he is survived by his wife, Hisako; children, Stanley and Audrey (Leron) Gubler; gc: 3.

**Nakamura, Glenn Mitsuru, 73,** Los Angeles, CA, Oct. 26; he is survived by his wife, Patty; children, Trisha and Melissa; siblings, Beatrice Mayetani and Gail (Robert) Higashiyama; sister-in-law, Arlene Nakamura; he is also survived by many nieces, nephews, great-nieces and great-nephews and other relatives.

**Nakamura, Masayoshi, 98,** Honolulu, HI, Oct. 3; during WWII, he served in the Army's 442nd Regimental Combat Team; he is survived by his wife, Helen; daughters, Charlene (Sam) Leong and Mae (Brian) Nakagawa; sister, Irene Shinsato; gc: 5; ggc: 3.

**Okazaki, Takashi, 96,** Los Angeles, CA, Oct. 9; he is survived by his children, James (Linda) Okazaki, Sallie (Terry) Kuwahara and Nancy (Jerry) Burks; gc: 4.

**Oshita, Felix Masaya 'Phil,' 76,** Los Angeles, CA, Sept. 20; he is survived by his wife, Patricia; children, Jenifer (Garrett Sloane) Oshita and Damon (Kimberly) Oshita; sister, Mary (Michael) Lum; brother-in-law, Kazuko Ohshita; gc: 2.

**Sasaki, Fukiko, 98,** Los Angeles, CA, Oct. 22; she is survived by her children, Brian (Joan), Susan, Eric (Katherine) and Glenn (Doreen) Sasaki; gc: 4.

**Sugita, Midori, 90,** Torrance, CA, Sept. 24; she is survived by her daughter, Katsuyo (Bert) Roberts; she is also survived by many nieces, nephews and other relatives; gc: 3; ggc: 1.

**Takahashi, Hideko, 83,** Montebello, CA, Oct. 5; survived by a son and a daughter; 5 siblings; gc: 1; and by many nieces and nephews.

**Takahashi, Hiroki, 105,** San Mateo, CA, Oct. 13; a WWII (MIS) and Korean War veteran, he is survived by his wife, Elsie Yoshiko Takahashi; 3 of 4 daughters; sister, Kazu Okui; gc: 3.

**Urasaki, Richard Masaaki, 85,** Hilo, HI, Aug. 26.

**Wada, Sumie, 82,** Huntington Beach, CA, Oct. 21; she is survived by her husband, Donald; children, Amy (Steven) Morr, James and Frank (Liz); sister, Ikuko (Jun) Hattori; she is also survived by many nieces, nephews and other relatives; gc: 2.

**Wadahara, Larry, 58,** Los Angeles, CA, Sept. 2; he is survived by his wife, Naomi Wadahara; sons, Nick (Elisa Lam) and Justin; sisters, Georgette (Roy) Matsuda and Lynn Wadahara; he is also survived by many nieces, nephews, and other relatives; gc: 2.

**Yamada, Glenn Hisayuki, 73,** Mililani, HI, Sept. 28.

**Yamada, Hiroko Alyce, 97,** San Gabriel, CA, Oct. 17; she is survived by her children, Ted and Cynthia (Ron) Dyo; gc: 2; ggc: 1.

**Yoshimizu, Ruth Hisako, 95,** Alhambra, CA, Oct. 12; she was predeceased by her husband, Henry; son, Rodney; she is survived by her children, Kary (Joyce) Yoshimizu, Karen (Wesley) Nobuta, Sharen (Randy) Kanemoto and Daniel (Jan) Yoshimizu; she is also survived by nieces, nephews and other relatives; gc: 9; ggc: 3. ■

TRIBUTE

## SONOKO (JANET) YAMAMOTO IKEDA



Janet, 92, died on Nov. 29 in Allentown, Pa. She was born in San Pedro, Calif., on Nov 4, 1927. From 1942–44 she was incarcerated at the Poston WRA Center in Arizona. She received a Friends Society (Quaker) scholarship and relocated to the Philadelphia area where she attended the Westtown School for her final year of high school. She earned a nursing degree from Pennsylvania Hospital School of Nursing and worked as a nurse anesthetist until retirement in 2003. She was an active volunteer with the Lehigh Valley Hospital Auxillary Unit. In her free time, she enjoyed knitting, needlepoint, traveling and spending time with her grandchildren. She is survived by her husband of 66 years, Kazuo (George) Ikeda; children Carolyn, Bruce, Jane and Douglas; and grandchildren Brian, Casey, Jamie, Eric, Dan and Becky.

TRIBUTE

## TOSHIKO JOHNSTON



Toshiko Watanabe Johnston died early on Monday, Oct. 21 of natural causes at the California Veterans Home (CalVet), nine days after turning 91. In her last few weeks, she demonstrated the tenacity, perseverance and resilience that served her well throughout her life as she battled a UTI that ultimately exacted a physical toll that even she could not overcome.

Toshiko possessed an outgoing personality, powerful life-force and big heart that belied her small 4'9" stature. In life she was fun-loving and ever-inquisitive, with simple tastes and needs.

Toshiko was born in the city of Fukushima and grew up in the City of Sendai with her parents and three siblings. During WWII the Watanabe family were forced to flee Sendai during a bomb raid by American forces; they lost their home and possessions during the war. After the war ended, Toshiko returned to Sendai to continue her education as her goal was to learn a profession which allowed her to travel and move as she wished. She trained to become a dental hygienist and upon graduation was assigned to the dental clinic at the U.S. Army's Camp Sendai.

Toshiko's life would change course after she met an Army dental technician named James Johnston, a handsome Korean War veteran from Los Angeles. They fell in love and had to overcome the same obstacles faced by the multitudes of U.S. servicemen and native Japanese women — so-called "war brides" — who similarly became international couples. Our dad won over Toshiko's father by making him a set of denture, and Toshiko's mother finally relented because of the $10,000 Army life insurance policy which at that time was a fortune.

Toshiko and Jim married in a Japanese ceremony and Toshiko never looked back at a career of cleaning other people's teeth. Jim would transfer into the Air Force and spend nearly three decades in the military. As a military spouse, Toshiko crisscrossed the Pacific Ocean and United States with Jim as he was transferred and stationed at multiple bases. Along the way, they would welcome a daughter, June, and a son, George.

Toshiko worked hard to adjust to American life and American English, and grew to appreciate the freedom of American culture, but never abandoned her traditional Japanese values of selflessness, *gaman* (perseverance), *kodomo no tame ni* (for the sake of the children), *mottai nai* (a sense of regret over waste) and more.

She was independent and adventurous – she was the only one of her sisters who learned to ride a bicycle and drive a car, and her career pursuits were an anomaly for a Japanese woman of her generation. There was very little that she couldn't do: she was an excellent seamstress, cook, poet, knitter, artist and she also played the harmonica. She had a winning system for the slot machines and kept a photo album of all of her jackpot winning machines. Most of all, she was kind and giving.

When living independently became too difficult to maintain in recent years, Toshiko and Jim moved in October 2018 to the California Veterans Home located at the West L.A. Veterans Affairs campus.

After more than six decades of marriage, Toshiko was widowed in February and continued to reside at CalVet where she was lovingly cared for by her constant companion and best *tomodachi*, Hiromi Kurosawa. She was predeceased by her parents, Katsuko and Hiroshi Watanabe; father-in-law George R. Johnston; brother-in-law Richard Johnston, youngest sibling Akihiko Watanabe; and son-in-law Jim Bardwil. She is survived by June and George, daughter-in-law Sachi, grandchildren Akari and Jameson, and future son-in-law Stephen Quadros, as well as her sisters Motoko (aka Sister Elizabeth) and Fukuko.

Donations can be made in Toshiko's memory to the Dayton Chapter of the JACL (Dayton JACL, 1133 Woodland Meadows Drive, Vandalia, OH 45377) or the Alzheimer's Association.

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# Salinas Valley

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From All Our Members

# Salinas Valley

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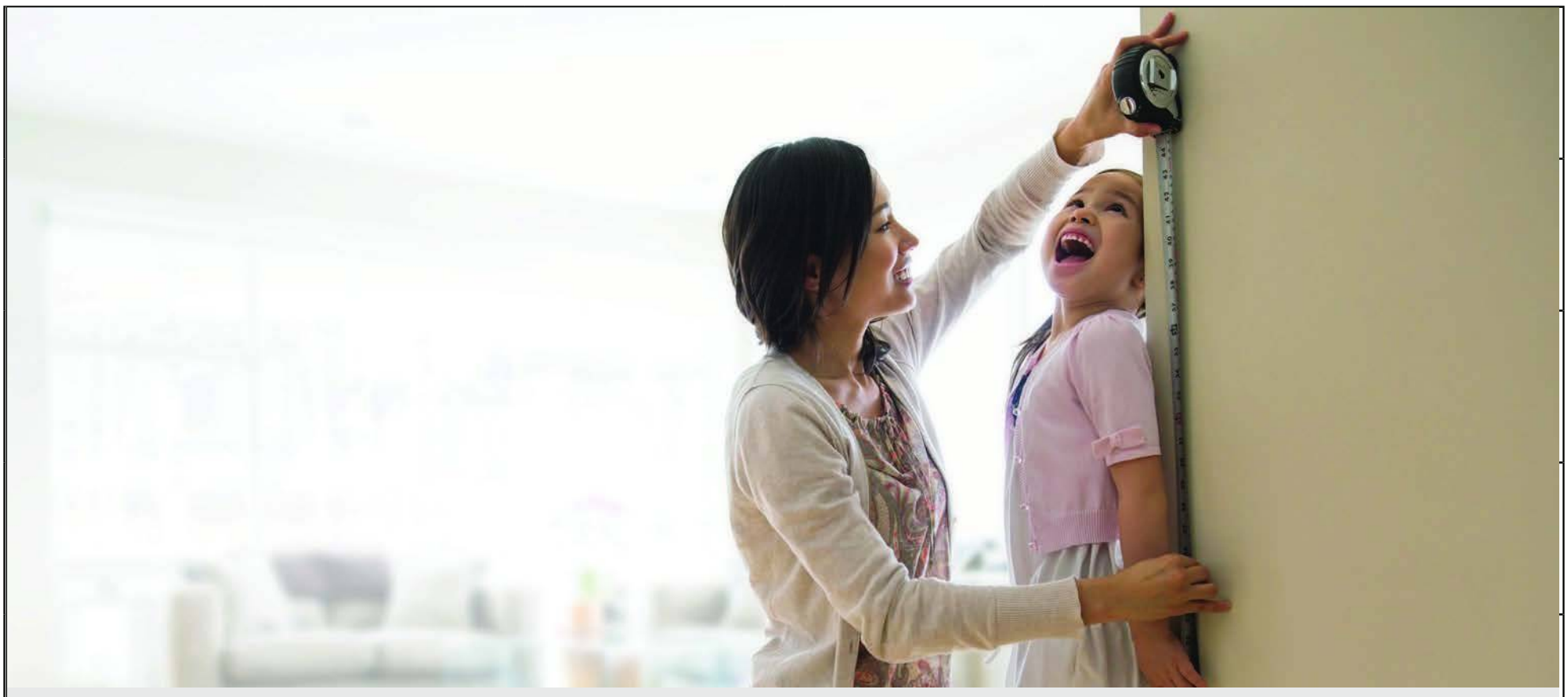
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