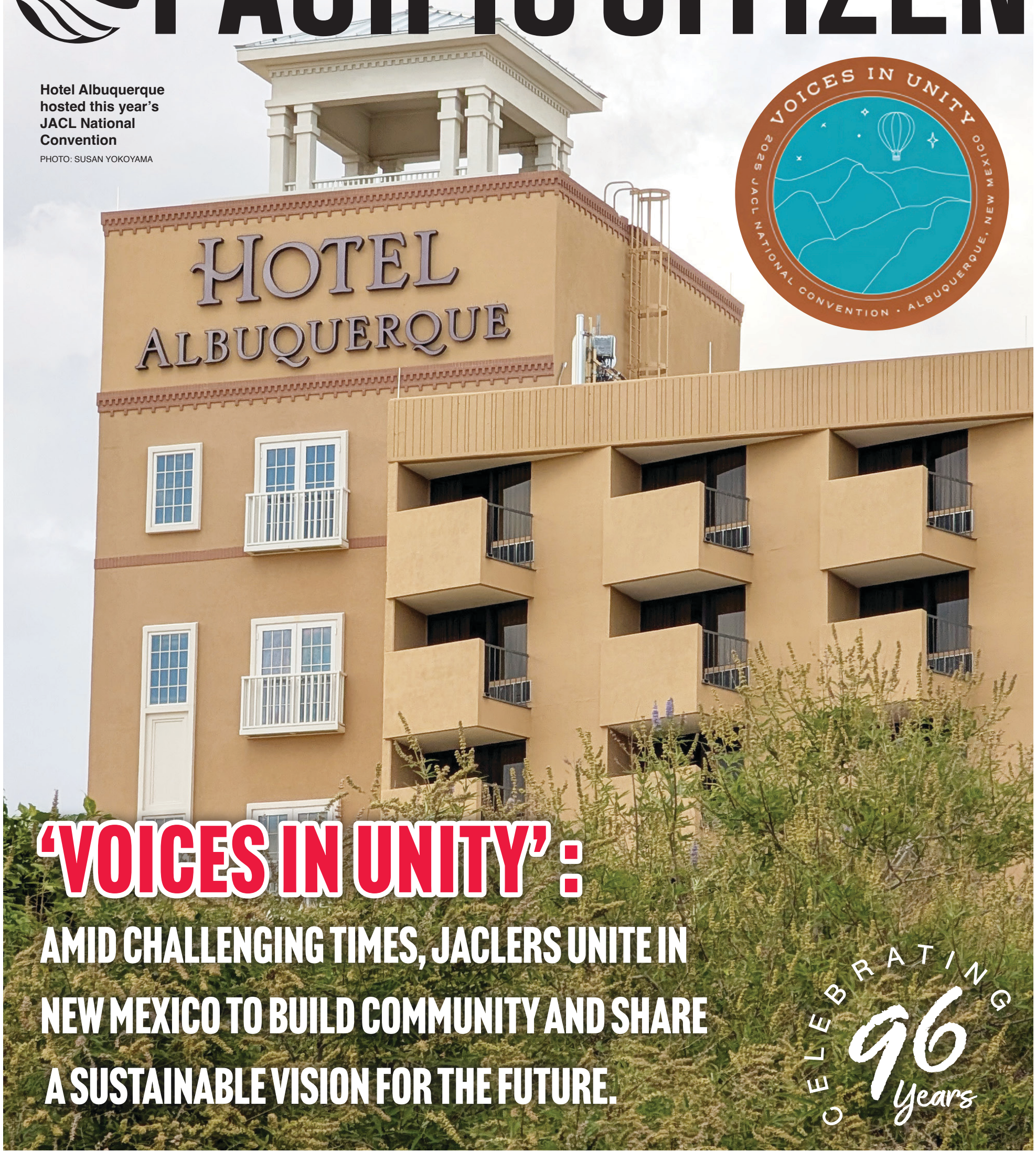
THE NATIONAL NEWSPAPER OF THE JACL

Aug. 8-21, 2025

PACIFIC CITIZEN



Hotel Albuquerque hosted this year's JACL National Convention

PHOTO: SUSAN YOKOYAMA

VOICES IN UNITY
2025 JACL NATIONAL CONVENTION • ALBUQUERQUE, NEW MEXICO

'VOICES IN UNITY': AMID CHALLENGING TIMES, JACLERS UNITE IN NEW MEXICO TO BUILD COMMUNITY AND SHARE A SUSTAINABLE VISION FOR THE FUTURE.

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JACL NATIONAL BOARD ACTS IN ALBUQUERQUE

Breaking Good: Five-member Social Justice Action Committee OK'd at N.M. convention.

By P.C. Staff



Pictured during the National Board meeting are *(from left)* President Larry Oda, Secretary/ Treasurer Jonathan Okamoto and Legal Counsel Ken Massey.

PHOTO: GEORGE TOSHIO JOHNSTON

At what JACL National Board President Larry Oda described as an "inaugural workshop only" JACL National Convention in Albuquerque, N.M., the JACL National Board nevertheless conducted JACL business beyond pro forma roll call and board member reports with the July 20 adoption of a resolution to create the Social Justice Action Committee.

Introduced by NCWNP JACL District Gov. Carol Kawase, the purpose of the newly formed committee is to streamline JACL's response time with regard to such tasks as filing amicus briefs, joining advocacy letters and acting on behalf of the National JACL.

The impetus for the committee, an ad hoc five-member team, can be traced to JACL's recent efforts regarding the current administration's abuse of the Alien Enemies Act and challenges to birthright citizenship guaranteed by the 14th Amendment.

Among other activities, the new committee's focus would also encompass challenging the revival of alien land laws and continue JACL's support for African American reparations for slavery.

The Social Justice Action Committee is comprised of attorneys Naoko Fujii (committee chair), Daniel Mayeda, Natsu Taylor Saito and Peggy Nagae, with fifth member Kawase serving as a liaison to the JACL National Board.

Discussed at the July 17 National Board that preceded both the convention and the July 20 postconvention follow-up was the status of the donation-based Alien Enemies Act Fund, dedicated to funding: 1) legal challenges related to the Alien Enemies Act and similar laws; 2) legislative advocacy efforts (e.g., the Neighbors Not Enemies Act); 3) advocacy efforts to repeal the Alien Enemies Act; 4) related public education and internships; and 5) financial support for the JACL, chapters, and members facing retaliation. It was reported that the restricted account had collected about $2,000 in donations. *(To learn more about the JACL's position on the Alien Enemies Act, visit jacl.org/alien-enemies-act.)*

In other news from Albuquerque, the headcount of conventiongoers was reported at 230 in attendance. The convention will also likely post a loss of about $150,000 according to preliminary figures. ■

2025 LEGACY FUND GRANTS NOW AVAILABLE

Are you a chapter in good standing and thinking about furthering the mission and fulfilling the vision of the JACL? If so, apply for a 2025 Legacy Fund Grant today and use it as seed money to execute a multigenerational project or activity where your chapter (or district) can take a leadership role in local programming.

The primary goal of Legacy Fund Grants is to support new projects at the local level that result in programming that will increase the membership and enhance and strengthen capacity to further the organization's vision and mission.

Grant amounts vary but generally will include up to $4,000 for a project/activity that must be completed within a year by June 30, 2026, and a grant of up to $8,000 for a project/activity that should commence by Oct. 1, 2025, must not be completed earlier than March 31, 2027, and must be fully completed by May 31, 2027.

To learn more, please visit the JACL National Legacy Fund Grant page on the JACL website *(www.jacl.org)*. Applications are due by Aug. 24 at 11:59 p.m. Hawaiian Standard Time.

The JACL National Council established the Legacy Fund at the 1990 JACL National Convention in San Diego. Much of the original funds were donated by JACL members who gave portions of their redress awards to further the legacy of the JACL. Each year, a portion of the earnings from the Legacy Fund Endowment provides the funds to run the LFG program. ■

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REFLECTIONS

LAYERS LOST AND VOICES UNITED — LIVE FROM ALBUQUERQUE, IT'S A WRAP

By Gregory Suko, JACL New Mexico Chapter

As many traveled from planes, trains and automobiles to the Land of Enchantment, we hope from the New Mexico JACL chapter that it was memorable and allowed you to relax, soak up the sun and enjoy the sights of Nuevo Mexico. It is no secret now that New Mexico has really kept development on its own timetable, and much of the best things to do and experience are only a referral away.

If you didn't get a chance to admire the Sandia Mountain at sunset, when enjoying da grindz from Kimo's food truck at the Japanese American Cultural Center, it gives off a pink hue that was named by the Spanish as the Sandia or the Watermelon Mountain. It is also the site of Great Unconformity, a gap in the geological record. Rocks that are over a billion years old touch rocks that are a few hundred million years old. Bringing everyone together this year helps to ensure that there will be at least a chance that not all of our stories will be lost to eternity.

It is only natural that we want to fill in the gap in storytelling, whether it is nonfiction, historical fiction or science fiction. Telling a complete story allows for introspection and a bit more empathy for all of the characters. As we all reach milestones in our lives, I believe it gives us better insight to walk in the shoes of our family members that are no longer with us or are unavailable.

During the recent JACL National Convention, we were able to learn from the stories of our fathers, grandfathers, uncles and great-uncles out in the desert who were forcibly removed and not often discussed. New Mexico is the home to 23 sovereign tribal nations. Many JA families have been born on the soil of many tribal and sovereign nations. We are connected.

For me, attending the National Convention both last year and this year instilled a commitment on a national level that my families' experience was not unlike many others but has twists and turns like a corkscrew when it comes to families being raised after the war. Ever since the convention, I hear the lyrics and the powerful driving force of CCR's "Fortunate Son" — to quote . . . "It ain't me, It ain't me, I ain't no fortunate one, no."

My Sansei uncle is a Vietnam War veteran. I have always been proud of his service to our country, even though anti-war protests were alive and strong when I was a child. The tension between anti-war protests and serving in the U.S. Armed Forces, in my opinion, should represent the stories for the next chapter of our JA collective experience.

We hope that everyone had a safe trip knowing that the best part of traveling is returning safely home with new friends, a sense of calmness and healing. After our convention, I would like to introduce a pledge that, collectively with our feet firmly grounded, we are committed to helping the women hold the sky up with our brothers and sisters from the community that we have grown into and are a part of. Support comes from not only paying our full monetary share but also in making a commitment from our hearts, in our words and in our actions.

Our singers and activists show us how to move our bodies and express ourselves and our emotions. Our educators show us that our hard work and degrees will be recognized, even if it has to be posthumously. Our friends and neighbors show us they will take care of our land and property if we have to move away. Our poets and storytellers show us how to use our voices and wield the words that change the world one person at a time. And most of all, our art directors set the stage for our comedians to help us laugh and by so doing, release tension, recycled thoughts and uneasy feelings that naturally build up to work against us.

Thanks to the JACL organization, national board and officers, local chapters, Victoria Meaney, convention sponsors and volunteers a plenty and to the *Pacific Citizen* and its staff for making the journey, sharing experiences and recognizing that words and stories are medicine, and intergenerational healing cannot begin without recognizing that the cure is within each of us and becomes powerful when we join together.

Deep thoughts . . . what if the paperwork for next year left off Nevada, would some folks book their reservations for Las Vegas, N.M.?

Gregory Suko is a member of the New Mexico JACL.



Greg and his wife, Amy Suko, were among the many New Mexico chapter members who helped to organize and support activities, programming and events at this year's JACL National Convention.

PHOTO: DARRELL MIHO

'YOUTH IN UNITY'

The JACL's NY/SC awards Austin Fujii with its 2025 Vision Award.

By P.C. Staff

JACL's National Youth/Student Council hosted its Youth Awards Luncheon in the Alvarado Room at the Hotel Albuquerque on July 18 to recognize the impactful contributions of youth within the organization and honor its 2025 Vision Award recipient.

Led by emcees Claire Inouye, national youth representative, and Simon Kutz, EDC youth representative, the NY/SC welcomed conventiongoers to its "Youth in Unity" luncheon as it celebrated "the achievements and leadership of young members in the JACL."

Inouye began by thanking the group's partners, especially State Farm, for its continued sponsorship and support throughout the year of the NY/SC's programs. She also presented highlights of the group's activities, including its recent youth retreat summit in Portland, Ore.

"During the summit, we visited significant historical sites, engaged in meaningful conversations about legacy and activism and had the opportunity to meet with (lawyer) Peggy Nagae (lead attorney for civil rights pioneer Minoru Yasui, who was awarded a Presidential Medal of Freedom in 2015), a trailblazer in the fight for redress and civil rights," said Inouye. "This summit was a meaningful opportunity to exchange ideas and deepen connections among youth leaders and gain inspiration for the work still to come."

Kutz then went on to introduce this year's recipient of the NY/SC Vision Award, which is given every two years to an individual who has shown exceptional leadership and has dedicated extensive time to advocacy/social justice work in the community.

"When it came time to selecting this year's awardee, the exceptional work this individual has done both within the Japanese American community and in coalition with others made this choice a no-brainer. We are thrilled to present the 2025 Vision Award to Austin Fujii," said Kutz.

Fujii, a member of the San Jose JACL chapter, is an incoming second-year honors scholar at Foothill College in the Bay Area, studying sociology and economics.

Upon joining the JACL in 2022, he was then mentored by former U.S. Congressman Mike Honda during the reintroduction of the Neighbors Not Enemies Act. Among his many chapter initiatives, Fujii has redesigned new marketing panels, created a social justice walking tour of San Jose's Japantown, updated print brochures and created digital QR codes to promote local small businesses and uncovered the depth of Japantown's history.

Fujii also established Foothill College's Nikkei Student Union, serves as the college's student body vp of administration and is a member of a semiprofessional taiko ensemble, all while preparing to transfer to a four-year university in addition to continuing his involvement in the JACL.

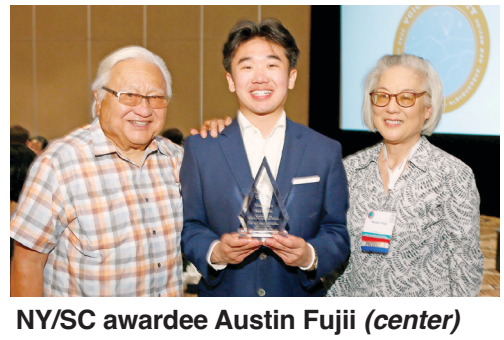
Upon taking the stage to accept his award, Fujii immediately thanked Honda for taking him under his wing and mentoring him, his mother, Naoko, for her support, as well as the NY/SC for choosing him, particularly Halle Sousa, NCWNP youth representative, for being her one nominee.

"I'm just happy to give back to my community and connect culturally with the people who continue to make an impact today," said Fujii. "It never crossed my mind that my work would be recognized to this extent, but I hope it will inspire people to realize, start and get spurred into action."

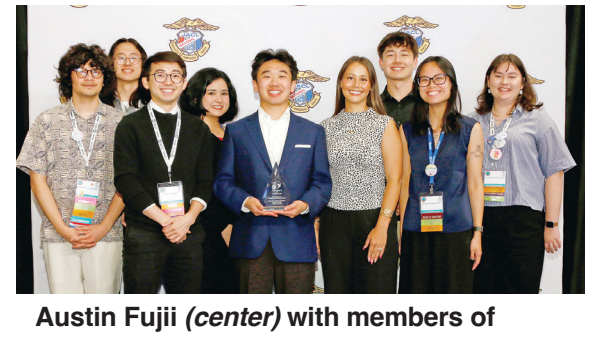
Fujii went on to speak about the importance of Japanese American youth to execute a vision for the future, a task that has become more vital than ever before.

"I really appreciate that we are able to provide an outlet for community impact because people want to help, but they don't know where to start," he continued. ". . . I've already gotten people to reach out and give support. . . . This includes not only Japanese Americans but also students with immigrant parents because that includes those who may not have been interned or detained, but it's more important now because we're stronger together.

"I'm incredibly honored to be the recipient of the 2025 Vision Award, and I look forward to representing JACL youth in whatever form that may take in the future," Fujii concluded. ■



NY/SC awardee Austin Fujii *(center)* with mentor Mike Honda and mother Naoko Fujii. PHOTOS: DARRELL MIHO



Austin Fujii *(center)* with members of JACL's NY/SC



The NY/SC luncheon featured emcees Simon Kutz, EDC youth representative, and Claire Inouye, national youth representative.

IMAGINE NO ALIEN ENEMIES ACT

N.M. plenary makes a case for repealing the problematic 1798 law.

By P.C. Staff



"Never Again: The Fight to Repeal the Alien Enemies Act" plenary panelists Naoko Fujii and Mike Honda

PHOTO: GEORGE TOSHIO JOHNSTON

The man known to many as "Uncle Mike" has crammed a lot of seeing, doing and accomplishing into his more than eight decades of life. Serving in the Peace Corps. Earning his bachelor's and master's degrees from San Jose State University in the town where he grew up. Having a three-decadelong career as an educator. Serving on San Jose's Planning Commission, thanks to an appointment by the late Norman Mineta when his fellow *Nikkei-jin* was the city's mayor. Serving in the California Assembly. And, from 2001-17, serving in the United States House of Representatives, representing his home state's 15th and 17th congressional districts.

But there is one remaining, vexing task Mike Honda has yet to complete, his now decades-long quest: repealing a centuries-old relic of a law that he presciently understood before it actually happened was a loaded and unsecured weapon ready to be misused and abused should an unscrupulous, unconstrained and motivated person or party ever be in a position of power.

AEA Repeal

That law is the Alien Enemies Act, and the campaign to relegate it to join its three related, defunct laws in the trash heap of outdated, misguided and racist laws of America's history was the subject of the July 18 plenary panel discussion at the JACL National Convention titled "Never Again: The Fight to Repeal the Alien Enemies Act."

Honda, 84, was one of the plenary's members and only one of an age to have experienced having been incarcerated with his American family at Colorado's Granada War Relocation Authority Center, aka Camp Amache, one of America's 10 War Relocation Authority Centers operated by the federal government during World War II.

Also on the panel was moderator Lorraine K. Bannai, an attorney whose résumé includes being professor emerita at Seattle University School of Law and director emerita of the Fred T. Korematsu Center for Law and Equality, the latter of which is now based at the University of California Irvine's School of Law, and serving as an attorney on the legal teams mobilized to revisit via writ of error *coram nobis* the three WWII-era Supreme Court cases brought by Fred Korematsu, Gordon Hirabayashi and Minoru Yasui.

The two panelists joining Honda were attorney Naoko Fujii, chair of the Social Justice Action Committee, newly established by the JACL National Board during the convention, and a member of the organization's Alien Enemies Act amicus brief legal team, and attorney Katherine Yon Ebright of the Brennan Center's Liberty & National Security Program, where she serves as counsel and focuses on war powers and the constitutional separation of powers.

History, Use of the AEA

Noting that prior to President Donald Trump's March 15 invocation of the AEA over the "invasion of the United States" by Venezuelan criminal gang Tren De Aragua — which led to the deportation and incarceration of Venezuelan nationals and likely would have led to more deportations until the Supreme Court on May 16 temporarily blocked him from continuing to use the 1798 law — Bannai noted that "it was used to incarcerate members of our own families … because of their race and national origin," a reference to how, during WWII, the government invoked the AEA for use on Issei who were at the time barred from even attempting to become naturalized U.S. citizens.

Bannai noted that despite the legal distinctions between the use of the AEA against Issei and President Franklin D. Roosevelt's use of Executive Order 9066 against ethnic Japanese, citizen and alien alike, which led to the forced removal from the three western-most U.S. states into the 10 WRA centers that incarcerated more than 125,000 people, both legal machinations had the "same exact roots of prejudice and othering and foreignness and suspicion."

Bannai then called on Ebright to elaborate on the "the context and history behind the Alien Enemies Act, how it's being used against other communities today and the present litigation concerning it.

Quasi-War With France

"The JACL team that I've been in touch with knows that I can go on for hours talking about the history of this law, but I will try to condense it to around five minutes," Ebright said. Noting that the Alien and Sedition Acts of 1798, of which the AEA was a part and today remains as the last extant act of those four original laws, came about from the Quasi-War with France.

"The United States at that time, 1798, had no real national security law. It had no real criminal law, no real immigration law, nothing for the president to protect the country with," Ebright said. Congress' solution? The Alien and Sedition Acts. "Of course, we had very different conceptions of due process, nondiscrimination — the words 'equal protection under law' did not exist in the U.S. Constitution at that time."

By 1800, the Quasi-War with France ended — and Thomas Jefferson was elected president. Under his administration, three of the four parts of the Alien and Sedition Acts ended, with only the Alien Enemies Act still extant. But with the War of 1812 against Great Britain — which Ebright noted "was a declared war" — " … the Alien Enemies Act was used to take British subjects who they were worried might affect coastal war efforts and moved them inland."

Jumping ahead a century plus a few years, the U.S. found itself in another war — World War I — again, declared by Congress. "In WWI, we see this law used for internment, and many countries around the world used internment policies throughout the First World War," Ebright said. "Around 6,000 Germans and Austro-Hungarians were put into camps, really based on who they were, not because they were actually materially dangerous. It was usually you had failed to register with the government, or you moved your home and you didn't tell the government where exactly you were moving, and then you were put into an internment camp."

AEA's Use in WWII

Following the War of 1812 and WWI, the AEA was invoked after the U.S. formally declared war on Japan and Axis powers Germany and Italy after Japan's Dec. 7, 1941, attack on U.S. Navy assets at Pearl Harbor in the territory of Hawaii; it was the first time the law was used in what Ebright described as an "invasion" or "predatory incursion."

Under Roosevelt, within 24 hours "there are over 1,000 immigrants, noncitizens of Japanese descent, who are in detention," said Ebright. She said there would ultimately be "around 15,000 interned under the Alien Enemies Act, complemented by an additional 2,000 Japanese Latin Americans who were rounded up in Latin American countries and then put into internment camps in the United States." Roosevelt also proclaimed that he was entitled to use the AEA "against the Germans and the Italian noncitizens as well," totaling about 14,000.

"This is now looked back on as a really hysterical, unnecessary response, and the vast, vast, vast majority of people who were held in these camps had no criminal record, were here lawfully — permanent residents had simply not naturalized.

"If you look at the basis for why these individuals were interned, it's often because they were these ethnic leaders, community leaders. They taught Japanese language, they did *kendo*, things that have absolutely nothing to do with loyalty or potential danger to a war effort.

"This law, unfortunately, was not repealed after WWII," Ebright continued. "For reasons that are obvious to this community, there was much more focus on Executive Order 9066, even though the Alien Enemies Act paved the way for the ultimate issuance and use of Executive Order 9066."

AEA Today

As promised during his presidential campaign, after taking office in January, President Trump invoked the AEA and set into motion the deportation of Venezuelan immigrants under the guise that "unlawful migration, narcotics trafficking and gang violence constitute an 'invasion' or 'predatory incursion.'"

"Narcotics trafficking is serious," Ebright said. "Gang violence is serious. Crime in our community requires some sort of response. But it's not this." She further noted that not only is there no predatory incursion or war occurring, but also the absence of "the full legal process" for those who were deported is especially problematic.

Bannai turned to Fujii to explain the status of Japanese American community activism and advocacy around the Alien Enemies Act repeal. In reference to Ebright's work "in coordinating a whole amicus brief campaign" that "complements the main ACLU litigation against President Trump," Fujii said part of that effort involved "finding the right parties" to make the most effective legal arguments.

Dual Amicus Briefs

"As Japanese Americans, we were the last group that the Alien Enemies Act was used on. So, we are working on two amicus briefs," Fujii said. Answering her own question as to why Japanese Americans are working on two amicus briefs instead of just one, Fujii said it was because there is a page limit. "Because we have so much to say, we're doing it in two briefs."

Describing the first amicus brief, Fujii said, "The first one, which we filed in June in the Court of Appeals level, is on behalf of the JACL and 63 other Asian American organizations, and that's making more legal arguments about the Korematsu cases and the coram nobis cases. Basically, don't repeat history, and don't lie about the evidence that you have to deport somebody." *(Read the June 6, 2025, Pacific Citizen, "JACL Takes Bold Stand in Federal Appeals Court Amicus Brief Against Discriminatory Alien Enemies Act," tinyurl.com/yc8n6u9c.)*

Regarding the second amicus brief, which has yet to be filed, Fujii said that it is on behalf of individuals who are descendants of ethnic Japanese who were AEA victims during WWII. "We will be personally signing on to this amicus brief our names," she said, to essentially bear witness for ancestors as to how the government misapplied the Alien Enemies Act during WWII, citing its unfairness, hardships caused and the lack of due process. "It was so absurd. My great-grandfather was just a laundry person. He didn't do anything."

Fujii said that the second amicus brief will be on behalf of not only Japanese Americans but also "the Japanese Latin Americans and the Germans and the Italian descendants" and that so far 150 have signed on. "We are looking for more descendants of Alien Enemies Act relatives to join us. That's one of the big projects we're doing right now."

» See AEA on page 9

AN EVENING OF 'ENCHANTMENT'

JACL concludes its national convention with nods to Folt and Yoshimura; organization also recognizes New Mexico chapter.

By Allison Haramoto, P.C. Executive Editor

Although its name implies farewell and goodbye, the Sayonara Banquet at the 2025 JACL National Convention at the Hotel Albuquerque on July 19 was quite the opposite as JACLers united to make new connections, renew old friendships and celebrate the organization's achievements.

The evening's festivities kicked-off with an official welcome by National Board VP of Public Affairs Seia Watanabe, who told the audience, "Over the past several days, we've come together to learn, reflect and recommit ourselves to JACL's mission: to secure and uphold the civil and human rights of all people while promoting cultural, educational and social values within the Japanese American community. Tonight, we take a moment to celebrate that work — and the community that makes it possible."

She then introduced the presentation of the colors by Rio Rancho, N.M.-based Boy Scout Troops 1919 and 714, led by Rhiannon Moore, followed by the singing of the "National Anthem" by convention planner Victoria Meaney. The audience then together surprised New Mexico chapter member Greg Suko with the singing of "Happy Birthday."

Watanabe then took a moment to thank JACL's key partners and sponsors, specifically State Farm's Kyle Ward, and then introduced National Board President Larry Oda.

"As we gather to close this year's convention, I want to offer my deep thanks to all of you — members, supporters and community leaders — who brought passion, insight and unity to our time together. We want to thank the New Mexico JACL for their hard work in hosting us this week," said Oda, who also acknowledged the organization's chapters and sponsors for their continued support.

Watanabe then retook the podium to introduce Remy Kageyama from the NY/SC to announce the group's silent auction winners.

"We exceeded our initial goal and raised $4,634," Kageyama said. "We are so grateful to all of our amazing sponsors, districts and chapters. . . . Funds will be absolutely instrumental in our ability to host youth programming and help shape JACL's future."

Kageyama then announced that the winners of the auction's Caesars Palace Las Vegas trip was Selanoco chapter's Ken Inouye and Paris Las Vegas trip was Washington, D.C., chapter's Kim Hirose.

Oda next presented the JACL President's Lifetime Achievement Award to Leo Akira Yoshimura. For 50 years, Yoshimura has worked on "Saturday Night Live," amassing 13 Emmy nominations and seven wins, as well as seven Art Directors Guild Awards, all while completing work that has "opened doors, told stories and made space for future generations of Asian American artists."

"This honor will always have a very special place in my heart," said Yoshimura, who earlier in the day participated in a Fireside Chat with performer/activist/storyteller Nobuko Miyamoto *(see related story in this issue)*.

Oda then made a special presentation to the New Mexico chapter, where he gifted its members a 48-star flag from Judge Johnny Gogo's American flag-signing project that displays the signatures of Japanese American incarceration camp survivors and Nisei veterans, which was made available for conventiongoers to sign throughout the four-day New Mexico confab.

Accepting the flag on behalf of the chapter was Nikki Nojima Louis, a surviving WWII incarceree, writer and storyteller who has dedicated her life to honoring all those who endured this injustice.

"I represent the history, a long history of emotion and care for a group of people right now who are sitting at that table and are descendants of the founding families of the New Mexico chapter," said Louis. "I am very proud to be part of that obligation and that legacy."

JACL National Board Secretary/Treasurer Jonathan Okamoto then introduced JACL's newest honor, the Robert Emmett Fletcher Jr. Humanitarian Award, which honors Fletcher's courage in aiding Japanese American families in the Sacramento agricultural region who were forced to move away from their homes as a result of Executive Order 9066.

Fletcher's actions helped the Kadokawa family return to Florin, Calif., and rebuild their lives — Okamoto shared remarks on behalf of Marielle Tsukamoto, whose grandmother, Ito Kadokawa, was Okamoto's grandfather's aunt.

"...Many Japanese American families lost everything — homes, farms and the dreams they had worked so hard to achieve. But our story was different, thanks to Bob Fletcher. . . . Bob Fletcher's selfless actions changed our lives forever. He gave us back not only our land, but our dignity and hope."

Okamoto also introduced Michael and Lisa Kanazawa (who is an ancestor of Fletcher's), who created the award and presented it to this year's inaugural recipient, Dr. Carol Folt, former president at the University of Southern California. Under her leadership, USC posthumously conferred degrees to 33 Nisei who were denied their diplomas because of WWII.

Recounting her decision, Folt was overcome with gratitude in accepting her award. "What an amazing story and the families touched — it gives us hope in a moment when we might not feel it. . . . It was one of those moments that was really a gift in my life, and that moment was so important, and it brought the community together."

Following Folt's moving speech, Watanabe then paid tribute to JACL members who passed away in 2025 by introducing an in memoriam video. PSW District Gov. Joseph Gu next announced that 2026's JACL National Convention will be held in Las Vegas from July 29-Aug. 2.

To close out the evening, Gu introduced legendary songwriter/artist Nobuko Miyamoto, who performed several iconic songs along with her musical director, Derek Nakamoto, as well as led JACLers in her take on traditional bon odori dancing, "Bambutsu no Tsunagari."

Convention sponsors this year included State Farm Insurance, Comcast, AARP, Verizon, the Motion Picture Assn., Compassion and Choices, U.S. Bank, the JACL Credit Union, Caesars Entertainment, the Japanese American National Museum, Keiro, the New Mexico Tea Company and Pepsi. ■



The JACL National Board

PHOTOS: DARRELL MIHO



Dr. Carol Folt accepts her humanitarian award.



Leo Yoshimura accepts his award from JACL National President Larry Oda.





The JACL National Staff

Larry Oda *(left)* presents the 48-star flag to New Mexico chapter's Calvin Kobayashi and Nikki Nojima Louis.

AMERICAN HOLIDAY TRAVEL

2026 TOUR SCHEDULE

HOKKAIDO SNOW FESTIVALS TOUR (Ernest Hida) . . . . . Feb 2-13
Lake Akan, Sounkyo, Sapporo, Otaru, Lake Toya, Hakodate, Tokyo. Hyobaku Ice Festival, Asahikawa Snow Festival, Sapporo Snow Festival, Hyoto Winter Festival.

JAPAN SOUTHERN CHARMS HOLIDAY TOUR (Ernest Hida) . . . . . Mar 9-20
Fukuoka, Hagi, Suo-Oshima, Hiroshima, Matsuyama, Takamatsu, Shodo Island, Okayama, Kurashiki, Himeji, Osaka.

GREAT TRAINS-SEDONA HOLIDAY TOUR (Carol Hida). . . . . Mar 15-20
Sedona Tour, Grand Canyon Railway to Grand Canyon South Rim, Flagstaff, Montezuma Castle National Park, Verde Canyon Railway to 2 National Parks.

JAPAN SPRING COUNTRYSIDE HOLIDAY TOUR (Ernest Hida) . . . . . Apr 13-25
Tokyo, Shimoda, Commodore Perry sites, Shizuoka, Mt Fuji, Lake Kawaguchi, Matsumoto, Tsumago/Nagome, Gero Onsen, Toba, Nagoya.

NEW YORK CITY HOLIDAY TOUR (Carol Hida) . . . . . Apr 23-28
New York City Tour, Statue of Liberty, Ferry Cruise of New York Harbor, 9/11 Memorial & Museum, 2 Broadway Shows.

MT RUSHMORE-YELLOWSTONE HOLIDAY TOUR (Carol Hida) . . . . . Jun 17-25
Rapid City, Mt Rushmore, Crazy Horse Memorial, Billings, Little Big Horn National Monument, Cody, Yellowstone National Park, Jackson, Grand Tetons National Park, Salt Lake City.

GRANDPARENTS-GRANDCHILDREN JAPAN TOUR (Ernest Hida) . . . . . Jun 21-Jul 1
Tokyo, Hakone, Atami, Hiroshima, Kyoto. Craftmaking hands-on experiences.

ALASKA HOLIDAY CRUISE (Carol Hida) . . . . . Jul 18-25
Vancouver, Sail Inside Passage, Juneau, Skagway, Cruise Glacier Bay, Ketchikan – "Salmon Capital", Vancouver. Koningsdam - Holland America Cruise.

PANA CONVENTION (Ernest Hida) . . . . . Sep
Sao Paulo-Brazil.

JAPAN AUTUMN COUNTRYSIDE HOLIDAY TOUR (Ernest Hida) . . . . . Oct 5-18
Hokkaido-Tohoku. Kushiro, Lake Akan, Sounkyo, Asahikawa, Sapporo, Otaru, Noboribetsu, Lake Toya, Hakodate, Aomori, Lake Towada, Morioka, Hiraizmi, Naruto Onsen, Matsushima, Mito, Tokyo.

AUSTRALIA-NEW ZEALAND HOLIDAY TOUR (Ernest Hida). . . . . Oct 26-Nov 11
Sydney, Cairns, Melbourne, Queenstown, Rotorua, Auckland.

CHRISTMAS MARKET CANADA HOLIDAY TOUR (Carol Hida). . . . . Dec 1-7
Vancouver City Tour, Grouse Mountain Skyride, Shipyards Christmas Market, Ferry to Victoria Island, Butchart Gardens, High Tea at Fairmont Empress Hotel, Victoria Christmas Market & Fair, Van Dusen Festival of Lights.

For more information and reservations, please contact:

AMERICAN HOLIDAY TRAVEL
312 E. 1st Street, Suite 240 * Los Angeles, CA 90012
Tel: (213)625-2232 * Email: americanholiday@att.net
Ernest or Carol Hida



JACL National President Larry Oda and his wife, Anne



JACL VP General Operations Ryan Yoshikawa addresses JACLers on opening night.



NY/SC's Remi Kageyama *(left)* and Claire Inouye



(From left) Zara Espinoza, Kai Uno and Vinicius Taguchi



JACL fellow Matthew Marumoto



(From left) PSW District Governor Joseph Gu, Sarah Taketa, Grant Nieda and Kiana Lovgren



(From left) Ryan Yoshikawa, Chizuko Heyer, JACL Education Programs Manager Matt Weisbly and Aiko Dzikowski



JACL board members *(from left)* Seia Watanabe, Gary Nakamura and Dominique Mashburn



New Mexico's NMTAIKO





(From left) Hanako Wakatsuki-Chong, Mike Honda and Ken Inouye



A celebration with JACL New Mexico was held at the JA Cultural Center on July 18.

PHOTO: ROBBIN KAWABATA



(From left) New Mexico's Steve Togami, Nikki Nojima Louis, Esther Churchwell and Calvin Kobayashi



The NY/SC held its youth mixer on July 17.

PHOTOS: DARRELL MIHO, GEORGE TOSHIO JOHNSTON, SUSAN YOKOYAMA, ALLISON HARAMOTO

'YOU ARE PART OF SOMETHING POWERFUL'

JACLers convened in Albuquerque, N.M., over the course of four days to take part in meaningful workshop discussions, listen to plenary discussions, enjoy the NY/SC Awards Luncheon and Sayonara Banquet, learn about cultural identity at the Japanese American Community Center of New Mexico, take part in a pilgrimage to the Santa Fe Internment Camp Remembrance Site near downtown Santa Fe and enjoy all that the "Land of Enchantment" has to offer.

"It's been a pleasure having you so far, and I hope you enjoy Albuquerque, N.M.," said New Mexico Chapter President Calvin Kobayashi to JACLers at the convention's opening night reception. "We have a lot of great things to offer, and we're going to share what we've done here as far as JACL is concerned and become a part of the whole here."

Meeting old friends again. Making new connections. Working together under this year's theme, "Voices in Unity," JACLers were reminded that, according to National Board VP of General Operations Ryan Yoshikawa, "Our strength lies not only in the stories we tell, but in how we stand together — across generations, across communities and across the country — to fight for civil rights, protect our cultural heritage and build a more just future."

— P.C. Staff



Candid Photos



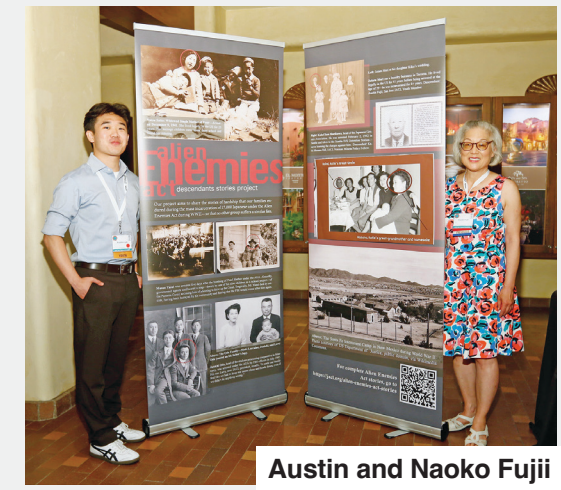
Chip and Setsy Larouche



JACL National President Larry Oda *(left)* and Secretary/ Treasurer Jonathan Okamoto



(From left) Steve Okamoto, Sharon Uyeda and John Saito Jr.



Austin and Naoko Fujii



JACLers at the President's Council Lunch



(From left) John Saito Jr., Kara Yokoyama and Darrell Miho enjoy a sweet treat to beat the heat.



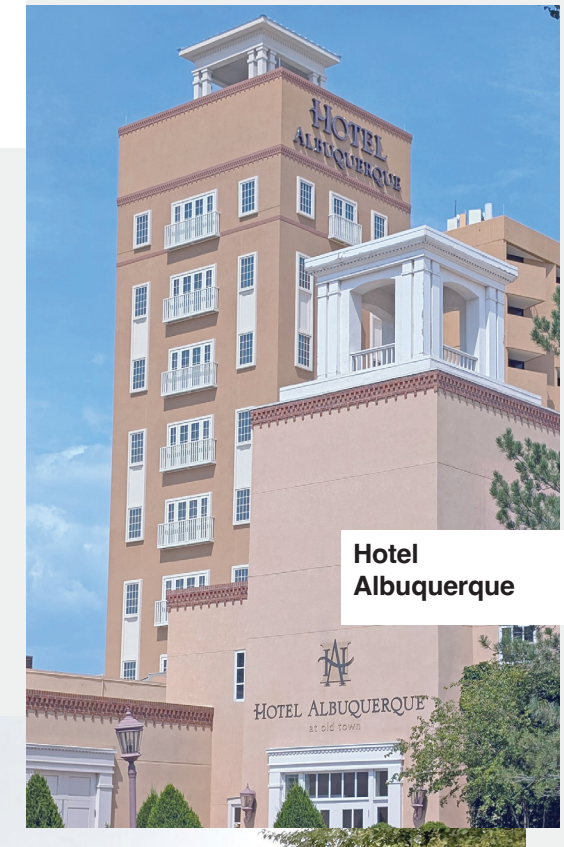
JACLers had the opportunity to sign Judge Johnny Gogo's 48-star flag in honor of those who were forcibly incarcerated during WWII. The flag was presented to the New Mexico chapter during the convention's Sayonara Banquet.



The NY/SC held a silent auction to raise funds for its youth programming and events.



Nobuko Miyamoto and Derek Nakamoto performed during the Sayonara Banquet.



Hotel Albuquerque



(From left) Greg Suko, Amy Suko, Esther Churchwell, Robbie Yoshikawa, Ariel Imamoto and Heidi Kamei



JACLers took a pilgrimage to the Santa Fe Internment Camp Remembrance Site on July 20.





Hotel Albuquerque was mere steps from historic Old Town.

PHOTOS: DARRELL MIHO, GEORGE TOSHIO JOHNSTON, SUSAN YOKOYAMA, ALLISON HARAMOTO

‘SNL’S’ LEO YOSHIMURA GETS CLOSE-UP

A revelatory Fireside Chat precedes his acceptance of the President’s Lifetime Achievement Award.

By P.C. Staff



Leo Akira Yoshimura and Nobuko Miyamoto during the Fireside Chat held July 19 at the JACL National Convention in New Mexico.
PHOTO: GEORGE TOSHIO JOHSTON

To paraphrase original “Saturday Night Live” cast member Garrett Morris’ iconic character Chico Escuela, one might say that 2025 so far has been “berry, berry good” for the hoary sketch comedy and music show.

In February, “SNL” celebrated 50 years since airing live, from New York, on a Saturday night — Oct. 11, 1975 — on NBC.

Thus, it was only fitting that someone associated with the venerable show received a President’s Lifetime Achievement Award at the JACL National Convention in Albuquerque, N.M. — and that someone was Leo Akira Yoshimura, the Emmy-award winning “SNL” production designer whose name has been in the show’s ending credits since 1975.

Among the many anecdotes Yoshimura shared during a July 18 Fireside Chat hosted by Nobuko Miyamoto a few hours before he received his award at the Sayonara Gala was how he got his first name. He told the singer/dancer/activist that “Leo,” the name by which most of the people in his life address him, can be credited to a priest who served Japanese American Catholics at the Manzanar War Relocation Center, where Yoshimura’s parents were incarcerated during World War II.

The Chicago-born Yoshimura also attributed to Catholicism — “You can’t use birth control, right?” — the fact that he is one of among 11 Yoshimura siblings. Not an unfunny observation from someone who claims to have “no sense of humor.” Maybe something rubbed off after 50 years with a comedy show.

Like ramen, “SNL” became an instant classic. Over all those decades, one constant was Yoshimura.

It has also meant 50 seasons of stress, sleepless nights and long days. “That’s what I do. I’ve done it for 50 years, and I do it because I love it,” said Yoshimura.

For the convention’s Japanese American audience, elements of Yoshimura’s backstory resonated: parents meeting in an arranged marriage, coming from a family that experienced incarceration, having a Nisei father who was, in his words, a “no no person” and who was deported to Japan, the family choosing to move to Chicago after the camps closed to avoid the racism of Los Angeles, being told by his mother that “I always had to be better than the other guy” and how she “always used Manzanar as the reason why one had to be better. If you’re not better, then they’ll be able to take you to Manzanar again.”

Yoshimura got his start building scenery for a theater troupe while attending Loyola University Chicago. From there, he said he chanced upon another theater group, which was run by Second City co-founder Paul Sills, himself a giant of sketch comedy.

Said Yoshimura: “I did most of the technical work. One winter, Paul came up to me and said, ‘What are you going to do?’ because the company was closing. I said, ‘I really don’t know what I’m going to do, Paul.’ And he said, “Why don’t you go to Yale?’”

As fate would have it, Sills was friends with Robert Brustein, who was at that time the dean of Yale School of Drama. “And he said, ‘I’ll get you in.’ And I said, ‘OK.’ Two weeks later, I get this letter, and it’s kind of this formal letter, and I open it up, and it said, ‘You have been accepted at Yale.’ Very lucky and very coincidental.”

Lucky break of a lifetime, right? For Yoshimura, it was more of a “yes, but” than a “yes and” scenario. And, it wasn’t the last lucky break that would get him to “SNL.”

“I get to Yale, and I’m terribly unmatched because a lot of the undergraduates who had come to the graduate program were from very strong theater programs, and I was just a guy who built scenery for a minor University in Chicago,” he said.

Yoshimura wasn’t sure whether he’d make it through his second year. Fortunately, Yale had hired Ming Cho Lee, a well-regarded Broadway and opera designer. “I found that so lucky because he mentored me. He invited me down to his studio during all the semester during the breaks, to work for him, and then to work in the Public Theater in in Central Park.”

With his Yale degree and the mentorship of Lee, when Lorne Michaels was preparing to launch “SNL,” Yoshimura was a ready for primetime player. Referring to the show’s creator, visionary and executive producer, Yoshimura said, “Lorne Michaels did not hire me because I was Japanese American. He hired me because I was a good designer first.”

But there’s no speculation for how much longer he will stay. “They asked me, and I said I would do one more year.” Like Chico Escuela and baseball, for Leo Yoshimura, “Saturday Night Live” has indeed been “berry, berry good.” ■

REWARDING RIGHTEOUS ACTION

Inaugural Robert Emmett Fletcher Jr. Award goes to USC’s Dr. Carol Folt.

By P.C. Staff



Mike and Lisa Kanazawa, who created the new Robert Emmett Fletcher Jr. Humanitarian Award, stand with former USC President Dr. Carol Folt and Glenn Osaki of the USC Annenberg School for Communication and Journalism following a short meeting with *Pacific Citizen* held July 19.
PHOTO: GEORGE TOSHIO JOHSTON

Do the right thing.

Not only can those four words be used for a movie title, they can encapsulate the essence behind the creation of a new JACL-sponsored honor, namely the Robert Emmett Fletcher Jr. Humanitarian Award, the first of which was presented during the JACL National Convention’s Sayonara Gala on July 19.

The “right thing” was what the award’s namesake, Robert E. Fletcher Jr., did for his neighbors when their government removed them from their farms and locked them up during World War II.

Decades later Dr. Carol Folt, the award’s first recipient, also did the right thing when she decided to break her university’s policy of never awarding honorary posthumous degrees, in this case to University of Southern California students of Japanese heritage, most of whom were U.S. citizens, who were summarily expelled after the United States and Japan went to war in late 1941.

After learning of the circumstances of the unfairness of how that cohort of students was treated, thanks in large part to the efforts of USC alumnus Jon Kaji, Folt realized that she not only had the authority to override her institution’s policy, she then took the steps necessary to make it happen and decades later finally do the right thing for those students and their descendants by awarding them in 2020 with honorary posthumous degrees from USC (*see the April 15, 2020, Pacific Citizen, tinyurl.com/389sne6t*).

Glenn Osaki of the USC Annenberg School for Communication and Journalism noted that Kaji and his late father, Bruce, had tried to persuade two previous presidents to do what Folt later did, but had declined.

Folt was honored by the JACL with the inaugural Robert Emmett Fletcher Jr. Humanitarian Award, creating a virtuous circle to recognize still-living people who went out of their way to do the right thing.

As for what Fletcher, who died in 2013 at 101, did and how the award came into being, another USC alumnus and his spouse come into play: Michael and Lisa Kanazawa.

Lisa Kanazawa is a great-niece of Fletcher, who selflessly and without fanfare stepped up to help three Japanese American neighbors — the Nitta, Okamoto and Tsukamoto families — by maintaining their farms while they were incarcerated during WWII.

According to the *Los Angeles Times* obituary, Fletcher “worked 90 acres of California table grapes, paid the mortgages and taxes, and took half the profits. He turned over the rest — along with the farms — to the three families when they returned to Sacramento in 1945.

“I did know a few of them pretty well and never agreed with the evacuation,” Fletcher told the *Sacramento Bee* in 2010.

After the war ended and formerly incarcerated Japanese American families began the resettlement phase, each had different circumstances awaiting them. Many had lost everything. But thanks to her relative’s efforts, Lisa Kanazawa said those three families whose returns were not so unfortunate. “When the families came back, they had a place to live,” she said. “Their homes were there for them, and they actually had some money to start. … a lot of the families did not come back to that kind of situation.”

Fletcher’s righteous actions resonated with Lisa and Mike and inspired them to approach the JACL National Board to create a new award to recognize the Bob Fletchers of the world.

Jumping to 2020 and how USC did the right thing under Folt’s leadership, she recalled how her decision played out. “Nobody said, ‘We don’t want it.’ In fact, when we wrote to people or called them, we didn’t say, ‘We’re going to do this.’ We said, ‘Would you accept the conferral of the degree?’ because it felt like it was their agency to do it.

“I just felt so privileged to be the person in this seat that could help that happen. But it was really about all of them and their families.” ■

AEA » continued from page 4

As for when the second amicus brief will be filed to the Supreme Court, Fujii said it may be either by the end of this year or early next year, depending on the court's schedule. "We are creating more Alien Enemy Act stories and … we will be posting them on the JACL website. The stories are really fascinating, and I invite everybody to read them."

Uncle Mike Takes the Mic

With that, Bannai brought the discussion back to Honda, asking him why he continued his advocacy to repeal the AEA, which goes back to 2010 when he was still a congressman.

"It came from the idea that in 1988 when JACL successfully passed HR 442, exacting an apology from our government for what they did through Executive Order 9066, that it was an unequivocal, unambiguous apology from the government to us. Unprecedented.

"And from that, many legislators, many policymakers knew that they were on call if they ever did this again because in the first Trump administration, when he was talking about herding up folks and putting them in cages, people have responded by invoking the history and the story of the Japanese Americans. And that was because of work that culminated in 1988."

Still, the continued existence of the AEA and how it could be misapplied bothered him. After doing some research, Honda decided it was necessary to write a bill to repeal it, and he even tried to get support on his 2010 bill from Eric Holder, then-attorney general under President Barack Obama. "He felt that it was not necessary to repeal the law because in case we do declare a war against a nation or another government that had attacked us, that we would need that law."



Moderator Lorraine Bannai *(left)* and panelist Katherine Yon Ebright

PHOTO: GEORGE TOSHIO JOHNSTON

Is the AEA Even Necessary?

To Honda, that made no sense. "I said to him, 'In 2001, we were attacked by terrorists on this land, and we had an authorization for use of military force by Congress to the White House, and that gave the president the authority to move forward and use military force against our enemies — but the key word was 'terrorists.'"

For Honda, the misgivings he had in 2010 about how the AEA could be misused despite limitations that a president could only invoke it during wartime would come home to roost with the election of President Trump. From Honda's perspective, Trump simply wants to invoke the AEA at will so that he can bypass normal due process.

The solution for Honda on how to deal with AEA as a legal means to bypass due process by any president who might wish to abuse it is to repeal it — and the means to do that is the Neighbors Not Enemies Act, introduced to the Senate by Sen. Mazie Hirono (D-Hawaii) and the House of Representatives by Rep. Ilhan Omar (D-Minn.) on Jan. 22.

The JACL, Honda believes, has a vital role in the success or failure of the Neighbors Not Enemies Act. "Whether you're a citizen or a noncitizen, you still have the protection of the Constitution of this country, and that's how the Constitution has evolved since 1798. JACL and JACLers, Nikkeis, we have it in our DNA now, in our history to know better, to be able to lead on this issue of repealing this law because we lived it.

"We fought for the apology," Honda continued, "and the apology just only was half the battle because the other battle was for our grandparents, who were not citizens, who were rounded up without due process — and it's being done again."

The repeal of the AEA is, to Honda, a redress-level legal task tailor-made for the JACL. "This is an American issue. It's not party, and it's dividing our country, and JACL can be the agent of bringing this all together."

Plea to the President

With his time to speak having run over, Honda addressed his next comment to JACL National Board President Larry Oda. "Mr. President, perhaps, maybe at this time, before we adjourn that we have an emergency meeting of the board and have an emergency resolution directing the chapters to move forward on this issue, as we did on HR 442."

Ebright augmented Honda's plea. "I really want to underscore the representative's point that repeal is the path forward, it's the only path forward. In wartime, this law is in excess, right? We saw what happened in WWII. We saw how unjust it was, and that's because it's not 1798. There are plenty of tools that the government has to keep us safe in wartime. Interning people based on where they were born, what they look like, is not, should not, cannot be one of those tools. And what we now see is that in peacetime, this law is drafted broadly enough that it is subject to abuse."

Honda, for his part, understands that his quest to have the AEA repealed won't happen in this session of Congress. It may not happen in his lifetime. But the status quo for repeal has progressed compared to a when he wrote a letter to the editor five years ago on the AEA repeal that appeared in the March 6, 2020, *Pacific Citizen* (*see tinyurl.com/432yk59p*). There was no Neighbors Not Enemies Act back then. In other words, like redress, it's a process that will take time and many twists and many turns.

"It's been on the books in 1798. So, make it happen in this generation," Honda said. "That's why it's important to vote and to make things happen." ■





A NATIONAL GUIDE TO NOTABLE COMMUNITY EVENTS

CALENDAR

NCWNP

Gunpla Social
San Francisco, CA
Aug. 16; 1-4 p.m.
The Center
1840 Sutter St.
Price: $5 BYOGunpla
Are you a fan of the iconic mecha anime Gundam? Join the community in building the popular Japanese mecha models. This event promises to be a fun and enriching opportunity to connect with like-minded enthusiasts.
Info: Visit bit.ly/CenterGunpla and www.jcccnc.org.

Kabuki Theatre Appreciation Class With JETAANC
San Francisco, CA
Aug. 21; 6:30-8:30 p.m.
The Center
1840 Sutter St.
Price: Free But Donations Encouraged
Learn why millions have come to love the drama, spectacle and beauty of the powerful tradition of Kabuki Theatre. No preparation needed. All ages are welcome.
Info: Visit www.jcccnc.org and www.jetaanc.org/kabuki-club.

The Incredible History of Nikkei Farmers in the Sacramento+ Region
Sacramento, CA
Aug. 24; 4-6 p.m.
Buddhist Church of Sacramento
2401 Riverside Blvd.
Price: Free
This free talk will educate participants on the incredible history of Nikkei farmers, the WWII loss of family farms and the long-term impact to the country's food system. This talk is sponsored by the Adult Buddhist Association of the Buddhist Church of Sacramento and co-sponsored by the Sacramento JACL, Florin JACL-Sacramento Valley and Buddhist Church of Florin.
Info: To register and for more information, visit kanshahistory.org.

New Japanese Clay
San Francisco, CA
Aug. 15-Feb. 2, 2026
Asian Art Museum
200 Larkin St.
Price: Museum Admission
The world of contemporary Japanese ceramics is brimming wtih approaches to the medium of clay. This exhibit showcases your idea of what is possible in this time-honored form.
Info: Visit https://exhibitions.asianart.org/exhibitions/new-japanese-clay/.

PSW

Natsumatsuri Family Festival During Nisei Week
Los Angeles, CA
Aug. 16; 11 a.m.-5 p.m.
JANM Democracy Center and Norman Y. Mineta Democracy Plaza
100 N. Central Ave.
Price: Free
Celebrate summer and Nisei Week at this family event featuring cultural performances, crafts, storytime with author and racecar driver Nadine Sachiko Hsu, origami and much more!
Info: Visit janm.org.

'I Am an American' Nisei Soldier Experience Traveling Exhibit
Torrance, CA
Aug. 22; 6 p.m. Reception; 7 p.m. Program
El Camino College, East Room
16007 Crenshaw Blvd.
Price: Free; Seating Is Limited.
The National Veterans Network invites all to learn about the U.S. Army's first traveling exhibit, which features Japanese American Nisei soldiers who served during WWII. Speakers inlcude Gen. Eric K. Shinseki, Ret., Christine Sato-Yamazaki and David Ono. A panel discussion with Nisei families will also be included in the evening's program.
Info: Visit https://nvnvets.org.

8th Annual Keiro No Hi Festival
Los Angeles, CA
Sept. 13; 10 a.m.-3 p.m.
Los Angeles Hompa Hongwanji Buddhist Temple
Price: Free for Attendees 60+; $20 for Attendees 59 and under; Registration Required.
This festival will feature live entertainment with performances by local older adults, food, vendors and much more. Registration is required before Aug. 22 or capacity is reached.
Info: Email events@keiro.org.

'Cruising J-Town: Behind the Wheel of the Nikkei Community' Exhibit
Pasadena, CA
Thru Nov. 12
ArtCenter College of Design
1111 S. Arroyo Pkwy.
This exhibit chronicles the people and stories behind how Japanese Americans have played vital roles in car scenes throughout the region. Generations of Nikkei have steered their family stories via their relationship to car culture. Presented by JANM on the Go.
Info: Visit https://www.janm.org/exhibits/cruising-j-town.

2025 VJCC Golf Tournament
Whittier, CA
Sept. 22
Candlewood Country Club
14000 Telegraph Road
Price: $200
This year's tournament will be a handicapped four-person team scramble format, with the shotgun start at 9 a.m., followed by an awards and buffet lunch at 2 p.m. Registration deadline is Sept. 12. All proceeds will benefit the VJCC Building Fund.
Info: Email golf@vjcc.com or call (310) 822-8885.

RAP Arts and Crafts Fair
Los Angeles, CA
Sept. 27; 9 a.m.-3 p.m.
Venice Japanese Community Center
12448 Braddock Dr.
Price: Free
Don't miss your opportunity to get a jump-start on holiday shopping with this craft fair that will feature plenty of unique craft items and much more!
Info: Interested in becoming a vendor, contact lola.hongo@gmail.com, sluyeda83@gmail.com or shar6416@aol.com.

PNW

Nikkei Community Picnic
Los Angeles, CA
Aug. 17; Noon-5 p.m.
Oaks Park, Picnic Areas 11-13 Behind Big Roller Coaster
Price: Free
Food, fun, rides for the kids, raffle prizes, entertainment, a performance by Portland Taiko and a sumo demo will be featured at this family-friendly event. Come enjoy the day and bring a dish to share.
Info: Email youth@pdxjacl.org or call (971) 940-8520.

'Sadako and Paper Cranes: Through Our Eyes'
Portland, OR
Thru Sept. 7
Japanese American Museum of Oregon
411 N.W. Flanders St.
In observance of 80 years since the bombing of Hiroshima and Nagasaki, this exhibit examines the devastation of nuclear war through the eyes of Sadako Sasaki.
Info: For information, visit https://jamo.org/sadako/.

'Natural Patterns: Katazome Stencil Dying'
Portland, OR
Thru Sept. 15
Portland Japanese Garden
The Calvin and Mayho Tanabe Gallery
611 S.W. Kingston Ave.
Price: $22.50 Admission
Katazome is a method of using paper stencils and resist paste to dye fabrics. This exhibit will feature the work of local Oregon artist Karen Illman Miller, who has practiced *katazome* for the past 30 years.
Info: Visit www.japanesegarden.org.

MDC

Intergenerational Conversations: 'Ripples of the Past' Program
Chicago, IL
Aug. 30; 3:30-6:30 p.m.
Midwest Buddhist Temple
435 W. Menomonee St.
Price: Free
This program from the JACL Chicago chapter brings Chicago-area Nikkei together to connect and process the trauma of WWII through personal story sharing.
Info: RSVP by Aug. 16. Visit https://jaclchicago.org/programs/intergenerational-conversations/.

Ground Blessing for Snow Country Prison Memorial and Pilgrimage to Bismarck
Bismarck, ND
Sept. 5
Courtyard of the Historic Barrack Building
This pilgrimage to Bismarck will celebrate the completion of the Snow Country Prison Japanese American Internment Memorial. Activities include a Native American ground blessing of the site, an honoring of those interned there during WWII and education programs and cultural performances.
Info: To learn more, visit https://uttc.edu/about-uttc/visit-our-campus/snow-country-prison-memorial-at-bismarck/.

2025 Crystal City Pilgrimage and Conference
San Antonio, TX
Oct. 9-12
Conference Portion: DoubleTree San Antonio Airport Hotel
611 N.W. Loop 410
Price: $395
Themed "Crystal City Rising — Neighbors Not Enemies," event programming will be centered around the present-day attacks on immigrant communities, Participants will also have the opportunity to stamp the Ireicho book.
Info: Visit www.crystalcitypilgrimage.org/2025-pilgrimage.

EDC

'Yakyu/Baseball: The Transpacific Exchange of the Game'
Cooperstown, NY
Now Open
Baseball Hall of Fame
25 Main St.
Price: Museum Admission
This exhibit explores the exchange of baseball between Japan and the U.S.
Info: Visit https://baseballhall.org.

Think!Chinatown Summer Events Chinatown Night Market
Manhattan, NY
Aug. 15, Aug. 30
Manhattan's Chinatown
Price: Free
Think!Chinatown's Night Market is here to build community with food and friends.
Info: Visit www.thinkchinatown.org.

Japanese War Brides: Across a Wide Divide
Delray Beach, FL
Thru Aug. 17
Morikami Museum and Japanese Gardens
4000 Morikami Park Road
Price: Museum Admission
This exhibit illuminates previously unknown American immigration stories.
Info: Visit https://morikami.org/upcoming-exhibitions/.

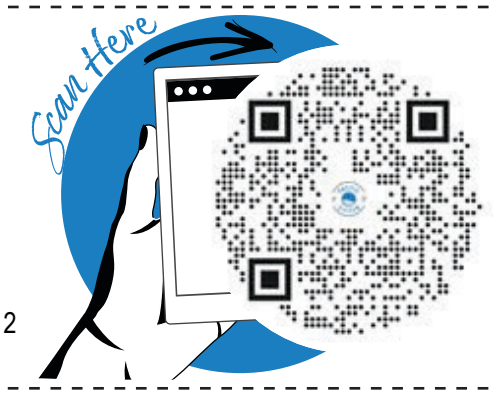
Celebrating Sano Gofu: 50th Anniversary of Sho-Fu-An
Duxbury, MA
Thru August
Art Complex Museum
189 Alden St.
Price: Museum Admission
This exhibit displays the paintings, sketches and architectural plans of Sano Gofu, a famous watercolor artist from Japan.
Info: Visit artcomplex.org.

Japanese Celebration: Boxton Red Sox vs. Detroit Tigers
Boston, MA
Celebrate Japanese culture at this game. Ticketholders with special event tickets will receive a Japan-inspired hat.
Info: Visit www.mlb.com/redsox. ■

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JACLERS TAKE PILGRIMAGE TO N.M. MEMORIAL

Some 4,555 men of Japanese ancestry were incarcerated near Santa Fe during World War II.

A group of JACLers traveled by coach bus from the Hotel Albuquerque to the Santa Fe Internment Camp Remembrance Site in Santa Fe, N.M., as part of the national convention's final-day agenda offerings on July 20.

Following a Santa Fe Camp presentation by Nancy Bartlit in the early morning, the group departed for the remembrance site that marks the location where some 4,555 men of Japanese ancestry — among them, resident religious leaders, businessmen, teachers, fishermen and farmers — were forcibly incarcerated in the Department of Justice internment camp from March 1942-April 1946.

A stone monument now stands at the top of the hill at the Frank S. Ortiz dog park in the Casa Solana neighborhood to memorialize the site; it was dedicated on April 20, 2002, and features a plaque that describes the historical significance of the site and the injustice Japanese Americans endured there during WWII.



A close-up of the memorial stone

PHOTOS: NANCY UKAI

The trip was organized by the New Mexico chapter's Victor Yamada and Nikki Nojima Louis and featured 10 descendants of Santa Fe incarcerees who spoke to the group about their family's experience there. Pilgrims were then invited to lay flowers on the stone.

As part of the convention's programming, New Mexico chapter members presented several workshops detailing the history of Japanese Americans in the "Land of Enchantment," including a screening of the documentary short "Community in Conflict" by director Claudia Katayanagi, which documents the challenges community leaders, historians and Japanese Americans faced when trying to erect the memorial stone; Louis served as the film's co-producer.

— P.C. Staff



JACLers at the Santa Fe Internment Camp Remembrance Site

In MEMORIAM

Adachi, Valerie A., 70, Honolulu, HI, Jan. 5.

Baba, Edith Yuriko, 93, Aiea, HI, Jan. 27.

Chinen, Sumiko Komesu, 95, Waipahu, HI, Nov. 16, 2024.

Doi, Paul Tsukasa, 87, Oxnard, CA, July 11.

Endo, Akira, 85, San Francisco, CA, Feb. 19.

Fujikawa, JoAnn M. 'Joey,' 85, Madison, WI, July 18.

Fujikawa, Tamiko, 97, Los Angeles, CA, April 21.

Fukushima, Fumiko, 88, Los Angeles, CA, May 31.

Harada, Aiko, 102, Los Angeles, CA. July 2, 2025.

Inafuku, David Hiroshi, 71, Gardena, CA, May 31.

Kato, Kazuko, 94, Seal Beach, CA, May 24.

Matsumoto, Kusuo, 91, Monterey Park, CA, June 5.

Okamoto, Takashi, 95, Gardena, CA, June 2.

Oyenoki, Joyce, 71, Garden Grove, CA, July 8.

Tawa Jr., Thomas Tetsuo, 85, Sebastapol, June 20.

Uyehara, William Suyekichi, 93, Los Angeles, CA, March 16.

Yamamoto, Karen Kikuko, 70, San Clemente, CA, June 12. ■

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CONTACT:
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News Briefs

DOJ Announces Arrests of 2 Chinese Nationals for Illegal Chip Exports

Chuan Geng, 28, of Pasadena, Calif., and Shiwei Yang, 28, of El Monte, Calif., were arrested Aug. 2 and later charged with violating the Export Control Reform Act for allegedly exporting "tens of millions of dollars'" worth of microprocessor chips, including Nvidia H100s used in high-end artificial intelligence applications, which ended up in the People's Republic of China. The Aug. 5 announcement stated that the pair illegally made the shipments between October 2022 and July 2025 through their company, ALX Solutions Inc., which was said to have made the sales minus the required license or authorization from the Department of Commerce. The Department of Justice described Geng as a lawful permanent resident and Yang as an illegal alien who overstayed her visa. Violating the Export Control Reform Act is a felony that carries a statutory maximum sentence of 20 years in federal prison. In related news, the DOJ announced July 21 that Chenguang Gong, 59, of San Jose, Calif., and a dual citizen of the United States and the People's Republic of China, pleaded guilty of one count of theft of trade secrets, specifically proprietary technologies developed for use by the U.S. government to detect nuclear missile launches, track ballistic and hypersonic missiles and allow U.S. fighter planes to detect and evade heat-seeking missiles. Gong, who remains free on $1.75 million bond, is scheduled to be sentenced Sept. 29; he faces a statutory maximum sentence of 10 years in federal prison.

Shane Tamura Identified as Gunman in June 28 Manhattan Mass Shooting

Law enforcement has been investigating a theory that CTE — chronic traumatic encephalopathy — may have been a motivating factor for the gunman responsible in the July 28 mass shooting at a Manhattan high-rise that resulted in four deaths and one person wounded. The suspect, identified as Shane Devon Tamura, 27, of Las Vegas, was a standout youth football player who attended high schools in Southern California. He killed himself with a self-inflicted gunshot wound to his chest. In a note discovered after the shootings, he blamed football and the National Football League, which has offices in the Park Avenue tower where the slayings took place, for covering up the dangers of CTE resulting from football. The words, "Study my brain please. I'm sorry," were reported to be in Tamura's note. NYC Mayor Eric Adams was quoted as saying, "It appears as though he was going after the employees at the NFL." A degenerative brain disorder, CTE results from cumulative blows to the head from contact sports such as football and boxing and can only be determined after an autopsy. The *Los Angeles Times* reported that Tamura's father, Terence Tamura, is a retired Los Angeles Police Department officer. The names of the slain are Didarul Islam of the NYPD, Wesley LePatner, Julia Hyman and Aland Etienne.

Los Angeles Times Owner Soon-Shiong Reveals Plan to Take Paper Public

The surprise announcement that financial shares for a new company to be known as the L.A. Times Next Network will go on sale in 2026 was made by *Los Angeles Times* owner Dr. Patrick Soon-Shiong during a July 21 appearance on Comedy Central's "The Daily Show." The financial mechanism to be used, Regulation A, can raise up to $75 million. The move appears to be a move to buoy the struggling newspaper, which Soon-Shiong purchased in 2018 for $500 million. In addition to the paper, the new entity will include LAT Next, a curated creator platform; Nant Games (esports and gaming); NantStudios Virtual Production; and L.A. Times Studios, which won an Academy Award with Searchlight Pictures for the short documentary "The Last Repair Shop" in 2024.

Major League Superstar Ichiro Suzuki Inducted Into Baseball Hall of Fame

On July 27, the Baseball Hall of Fame inducted the first Japanese national into the Cooperstown, N.Y., institution. Ichiro Suzuki, who began his professional career began in Japan and completed the final 19 years of it in the United States, received 393 of 394 votes from the Baseball Writers Association of America, one vote shy of being selected unanimously. He spent most of his U.S. career playing for the Seattle Mariners and closed it out with the Miami Marlins. *(To view an iconic throw by Ichiro Suzuki, visit tinyurl.com/mr28n7w9. To view Suzuki's HoF speech, visit tinyurl.com/2mamdffu.)*

WNBA Names Valkyries' Natalie Nakase Coach of the Month for June

The honor is a first for the Golden State Valkyries' skipper, Natalie Nakase. It's her first season as a head coach.

— P.C. Staff

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