

‘Adaptation Is Often Necessary to Ensure a Viable Future in an Ever-Changing Environment’

*By Matthew Farrells
National Secretary/Treasurer*

Happy New Year! I wish everyone a healthy and prosperous new year. JACL had a successful but challenging 2015. On one hand, our programming continues to raise the visibility of JACL and deliver on our core competencies of civil rights advocacy and JA legacy preservation. On the other hand, implementing new programs, which strive to further the mission of JACL, often came at a cost, mainly the unanticipated impact to the budget. In times like these, flexibility is key to capitalize on current opportunities, and effective communication is required when accurately reporting the financial position of the organization.

As we look ahead to 2016, our focus will be on two main components. First, the biennial budget process will set the priorities of the next biennium with the main goal of approving a budget at National Convention. Second, operating performance must be kept in line with the approved budget for 2016. Given our outlook, these two items may prove to be difficult.

First, as we look toward convention this summer, there is a lot of work that must be done to propose a new biennial budget for 2017-18. The Budget Committee and National Board will be hard at work to ensure critical input is gathered from all stakeholders. Our goal is to build a budget that supports both current and new programs, which meet the needs of our community through 2018. This process ultimately ends with a vote by National Council, which I hope is swift and united.

Second, proactive measures will be implemented to ensure the organization meets the budgeted revenue and expenditure targets for 2016. This primarily consists of identifying additional revenue streams to supplement our existing income base; as well as cutting expenses where possible. Adaptation is often necessary to ensure a viable future in an ever-changing environment, and I am hopeful that required change will be met with optimism and support.

In closing, I'd like to thank the members of JACL for their vote of confidence in my ability to serve as National Secretary/Treasurer. I owe a big thank you to staff and my fellow colleagues on the National Board for their continued support over the past three and a half years. It's been a great pleasure to serve, and I look forward to working with members, staff and fellow board members to continue to improve the financial stability of our organization for years to come.