



PACIFIC CITIZEN

CELEBRATING 91 YEARS



2020

JACL NATIONAL
SCHOLARSHIP
WINNERS

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**Scholarship Spotlight: A Past Winner's
View on the Importance of This Award**

THE 2020 JACL NATIONAL SCHOLARSHIP WINNERS



Welcome to the 2020 JACL Scholarship Special Issue! In what has certainly been a challenging year, there have been bright spots, too, and in this *Pacific Citizen* issue, you'll be introduced to 33 exceptional student scholars who, no matter what uncertainties the future holds, are more than capable at meeting those challenges head on, blazing a path forward for us all.

The JACL is pleased to announce a total of \$77,500 has been awarded to this year's National Scholarship recipients in the categories of Freshmen, Undergraduates, Graduates and Law and Special Scholarships.

Each student was asked to respond to the following question, provided by the JACL National Youth/Student Council: "Why is it important for APIA youth to have a political understanding of their identity and the histories of their communities? How has this understanding impacted your community involvement?"

As you read through their personal achievements and responses to the essay question, it is clearly evident that these exceptional students are our future leaders, their talents and knowledge already showing us that

they 100 percent care about their culture, their communities and are truly committed to making a difference in the lives of every American. In a world clearly in distress, hearing fresh perspectives on their hopes and dreams for a better future is exactly what the world needs.

National JACL would also like to acknowledge the team who ensures the scholarship program continues to thrive each and every year. NCWNP Regional Director Patty Wada serves as the program manager and implements all aspects of the program. She coordinates two Scholarship Selection Committees that rotate amongst JACL's seven districts every three years. The committees are tasked with evaluating and scoring the applications and composing the student write-ups that appear in the *Pacific Citizen*.

Overseeing the JACL Freshman Scholarship Committee was the Pacific Northwest District Council, which consisted of Seattle JACL members led by Chair Bill Tashima, Karen Cunningham, Kristen Cunningham, Sylvie Shiosaki, Joshua Tashima-Boyd, Kyle Kurose and Mika Kurose-Rothman.

The JACL Undergraduate, Graduate, Law, Arts and Student Aid Scholarship Committee was spearheaded by the Midwest District Council, which was comprised of Chair Betsy Sato of the Cincinnati JACL, Ron Katsuyama of the Dayton JACL, Vickie Sakurada Schaepler of the Omaha JACL and Henry Tanaka of the Detroit JACL.

Said Wada, who has spearheaded the program for the past 10 years, "It really takes a village to see this program through from start to finish. The success of the program depends

on the participation of many people and entities of the JACL working together like a well-oiled machine. We are grateful for their dedication to our youth and student scholars."

In addition, acknowledgement is also extended to the NY/SC for providing the prompt for the personal statement that the students responded to in their applications; JACL Business Manager Roya Afsharzada for providing the Scholarship Endowment interest earnings; David and Carol Kawamoto for their guidance and help in configuring which family scholarships had sufficient earnings to be awarded this year; JACL Membership Department staffers Phillip Ozaki and Tomiko Ismail for providing membership information on the students and their chapters; JACL Washington, D.C., Fellows Matthew Weisbly and Cheyenne

Cheng for promoting the program in the D.C. Digest and website; Matthew Farrells, former vp of planning and development, for serving as program owner of the Scholarship Program for the past four years; and to the P.C. for highlighting the 2020 recipients with this Scholarship Special Issue.

One final nod is given to the members who have helped over the years to maintain the scholarship files at JACL National Headquarters: Debbi Endow, Mariko Fujimoto, Judy Hamaguchi, Carol Kawase, Arleen Mataga, Aeko Yoshikawa and the late Greg Marutani.

It truly does take a village.

Congratulations to all of this year's winners. JACL will soon begin the 2021 application process to recognize the next group of exceptional students. The future indeed remains bright! ■

CORONAVIRUS OUTBREAK

COVID-19: U.S. AT A GLANCE*

- **Total Cases:** 6,916,292 *
- **Total Deaths:** 201,411 (as of Sept. 24)
- **Jurisdictions Reporting Cases:** 55 (50 states, District of Columbia, Puerto Rico, Guam, the Northern Mariana Islands and the U.S. Virgin Islands)
- **Data includes both confirmed and presumptive positive cases of COVID-19 reported to the CDC or tested at the CDC since Jan. 21, with the exception of testing results for persons repatriated to the U.S. from Wuhan, China, and Japan. State and local public health departments are now testing and publicly reporting their cases. In the event of a discrepancy between CDC cases and cases reported by state and local public health officials, data reported by states should be considered the most up to date.**

Source: CDC

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The P.C.'s mission is to 'educate on the past Japanese American experience and preserve, promote and help the current and future AAPI communities.'

* Your donations will help build and preserve a cohesive library of the *Pacific Citizen* to educate future generations.*

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"I'm glad to see the *Pacific Citizen* growing and evolving with its website, and especially LOVE the much easier-to-navigate digital archives. It's a treasure trove for JAs to learn about our community's history, and for scholars and journalists looking to connect the past with the present. Thanks for the improvements, P.C.!"

— Gil Asakawa

JACL MEMBERS

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By David Inoue,
JACL Executive Director

FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR WE SHALL OVERCOME

Our annual Scholarship Special Issue is intended to be a celebration, recognizing the accomplishments of the students we hope to be the future of JACL. Yet, for this year's awardees, one cannot help but recognize the challenges they have faced.

Senior years in high school ended with the detached experience of graduating via video conference commencement ceremonies, canceled senior proms and no opportunity to take one last walk through the school as a senior, knowing that was their last time before graduating.

And the pain has continued into the next transition, meeting new classmates again through the computer screen, without the joy of what has been the normal college freshman experience.

The high school class of 2020 has had much taken from them, and they have every right to be disappointed, embittered and spiteful of the adults who have failed to control COVID-19 and protect the end of their childhood experiences.

This past week has been made

even more difficult. The passing of Supreme Court Justice Ruth Bader Ginsburg has shaken many of us to the core. There has been an outpouring to celebrate her life and the inspiration she has been for women, especially young girls.

Today's young adults only know of a time when the Virginia Military Institute has been co-educational because of an opinion authored by Justice Ginsburg. The darker side, however, has been the immediate calls for a replacement to be made in record time, an unprecedented rush to confirmation in the midst of an election and pandemic that Congress has failed to respond to adequately.

One could not fault anyone for feeling despair and a deep mistrust in a system of government that seems to have failed in every possible way. It has failed to respond to COVID-19, necessitating the continuation of online classes for students or rushed returns to physical classes, leaving some with the feeling of unease and lack of confidence it is truly safe.

Now, the sudden urgency for a Senate that has been inactive on COVID relief and slow to respond to policing injustice suddenly seeks to rush through the confirmation of a still-to-be-nominated justice.

I've heard it said that with the loss of the courts, everything will be lost, so why bother voting.

Yet, history tells us that the courts have not always been the great backstop of justice for all. The Hirabayashi and Yasui cases were decided unanimously without dissenting opinions. Korematsu was decided by a 6-3 decision.

We saw the Supreme Court more recently uphold the Muslim ban using the same logic the Korematsu, Hirabayashi and Yasui cases had been held — that the government's actions were justified by military necessity and there was no discrimination on the basis of race or religion.

Our history is full of dark times, often approved by Congress, executed by the administration and upheld by the courts. Yes, the system has always been broken. But it is also a system capable of change.

In the wake of Japanese American incarceration, in the midst of Jim Crow also came legislation such as the Immigration and Nationality Acts, Voting Rights Act and Civil Rights Act. All came within the 20 years after the end of World War II. The courts also played a role from *Brown v. Board of Education* up through *Loving v. Virginia*.

When Japanese Americans were incarcerated, there were few who stood up to protest outside our community. We will always remember the Society of Friends as the one national group that did stand in solidarity. The Civil Rights movement changed that paradigm, as we all recognized the need to stand together in the face of injustice.

We stand together in opposition to our inhumane immigration policies that incarcerate children illegally and have separated them from their parents. We stand together in opposition to a Muslim travel ban that keeps families separated. We stand together in opposition to systemic racism that devalues Black lives. We stand together against the xenophobia resulting from COVID-19 targeting our Asian communities.

Standing together does make a difference. The Shutdown Berks Coalition regularly leads actions at the detention center, often when the families incarcerated there are given time outside where they can hear our chants, our songs, and know that they are not alone.

What we give them is the knowledge that they are not forgotten, that their lives do matter. And with that, they have hope that our country might eventually end our inhumane policies toward them and welcome them as we have so many others to

our country.

For our students starting college this fall, you may be discouraged by the dysfunction and failures of our current government, and you would be right to recognize all of that. However, there remains hope. We can still work to effect change.

Call out our government's immoral actions on asylum seekers. Tell our legislators to change the laws that systematically target Black lives for incarceration and excessive use of force by our justice system that is not blind and sees color of skin. Call upon all Senators to fully vet any nominee to the court and not rush through a sham of a confirmation hearing.

The Senate should instead be told to focus immediately on the pain our nation continues to experience due to COVID and take action to pass a relief package that helps American people who need it most, not corporate welfare. This is how we try to make the system work for us.

Most of all, vote. Make your voice heard at the ballot box because as slow as the change might come, that is how we can be the difference. The system might be stacked against us, but we shall overcome. We always have and will continue to do so if we work together.

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



By Judd Matsunaga, Esq.

LEGAL-EASE: AN ATTORNEY'S PERSPECTIVE LOSING YOUR MIND???

Not as "sharp" as you once were? Me, too. Perhaps it's all the prescription medications I take that don't mix well with my brain. But according to the World Health Organization, psychological conditions such as dementia and depression affect 15 percent of people ages 60 and over, and that percentage is expected to rise as the global population continues to age.

An individual's ability to comprehend what is going on is often referred to as one's mental capacity. Legally, "capacity" is the ability to make and communicate an informed choice. An "informed choice" is made based on understanding the options and the impact of different options.

Capacity is often used in determining whether someone is sufficiently competent to enter into a binding legal agreement. In the area of estate planning, the term "capacity" means the ability to manage your own affairs and make import-

ant decisions on your own. Legal capacity is a necessity in order to execute various documents such as wills, trusts and power of attorneys.

In some cases, incapacity is only temporary, such as when the condition causing diminished capacity has been cured or resolved.

There are a number of medical conditions such as Alzheimer's disease, psychosis and dementia that are recognized as resulting in diminished mental capacity. Age and senility are also common culprits. However, a determination of incapacity should never be based solely on a diagnosis.

"Say what?" A diagnosis of dementia or the beginning stages of Alzheimer's disease does not revoke legal capacity. I like to say, "Diminished capacity does not mean lack of capacity."

Parents spending their money "foolishly" is not proof of lack of capacity. Adult children need to know that failure to follow advice is not proof of lack of capacity. What's more, agreeing with one family member, and not others, is not proof of lack of capacity. However,

just because a person has capacity to decide one issue does not assure capacity to decide a different issue.

In a recent webinar (Sept. 15) presented by the National Center on Law & Elder Rights, it gave attorneys "tips" to communicate with people with diminished capacity through something called "Decision Supports." The goal is to increase a person's ability to make choices through (1) enhanced communication, (2) empowerment and (3) technology that reduces the need for memory.

According to the NCLER, persons with diminished capacity are denied the dignity of even the simplest of choices in the name of protection. However, people should be empowered to make these choices.

Empowerment is not an assurance that the person is going to make the choice that is "best for them." Empowerment is honoring the choice that the person finds is the best "choice for them" while knowing the potential outcomes.

If you have a loved one who has recently suffered a stroke or other

illness and has diminished capacity, the NCLER suggests you try to communicate using a normal voice and short, simple sentences. A lower register or tone of voice may be easier to hear. Allow extra time for the person to understand and respond. In other words, don't fill void of silence — wait for the answer.

Before you start, make sure the person knows you are talking. Maintain eye contact if possible. Eliminate background noise. Communication is a two-way street. Just as we try to confirm that the person is understanding our message, we need to ensure that we understand what the person is telling us. Listening is more important than hearing.

Maintain an adult conversation and try to be at the person's eye level while face-to-face. Don't talk to an adult as if he or she were a child. If possible, break big issues into smaller parts. Restate. Explain risks, benefits and options. Offer input, recommendations. Ask for input, "What do you think?" Watch facial expressions and gestures for added meaning.

If you have a loved one whose mental capacity is starting to wane

or whose mental capacity is already "questionable," the good news is that an expensive court-supervised conservatorship can be avoided. More importantly, the individual will have the ability to choose his or her own agent to act on his or her behalf, rather than having a guardian appointed by the court.

In conclusion, a valid, up-to-date power of attorney will avoid the need for a conservatorship. A power of attorney is not a complicated legal document, and it is much less expensive than a conservatorship court proceeding. Every adult should have one — for both finances and health care.

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 constitute legal or tax advice and should not be treated as such.

» **EDITOR'S NOTE:**

All student responses reflect those that were submitted to the P.C. by the respective JACL Scholarship Committees.

2020

JACL NATIONAL SCHOLARSHIP WINNERS

FRESHMAN
WINNERS


CHARLENE DIN
JACL Chapter: Berkeley
Recipient of the Paul and Katherine Ohtaki Memorial Scholarship
University of California, Los Angeles
Notables

Learning about her family's history has inspired Charlene Din to take action to prevent the injustices suffered by the Japanese American community during World War II from being repeated. She sees parallels in the way that immigrants are being treated at the border and works to draw attention to issues such as this through her involvement in her school and community.

Din was an active leader of her school's Asian Student Union, a club that focused on APIA issues — providing information and encouraging discussion and action through meetings, presentations and workshops. She also organized a voter

preregistration workshop, fostered a connection to Tsuru for Solidarity by teaching members to fold cranes and directed planning for the first Asian Cultural Assembly in over 30 years.

Among her accolades, Din has an impressive academic record and is a student-athlete, leading her volleyball team to win the 2017 Oakland Athletic League Championships. She is also active in the Junior Young Buddhists Assn. and the National Japanese American Historical Society and has traveled to Japan as a cultural ambassador as a participant in the Shinzen Nikkei Youth Goodwill Program. Her drawing "Never Forget, Never Repeat," connecting JA incarceration to current events, was awarded the Best in Class Award in the Bay Area "Growing Up Asian in America" contest.

Personal Statement

"My understanding of the history of my family and community gives me the ability to draw parallels to and take a stand against discriminatory actions of our government today. Ever since I was a small child, I remember helping at the Bay Area Day of Remembrance, and every year since, I have felt an increasing urgency and relevance for my community and my generation to continue reminding others to stop the repetition of history.

"The experiences of my family members are hauntingly similar to the experiences of many Latinx and South East Asian migrants who are currently detained at our country's border and at risk of being deported. Thousands of people have been separated from their families, displaced from their homes and thrown in cages.

"Under the Geneva Convention, all migrants have legal recourse to refuge and asylum from oppressive regimes, poverty or domestic abuse. I believe there is no excuse for

the inhumane treatment of anyone, especially the indefinite separation of parents from their children.

"My community knows first-hand about intergenerational trauma and shame that comes from being excluded. I believe my generation needs to be the allies that my great-grandparents desperately needed."



JUSTIN FAJARDO
JACL Chapter: Gilroy
Recipient of the Kenji Kasai Memorial Scholarship
University of Southern California
Notables

Leadership is a theme that stands out in Justin Fajardo's school and community life. In addition to three Associated Student Body presidencies in his high school years, Fajardo also participated in EDGE (Explore, Develop, Grow, Empower) leadership seminars and was a member and vice chair of the Gilroy Youth Commission, an advisory to the local city council.

Fajardo also completed an internship with Dr. Satsuki Ina, prominent in the Tsuru for Solidarity movement. Among his accolades, he is the recipient of the Gilroy Chamber of Commerce High Five Youth Award and the Junior League of San Jose Crystal Bowl Award, as well as a National Merit Commended Scholar.

Personal Statement

"I am a proud Japanese and Filipino American. My grandparents were »

ESSAY TOPIC

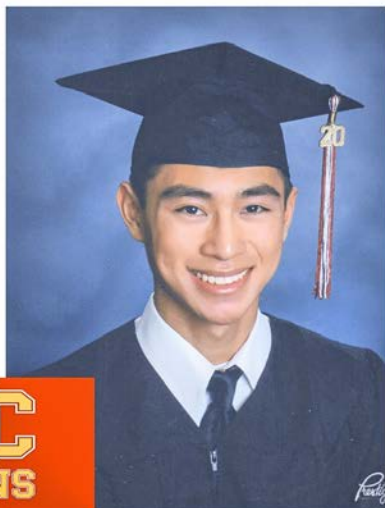
This year's scholarship recipients were asked to respond to the following question:

*'Why is it important for APIA youth to have a political understanding of their identity and the histories of their communities?
How has this understanding impacted your community involvement?'*

Justin Fajardo - Class of 2020
Congratulations on your acceptance to USC
and for being an Army ROTC National
Scholarship winner.

I am so proud of you! Fight On 🍷

With love,
Mom



Congratulations
To all the
2020 Graduates!!

Miyako Kadogawa, Culver City, CA

Congratulations
Charlene
on receiving the 2020
Paul & Katherine Ohtaki
Memorial Scholarship!

We know you'll go far!

Love, Mom, Dad, Kiyoshi, and
the kitties Mochiko & Gingko!



Congratulations on the Moriuchi
Scholarship, Kylie!

We are very proud of you!

Love, Mom, Dad and Tyler.



both incarcerated during WWII. They were not much younger than I am today. They were seen as enemy aliens, guilty of espionage against the country. They were seen as sympathizers to Imperial Japan. However, at no point was there any evidence of any Japanese American committing any form of espionage or disloyalty to the United States. All lies.

“Later in the 1944 *Korematsu v. United States* case, the Supreme Court upheld the constitutionality of the incarceration of Japanese Americans. The court cited the need for national security as its rationale. What happened in WWII was illegal and unconstitutional. Americans were held without due process of the law.

“For APIA youth, it is our duty to hold our government accountable, especially given its mistakes and wrongdoings of the past. Right now, the American government is detaining asylum seekers in ICE detention centers. These people are seeking asylum from countries like Guatemala and Mexico, where conditions in their hometowns can be extremely dangerous.

“A further example of racial injustice at the hands of the government came in 2017 when the Supreme Court made its decision in the landmark *Trump v. Hawaii* case, which upheld the constitutionality of the Muslim Travel Ban aka Presidential Proclamation 9645. This ban indefinitely suspends the immigration of people from Muslim-majority countries like Libya, Iran, Somalia, Syria and Yemen. Just like in 1944, the court cited national security as its rationale for keeping the Muslim Travel Ban.

“It is now the duty of the youth of this country to learn from history and ensure that real change happens for the future.”



AMANDA HIRAYAMA
JACL Chapter: Fresno
Recipient of the Paul and Katherine
Ohtaki Memorial Scholarship
University of California, Los Angeles
Notables

Amanda Hirayama is a graduate of North Clovis High School in Fresno, Calif., where her well-rounded career included rigorous academic coursework, varied clubs and athletics. She was a dedicated member of her school's basketball team (one of 50 in the U.S. to have Nike sponsorship) and enjoyed clubs that appealed to her wide array of interests, such as physics, hiking and ukulele.

In addition to her demanding school schedule, Hirayama is very involved with the Youth Buddhist Assn. and has held numerous leadership positions at both the local and district level. As a freshman, she was selected to be conference chair for the Central California District Conference, which involved organizing and leading an event for 200 attendees.

She also has been active in Girl Scouts since 2007 and is currently working toward her Gold Award. In addition, Hirayama works at her family's business, Designer Flower Center, assisting in many areas, and she has been performing Nihon Buyo since she was 5. She enjoys dancing every year at her temple's Obon festival.

Personal Statement

“APIA youth should have an

understanding about the past and how it relates to them, as it can influence their perspectives on current events. For example, my papa, Barney Sano, was taken from his home when he was a baby. His family had a successful gas station and farmland. However, they lost all of this when they were put into the internment camps. Even though he was a kid, this violation of civil rights greatly affected his family and their lives.

“Knowing the unnecessary hardships his family went through makes me appreciative for what I take for granted, as well as adamant that other groups should not be treated this way. For instance, to this day, different ethnic groups are still facing discrimination and persecution.

“There are some people who say that these people should face circumstances very similar to the internment camps. However, knowing what my grandparents and their families had to go through, I immediately try to defend these people who are being judged and facing injustice. The last time actions were taken on assumptions, it ended up hurting thousands of Japanese Americans. Because of this, I want to ensure this does not happen again.”



KYLIE KUBOTA
JACL Chapter: Watsonville-Santa Cruz
Recipient of the Mr. and Mrs.
Takashi Moriuchi Memorial
Scholarship
University of California, Berkeley
Notables

Kylie Kubota is the chapter founder of the Western Sierra Young Asian Leaders of America chapter, which allows a space for Asian Americans in her school to discuss their

narratives and work toward social justice. At school, she also took on leadership roles as president of the Academic Decathlon, class ambassador of DECA and vp of her school's Interact Club.

She has been honored as a DECA NorCal Regional Competition Principals of Finance Top 10 finalist and a two-time Academic Decathlon County Competition SuperDecathlete. She also tutors Mandarin and won third place at the Chinese Bridge Speech and Talent Competition in 2019. In her community, she is involved with Placer Ume Taiko and enjoys performing and teaching the art of taiko. At the University of California, Berkeley, she plans to major in global studies.

Personal Statement

“Understanding my own history and identity helps me feel connected to my Japanese heritage in a region where there are few Japanese people. This lack of ethnic diversity drew me toward others who look like me, and I was inspired to help other APIA students understand their heritages. My school was a place to start. Because of the limited diversity, I always felt my community was missing a space for Asian American students to discuss and share their heritage and experiences.

“In summer of 2018, an alumnus of a language program I participated in made a social media post about a new organization he founded, Young Asian Leaders of America, whose mission is to ‘spark youth civil engagement and provide a platform for the narratives of Asian Americans.’ This objective resonated with me.

“YALA sounded like the perfect way to address what I felt my high school was missing, and I sent in an application to start a chapter at my school. . . . Over the past year, we have held conversations on subjects including education, generational differences and representation in media.

“We organized an end-of-year Community Engagement Project to teach other students phrases in several Asian/Pacific Islander languages and provide information

on the demographics of both the local and national Asian American population.

“In an area where many of us Asian American students faced extreme ignorance from non-Asian peers while growing up, we were able to use our CEP to address this ignorance and break down stereotypes by raising awareness on the diversity of the Asian American community.”



MAILE KUO
JACL Chapter: Ventura County
Recipient of the Henry and Chiyo
Kuwahara Memorial Scholarship
Embry-Riddle Aeronautical
University at Daytona Beach
Notables

A talented scholar-athlete, Maile Kuo maintained a 3.9 unweighted GPA, as well as the captainship of her varsity lacrosse team and membership in various other all-Ventura county teams. She's also active in the community as a Girl Scouts Gold Award recipient, a Rotary Club member and vp/publicist of the Newbury Park Cancer Awareness and California Scholarship Federation clubs.

Through these roles, she participated in an inspiring amount of volunteer work and community service: she has donated over 25 months to coaching girls' lacrosse and serves as a mentor for younger generations through Girl Scouts.

A dedicated member of the JACL community since elementary school, Kuo is often seen at Culture Day, Installation and community cleanup events. She keeps connected with Japanese culture through Nihon Buyo, which she practices with the Azuma Kotobuki Kai, and through jujitsu (she achieved the rank of ➤



Congratulations, Maile Kuo

On receiving the

Henry & Chiyo Kuwahara Memorial Scholarship

We are so proud of you!

Love, Mom, Dad, and Jonathan



Congratulations, Kyfie,
on receiving the
Mr. & Mrs. Takashi Moriuchi
scholarship!

We are so proud of you!

Love,
Grandma and Auntie Kelley

WATSONVILLE-SANTA CRUZ JACL
PROUDLY CONGRATULATES

KYLIE KUBOTA

Awarded National JACL's
Takashi & Yuriko Moriuchi Memorial Scholarship

NICOLE GARCIA-KIMURA ✽ KAI GAVIN ✽ ALEX TAO

Awarded Chapter Scholarships

Louise & Ray Sako Scholarship
Frank Mito Memorial Scholarship
Kee Kitayama Memorial Scholarship



a third-degree brown belt). She plans to major in mechanical engineering.

Personal Statement

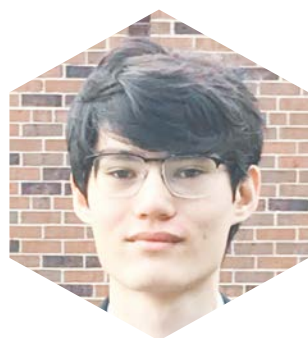
"In having a political understanding of their identity and the histories of their communities, APIA youth can use the experiences of their communities in order to avoid making the same mistakes that governments and political figures have made.

"For example, APIA youth can learn about how governments have marginalized or targeted certain groups throughout history and how this marginalization affects people. In learning about how people are affected, youth can help educate themselves and others on the consequences of making very generalized assumptions about groups of people and how there are better ways to deal with political turmoil and public fear.

"This means we can hopefully avoid the passing of oppressive laws or executive orders, such as ones that implement mass incarcerations or travel bans based on race, religion or other generalizing factors. APIA youth can additionally use this knowledge to carry on the histories of their communities in political or more large-scale capacities.

"People can honor the memories and experiences of others through events such as the Day of Remembrance and becoming more politically active. Youth can become more politically active by being aware of laws being debated in Congress (and more local levels) by reaching out and communicating with their representatives and joining advocacy groups.

"By communicating with others and joining groups that spread awareness and facilitate political change concerning certain issues or communities, young people can help contribute to creating a better, more open society."



JOHN LUBIANETSKY
JACL Chapter: St. Louis
Recipient of the Patricia and Gail Ishimoto Memorial Scholarship
University of Kansas
Notables

John Lubianetsky aspires to a career with the U.S. State Department, a goal that he is well on his way to achieving. This year, Lubianetsky was one of three people to win the International Atomic Energy Agency's International Essay Competition on Nuclear Security for Students and Early Career Professionals — the youngest person and only American to be awarded this prize. He also was invited to attend the IAEA's International Conference for Nuclear Security at the agency's headquarters in Vienna, Austria, and his essay will also be published on the IAEA's website.

In addition, Lubianetsky has won numerous other awards for writing and debate, including a pending publication in the Harvard College Economics Review, and awards from the International Relations Council of Kansas City, Bow Seat Ocean Awareness, the Midwest Center for Holocaust Education and the Carnegie Council for Ethics in International Affairs.

He was active in his school's debate team, Science Bowl and Knowledge Bowl, and he founded his school's Academic World Quest team, reactivated the school's Model UN

team and was one of the founding members of the Shogi club.

Outside of school, Lubianetsky is an Eagle Scout, has transcribed JA WWII veteran oral histories for the Go For Broke National Educational Center and has received the Crystal Bell Award multiple times over the past five years for his volunteer work as a Salvation Army bell ringer.

Personal Statement

"My interest in studying Japanese American history and politics culminated in my junior year of high school. Through chance, I came across an obscure political figure from the 1940s, Norman Thomas. He was the only national-level figure to openly resist all aspects of the Japanese internment. What I found particularly interesting was how he merged American politics with individual Japanese American history.

"As I went to research in the Japanese American National Museum in Los Angeles, I felt like my family had been part of a greater history. While research and political activism are quite different, it was through this process that I learned about how important knowing one's history is, especially as a Japanese American.

"Knowing the history and politics of one's identity is critical in remaining conscious of politics. Especially as Japanese Americans, we hold a responsibility to uphold the American government to a high standard, especially in regard to unlawful detention or revocation of basic constitutional rights. Knowing the history and politics of being a Japanese American is critical in upholding that responsibility."

EMILY NAGAMOTO
JACL Chapter: Ventura County
Recipient of the Sam and Florice Kuwahara Memorial Scholarship
Duke University
Notables



Emily Nagamoto's compilation of academic and extracurricular achievements in high school is enough to exhaust even a simple observer. She earned a near-perfect GPA, made the honor roll all four years of high school and was named a Presidential Scholar Athlete for maintaining a 4.0 GPA throughout her three seasons of tennis.

She also served as the editor-in-chief and chief photographer of her school newspaper, founded the Asian Culture club and was president of the Interact club, Girls Up club and California Scholarship Federation club.

Outside of school, Nagamoto has volunteered her time with the Westminster Free Clinic, which provides free health care to low-income uninsured patients, the Children's Hunger Fund and as a volunteer tutor with the National Honor Society. Her dedication to academic excellence and service to others earned her the Thousand Oaks Youth Volunteer of the Year and Ventura County Board of Supervisors Outstanding Volunteer Awards, as well as competitive selections for Girls State and Asian Pacific Youth Leadership Project programs.

Personal Statement

"For a majority of my life, I was assimilating with mainstream ways, not paying attention to the values and history my grandparents were showing me. When my father emigrated, he had to assimilate quickly to fit in

and make a living, but as an APIA youth now, I see you don't have to do that, and you shouldn't.

"In fact, APIA youth need to understand their backgrounds, histories and identities because we are the future. We will be the ones carrying on tradition and teaching new generations. We must be the ones to learn from history's mistakes.

"Beyond just knowing our cultural history, APIA youth need to have a political understanding of their identity and the histories of their communities. Living in America, we are a minority with a history of having our voices shut out.

"We must know and understand how we have been treated in the past and how we are being treated currently, so that we can work for equal rights, representation and the betterment of our communities. We must understand where we come from to understand the significance and necessity to work for better lives. Also, if we don't remember what has happened to us, who will? We are the future who must carry on the memories of the past."



ANDREW OKAMOTO
JACL Chapter: Mt. Olympus
Recipient of the CW04 Mitsugi Murakami Kasai Memorial Scholarship
Southwest Oregon Community College
Notables

Andrew Okamoto is an active member of the Mt. Olympus Chapter of JACL, coordinating and volunteering at many different chapter events like the Senior Center Luncheon and the community cleanup of the International Peace Garden. He enjoys volunteering with JACL, as it provides him an opportunity to have a meaningful impact in his community.

Okamoto believes in standing up for civil rights and civil liberties, which he's absorbed from his service with JACL and the experiences of his family members who were incarcerated during WWII. He participated in a school walkout, circling the block with signs promoting equality for communities of color and LGBT people.

He also is a talented baseball player, having played for the varsity team all four years of high school and winning the state championship twice. He volunteers with his baseball team and the Youth Buddhist Assn.



*San Diego JACL congratulates
our 2020 scholarship recipients!*



**Hailey
Sasaki**



**Breven
Honda**



**Jordan
Waller**



**Richard
Tanaka**

Best of luck in all your future endeavors!



and has held many part-time jobs, all while maintaining a near-perfect GPA and making the honor roll.

Personal Statement

"It is important for APIA youth to have a political understanding of their identity and the histories of their communities because in a world where racial prejudice and discrimination continues to occur, our understanding of our political identity and community are the best ways to help us continue to progress to create a more unified and just society.

"Growing up as a Japanese American in predominantly white Salt Lake City, I have often felt self-conscious and out of place. In addition to my physical distinction, I am a member of the Salt Lake City Buddhist Temple, worshipping in a city known as the 'headquarters' of the Church of Latter-Day Saints, where less than 0.5 percent of the entire Utah population considers themselves Buddhist. However, this pales in comparison to what my own family had to endure during WWII.

"This scholarship means a lot to me because I represent my relatives and their struggle to overcome societal discrimination in their attempt to live a normal American life. One of the most inspirational family stories is that of my great-grandparents suffering the indignity of the Japanese incarceration camps during WWII. "As second-generation Americans, my great-grandparents, along with thousands of others, felt confused and betrayed by the decision of the United States government to forcibly remove all persons of Japanese ancestry along the West Coast to internment camps, regardless of the fact that over two-thirds were American citizens. The ability of my great-grandparents to have everything stripped away from them and then find the courage and determination to rebuild their lost lives after WWII inspires me every day."



DANTE PELLEI
JACL Chapter: Washington, D.C.
Recipient of the Deni and June Uyejima Memorial Scholarship
University of Virginia
Notables

Involvement in government is among one of the features of Dante Pellei's extracurricular and academic interests. He served as a page in the Virginia House of Delegates

and personally witnessed the state's General Assembly commemoration of Fred Korematsu for his stance on civil liberties.

Pellei also participated in the Center for Leadership, Government, Global Economics advanced study program training future principle-centered servant leaders in their communities. An accomplished honor student and athlete, Pellei is also well-traveled, visiting Japan twice. During one visit to Japan, in addition to touring and connecting with family, he was able to intern as an English teacher at Nihon University.

Personal Statement

"The prejudiced and discriminatory political atmosphere our Asian ancestors faced and overcame is crucial to understanding our contemporary civic responsibilities. Whether it was supporting the arrival of new immigrants, ambitious defiance against a government that took the rights of minority groups or perseverance through the severe Japanese internment camps, we can adopt these various characteristics and model them in our communities.

"Hopefully, our generation realizes the impending threat from animosity in America today and begins to take the necessary steps to foster a country that gladly accepts migrant workers, ensure rights for all minority groups and helps new cultures to better assimilate and add their distinct culture in American society, [as well as seeks] to better integrate those left on the margins of society.

"For me, realizing that I am able to make a difference in my community has empowered me to seek out new opportunities of service in order to help those most marginalized. Through summer work camps, I have created ramps for the disabled, painted houses for shut-ins and redesigned yards for the elderly.

"As I study history more and more, it's apparent that our ancestors aren't

that different than we originally perceived. Despite our worlds being vastly different, with the emergence of technology, they had many of the same motivations we do: to change our community and country to secure and safeguard civil and human rights. Thus, it is up to our generation to decide whether we will build bridges of acceptance or walls of animosity. Our legacy will be decided by our action or lack of action."



MIYO SUN
JACL Chapter: Sacramento
Recipient of the Hanayagi Rokumie Memorial Cultural Scholarship
University of California, Irvine
Notables

Miyo Sun stands out not for her academic or athletic achievements

— of which there are many — but her passion for Japanese language and culture and her desire to share it with others. Sun earned a 4.0 unweighted GPA and many academic accolades in high school, placed at several regional math and science competitions and won numerous awards throughout her four-year varsity tennis career.

Although that is enough to keep any high school student busy, Sun has studied Japanese language for five years and as part of her coursework, completed projects on Japanese crafts and food. She also led the Cranes for Cancer project, which enlisted students to fold thousands of origami cranes to deliver to cancer patients to give them hope and lift their spirits.

Personal Statement

"According to APIA Vote, out of all racial and ethnic groups, Asian American youth are the least likely to be registered to vote, yet they are some of the most engaged in volunteering and other forms of involvement in the community.

"It is important for APIA youth to understand how their culture or race was treated by others, specifically Americans, in the past in order to

advocate for the correct mindset.

"At the same time, Asian Americans should stay true to themselves, despite typical negative treatment in the past. By understanding APIA identities, APIA youth may pave the way for a future with equal rights and viewpoints in the United States. They will appreciate the significant efforts made by ancestors in the past and truly express gratitude for the values and customs that their culture possesses.

"For Japanese Americans, it is important to understand the political viewpoint of the Americans in relation to the internment camps following WWII. In order to respect the past Japanese Americans, APIA youth and I should understand how Japanese Americans responded to the harsh treatment, such as diligently working jobs or staying in the internment camps without revolt.

"Personally, I researched about Sacramento internment camps in order to see what Japanese American life was like in my community. I learned how wrongfully the Japanese were treated, yet they did not change their identity or culture to fit into society. I respect this act



Sacramento JACL proudly announces
Our 2020 Scholarship Awards

Chapter Awards

Miyo Sun
Jake Chow
Erika Hayashigatani
Mariya Hayashigatani
Robert Lee
Evan Matsuda

National JACL Awards

Quinn Fujii
Miyo Sun
Kayla Umemoto
Jackson Kubokawa Vogtmann

Congratulations!

The Berkeley Chapter Congratulates Our 2020 National and Chapter Scholarship Recipients!

**National Recipients: Freshman - Charlene Tonai Din;
Undergraduate - Hope Fa-Kaji; Graduate - Marco Torrez**



Chapter Recipients

Charlene Tonai Din	Bryce Nakahara
Anna Hamai	Allison Nakao
Danielle Kitaoka	George Paoletti
Bryant Lee	Peter Sullivan



of staying true to my own political standing because my vote matters in the future presidential elections, and I should not have to change my Japanese customs for the benefit of others.”



EMILY TANABE

JACL Chapter: Mile High
Recipient of the Shigeki 'Shake' Ushio Memorial Scholarship
Lewis and Clark College
Notables

Youth in Action is a nonprofit that combines Japanese culture and language with becoming strong community leaders, and Emily Tanabe was highly active in the local Denver-area group. Tanabe not only taught classes for YIA, but she also planned excursions to Japan.

Tanabe also took part in an English Language Diplomacy camp in Yamagata, Japan, and interacted with Japanese and Taiwanese students to promote global coexistence. She centered her senior capstone on writing a historical novel about the incarceration of Japanese Americans. The aim was to humanize the experience and present a perspective that has been often marginalized in the mainstream media and school curriculum.

Personal Statement

“APIA have been left out of the conversation in the American consciousness. We are the last mentioned in almost every statistic, if we’re mentioned at all. But times are changing. The APIA population has been growing rapidly, and soon we will be one of the largest ethnic minority groups in America — large enough

to swing elections, large enough to matter in a very real political and economic sense.

“This means our youth need to know what America has done to APIA. We need to make sure our story, our struggle, is not forgotten. APIA people have contributed so much to American society, and we are almost constantly overlooked.

“Learning more about APIA history and community, especially from a political standpoint, has plunged me into what will hopefully be a lifetime of APIA activism. I am an APIA advocate in almost every circle I’m in. I’ve dedicated years of my life to learning more about APIA culture, Japanese and Japanese American culture in particular. I participate in APIA education opportunities, such as Rock the Boat Conference sponsored by CU Boulder, and my school’s local Asian Cultural Alliance. And I’m currently attempting to write a novel to bring APIA history to light.

“Understanding APIA history gave me an identity to connect to. It gave me a way to put myself in American history and find pride in my Asian, and American, identities. It allowed me to further my passion for serving my community, becoming an advocate and my career goal of becoming an American legislator to ensure the APIA voice is never looked over again.”



SAMANTHA WONG

JACL Chapter: San Jose
Recipient of the Mr. and Mrs. Takashi Moriuchi Memorial Scholarship
Georgetown University
Notables

A recognized community youth leader, Samantha Wong has been honored by Stanford’s Lucile Packard Children’s Hospital, the Global Leadership Academy and by numerous national awards. In 2015, she founded a club that collects science and math materials to create and donate kits for children at the Lucile Packard Children’s Hospital, and she was named a top five “Champions for Children” in 2017.

Wong has also participated in international and national leadership conferences, including the Global Leadership Academy camp in 2017 and the 2017 Asian Pacific Youth Community Leaders Conference. She was awarded with the Congressional Award, Gold Medal status, for completing over 850 hours of work in the areas of community service, physical fitness, personal development and international travel.

During her high school career, she was a four-year varsity basketball starter and a two-year captain. She also donates time as a middle school and Japanese Youth Organization assistant basketball coach. At Georgetown, she is interested in exploring a major in either prehealth or prelaw.

Personal Statement

“I believe that all APIA youth must understand their culture and background in order to understand who we are — we are a part of a large community working toward unity and equality for all.

“My experiences as a child, in and out of the classroom, shaped the way I view my place in the world, and I wanted to give back to the formative communities of my childhood. I volunteered as an assistant coach to a fourth grade girls’ basketball team that was part of the same Japanese league I had played in. This league built my skills and confidence and helped me go from a first-time player to a starter on my high school’s varsity team, and I wanted to support that same experience for younger girls.

“Similarly, after graduating the Medaka no Gakko summer program as a fifth-grader, I applied

for a counselor position and was trained and assigned to work with second-graders. I felt a great sense of gratitude being able to give back to the communities that had once given so much to me. Being a part of and learning about Japanese communities, the culture and history has shown me the importance of helping the younger generations understand their place in the world, too.”



ALLISON YAMASHITA

JACL Chapter: Venice-West Los Angeles
Recipient of the Henry and Chiyo Kuwahara Scholarship
University of California, Los Angeles
Notables

Allison Yamashita is a true ambassador for the Japanese American community and has used her connections with the JACL and her passion for peace and justice to become a mentor for younger generations. After being inspired by a Venice-WLA JACL event, “1,000 Cranes: Solidarity, Vigilance, & Peace,” she decided to write, design and illustrate a children’s book based on the Atomettes, a Nisei girls’ social group formed at the WLA United Methodist Church.

Yamashita’s children’s book won first place at the Manzanar Pilgrimage Committee’s Students Awards program, and she has since shared

the book with the Venice Gakuen, the WLA United Methodist Church, the Venice Hongwanji Buddhist Temple and the Kizuna Summer Camp.

Over 100 hard copies of the book have been distributed, and online versions are also available. To continue pursuing her passion of educating young students, Yamashita also dedicates her summers to the Kizuna Summer Camp, where she serves as a Junior Counselor and shares Japanese American culture and history with young campers.

In addition to her work in the Japanese American community, Yamashita is a distinguished scholar, a Varsity Cross-Country athlete, a Girl Scout Gold Award recipient, a youth basketball coach and a practitioner of Taiko with Koshin Taiko. She will take her talents to UCLA, where she plans to major in psychobiology.

Personal Statement

“APIA youth need to have a political understanding of their identity because politics can have a huge impact on the past, present and future of a community. Racism affected my ancestors and hundreds of thousands of other Japanese Americans around the time of WWII.

“Today, I see the same type of prejudice toward the Muslim community through not only hate incidents but also through government created anti-Muslim legislation. If APIA youth have a political and historical understanding of their communities, they can help influence politics to ensure that the wrongdoings of history will not be repeated.

“This is why, as an APIA youth, I have committed myself to educating children and promoting awareness of the inequity of Executive Order 9066.”



Congratulations!

Kaycee Ching

Chiyo M. Hattori Memorial Medical School Scholarship
CHAPTER PROGRAM

Allison Yamashita

Henry & Chiyo Kuwahara Memorial Scholarship
JACL NATIONAL PROGRAM

Jack Nomura Memorial High School Scholarship
CHAPTER PROGRAM

ALLISON YAMASHITA

KAYCEE CHING

VENICE-WEST LOS ANGELES JACL

SAN JOSE

JACL

JAPANESE AMERICAN CITIZENS LEAGUE

congratulates

Samantha Wong

Recipient of the Takashi & Yuriko Moriuchi Memorial Scholarship

Congratulations, Ally Yamashita

on the honor of receiving the
**Henry & Chiyo Kuwahara
Memorial Scholarship!**

With love & best wishes, the Yamashita and Nomura families

UNDER-GRADUATE WINNERS



AYANNA SOPHIA LOUISE BOBEN
JACL Chapter: Florin-Sacramento Valley
Recipient of the Kyutaro and Yasuo Abiko Memorial Scholarship
California State University, Chico
Notables

Ayanna Sophia Louise Boben has served as her chapter's Next Generation board member and Civil Rights Chair, in addition to community work as a hospital volunteer. As she furthers her Buddhist education, she currently serves her Buddhist Temple by assisting in services.

Boben recalled a moment in high school when "I felt so much passion surrounding the discussions we would have in class because I understood that it was not just history we were discussing, but also human life and the stories of the past that had ultimately shaped our present existence.

"I distinctly remember a heated moment in my American History class in the 10th grade; we were discussing the controversy of the Japanese American Concentration Camps. The majority of students did not understand these events, and due to their ignorance, saw internment as justified.

"In hindsight, I recognize that the majority of students in the room were white and grew up in white communities, sheltered from the realities of the colored experience in America. In this realization, I see that the consensus in their minds was that if one does not look like a white American, they are not an American. My peers saw Japanese

American citizens as Japanese people on American land, not as American citizens who had already been on this land for generations previous to World War II.

"I have further come to understand the ignorance of my peers and for a reason that was not their doing. Our curriculum did not emphasize the purely racist and authoritarian actions of the U.S. government in issuing Executive Order 9066.

"The structure of the Ohio American History curriculum did not expand on Japanese Americans and the turmoil they experienced while being torn from their land and homes, as well as separated from their families.

"I knew about the suffering of Japanese Americans in this time from my aunt's knowledge and insight she provided me, and while it was an elementary understanding, I still knew that the events leading to, during and after Japanese American internment were a time of grave pain. I understood that these events were utterly shameful and a disgrace to not only U.S. history but also human history.

"When I moved to Sacramento after graduating from high school in 2017, I joined Florin-Sacramento Valley JACL, and I was interested to see the perspectives of Japanese Americans and their history.

"I have learned beyond what I could have imagined from the experiences and stories of people in JACL, and I have found peace knowing there are people who not only care, but also work to preserve Japanese American history for their community and all to remember.

"Knowing the severity of history, its consequences and how it influences our future, it is a necessity to protect the well-being of current and future generations.

We all, whether of Asian ancestry or not, have a responsibility to our ancestors, the human race and to this Earth to learn from our errors and evils, to correct the past in present efforts and preserve righteousness and peace for our children, grandchildren and their descendants."



HOPE FA-KAJI
JACL Chapter: Berkeley
Recipient of the Dr. Thomas T. Yatabe Memorial Scholarship
Rice University
Notables

With numerous scholastic honors in her field, Hope Fa-Kaji is entering her senior year as a mechanical engineering major. At the same time, she works to combat inequality and promote social justice through leadership in Engineers Without Borders in Guatemala, mentoring high school students. She also heads the Intramural Sports Committee.

Personal Statement

Fa-Kaji analyzed the *Loving v. Virginia* Supreme Court decision to strike down an anti-miscegenation statute as "a powerful testament to the importance of engaging in identity, history and community service. The APIA legacy I have inherited is one of opposing injustice. More precisely, it is a robust example of how to be a good neighbor.

"When my grandparents returned to the Los Angeles area after internment, Frances and Bruce Kaji became strong advocates for the community-led redevelopment of Little Tokyo: a place where culture could thrive without being questioned. Their fight for a neighborhood inspired my own.

"I spent the past school year working with a student coalition seeking to secure and sustain a Community Benefits Agreement between the residents of the Third Ward (a historically Black central Houston neighborhood) and the management company that handles our university's endowment.

"The developers want to build an 'Innovation District' to bring Houston into competition with Silicon Valley. Our group wants »



SCHOLARSHIP SPOTLIGHT



JENNIFER (MIYASAKA) KUO
Year of JACL Scholarship Award: 1992
Scholarship Award Name: Majiu Uyesugi Memorial Scholarship
College/University Attended: University of Southern California
Name of JACL Chapter That Awarded Scholarship: National JACL (Ventura County, my local chapter also awarded me a scholarship.)
Current Profession: Research Scientist in Materials

QUESTIONS & ANSWERS

Q: How has receiving a JACL scholarship impacted your life?

A: Receiving a JACL scholarship meant so much to me. It was recognition of years of work and an investment in me and my future. This scholarship was also a tie to my Japanese American roots. This tie continued through to my children, who know about and are proud of their cultural roots. The investment from JACL also continues this year as my daughter is one of the National (and local) scholarship recipients. Obviously, to now be the parent of a recipient means a great deal to me.

Q: Did you know about JACL before you won the scholarship?

A: Yes, my parents were members throughout my childhood and continue as members today.

Q: If you could give your twentysomething self some advice from where you are now in your life and career, what would it be?

A: Things usually happen for a reason, even if you can't see why at the moment. Learn all you can and try to keep learning things, even once you are done with school.

Q: What is your greatest personal/professional achievement?

A: I think my greatest achievement on the personal side has been to raise two children, who I think will both make valuable contributions to society in their own ways. From a professional side, it's been to make contributions to the field of material science that will hopefully make life better for people in some small way.

Q: How do you define success?

A: For me, success means that I have made a difference, even if it's just in one small way.

Q: Any words of wisdom for this year's JACL scholarship recipients?

A: On the path to finding your career/calling, make sure you are doing something you want to do, not something someone else wants you to do.

Q: What do you think is the strength for JACL's future?

A: I believe the strength of JACL lies in today's youth. They have grown up in a multicultural society and will stand on the shoulders of our elders. They are the ones who can help to make us truly color-blind and more equal. ■



» If you or someone you know is a past JACL Scholarship recipient, please contact: busmgr@pacificcitizen.org. For more information on the JACL Scholarship contact: www.jacl.org.



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Florin JACL—Sacramento Valley

Proudly Congratulates

Ayanna Boben

For being awarded the

2020 Kyutaro & Yasuo Abiko

Memorial Scholarship

You are going to crush it at

California State University, Chico and beyond!



to ensure that the developments do not displace our neighbors in the Third Ward. We do this because we understand the importance of history. This is an issue of race. It is because the racist policies of the past have made it so. As a coalition of students from various ethnic backgrounds, it is vital to recognize the dynamics of racial identity, among the developers, those who live in the Third Ward and ourselves.

“And this will continue to be salient. In *Hirabayashi v. United States*, Gordon Hirabayashi argued that the curfew should apply either to all citizens within the military area or to none at all. Justice Stone wrote that this alternative would create ‘a choice between inflicting obviously needless hardship on the many, or sitting passive and unresisting in the presence of the threat.’ He went on to say that ‘because racial discriminations are in most circumstances irrelevant and therefore prohibited, it by no means follows that [the government is] wholly precluded from taking into account . . . our national defense.’ In other words, the highest court in the land decided that sometimes it is more efficient, and therefore constitutional, to treat groups unfairly based on ancestry. Extending security measures to all would be ‘needless.’

“We are now in a state of global emergency. More than ever, we need to look out for ways that the situation is used to discriminate against and blame certain groups in ‘defense’ of others.

“Knowing my history drives me to

push back against those who would blame anyone of Chinese or East Asian descent for COVID-19. Beyond that, knowing my history constantly encourages me to help in any way I can. I know that my individual contributions are small, but I am trying to live out my community’s legacy by volunteering in my own university’s neighborhood with the Houston chapter of the Action Pac COVID-19 Help Squad.”



KAITLYN HOWARD
JACL Chapter: Houston
Recipient of the Railroad and Mine Workers Memorial Scholarship
Abilene Christian University
Notables

While Kaitlyn Howard does not live near a JACL chapter, she recently participated in Chicago JACL’s Bridging Communities Program and its Kansha Project. She reported that these experiences contributed to “a passion for fighting against social injustice. I want to share these stories and let those who don’t have a voice be heard. That is why I have added journalism in my undergraduate study.” As Howard begins her junior year as a communication/journalism major, she wrote, “I hope to explore different cultures and showcase their

unique characteristics. Fighting for equality among minorities is a constant battle, but I believe that educating others of the history and the oppression it has caused can create a chain reaction toward justice.”

Personal Statement

Reflecting upon her Kansha Project’s trip to Manzanar, Howard wrote, “I was saddened by the conditions at the camp and envisioned how my grandparents and family endured their time at camp. Since part of my family was at Manzanar, it was very surreal for me. I stood in the area where their block was. I am forever grateful to my family and other Japanese Americans for paving the way for future generations. They are the heroes of the story. I’m not sure that I could have done what they did. They truly defined the word *gaman* for me.”

Reporting on her current extracurricular activities, Howard wrote, “International students often feel isolated and segregated in a new country. I recommended a plan of creating a mentorship program with international students, where we pair a native English-speaking sophomore or an upperclassman with an international student throughout the school year. This way, the international students have a resource and personal mentorship not only at school but also living in the United States.

“At school, I worked on a project to find a person of a different race, gender or sexual orientation to understand how [he or she faces] discrimination and isolation. I knew minorities face discrimination, but it is very disheartening to know that people my age face discrimination just as their ancestors did years ago. I wonder how far have we improved as a country or world? I think support is what each one of us can do. We can be better listeners and figure out together how to be more supportive. That’s why I appreciate what JACL does as an organization.

“One day, we won’t have to focus on diversity at businesses, schools, churches and organizations. But, until that happens to include all nationalities, genders, special needs

and other classifications, we will need JACL to defend all groups. We will continue to fight for the rights of everyone, something I wholeheartedly believe in.”



JUSTIN KAWAGUCHI
JACL Chapter: Ventura County
Recipient of the Henry and Chiyo Kuwahara Memorial Scholarship
University of Southern California
Notables

Justin Kawaguchi, a Kakehashi Program alumnus, is a senior who is majoring in global health and minoring in public relations and consumer behavior. Besides his extensive university preprofessional activities, he serves as the PSW Youth Representative to the JACL NY/SC. In this capacity, Kawaguchi demonstrates leadership as its Social Media Chair. According to Mieko Kuramoto, National Youth Representative, he has revitalized the NY/SC’s Instagram and Facebook presence and has designed workshops to help other youth learn about social media platforms as tools for advocacy.

Personal Statement

According to Kawaguchi, particular high school experiences provided him an incentive to delve heavily into community involvement: “It wasn’t until I started talking with my group of friends in leadership class that I realized there was something important rooted in your family’s culture. I am proud to represent my identity and build community through the lens of diversity and inclusion.

“One of the most impactful lessons that I gained during my time engaged in APIA community-building at USC is the importance of understanding one’s identity and culture in order to foster empathy and understanding.

“Last year, the executive board of USC’s Asian Pacific American Student Assembly, the governing body elected to represent nearly one-fifth of the USC body, chose our APA Heritage Festival theme: ‘Strength in Struggle.’ This theme was intended to coalesce all the different narratives, stories and journeys of our community into a single resounding message: ‘We matter.’ Through a combination of programming, advocacy and community outreach, we supported over 30 individual events intended to bring awareness to the struggles and issues faced by the APIA community in the United States.

“We tackled issues like institutionalized racism, redlining, the

Model Minority Myth, the ‘lunchbox phenomenon’ and the importance of unpacking generational trauma. It’s reaffirming to know that others’ experiences mirror your own in certain ways and inspiring to hear the ways they’ve overcome adversity.

“A personal goal of mine in recent years has been to leverage my understanding of the Japanese American incarceration experience, built over years of research and conversations in community spaces. I am a firm believer that sharing stories is one of the most impactful ways to make a change in another person’s psyche.”

Through his JACL activities, his role as a board member of USC’s APASA and as a volunteer facilitator at JANM, Kawaguchi wants to “share my family’s stories and their history of unjust incarceration in order to advocate for others who in today’s political climate don’t have a voice.”



MIRA B. LARSEN
JACL Chapter: Mt. Olympus
Recipient of the Henry and Chiyo Kuwahara Memorial Scholarship
Brigham Young University
Notables

Mira Larsen is an accomplished ballet dancer, having won a Gold Medal at the Vienna International Ballet Experience and achieving a finalist (top 12) award at the Youth American Grand Prix in NYC. This led to a two-year scholarship at the Royal Ballet School in London. She is currently a sophomore student dancing with the BYU Theatre Ballet while majoring in statistics.

While a longtime JACL member, Larsen recently developed even greater appreciation for the organization’s activities: “Whenever I attend JACL events, I enjoy interacting with other members of my Japanese/Asian American community, and I feel inspired to find ways to share the beauty of my culture and the courage and strength of my ancestry in ways that will benefit all communities.”

In addition to her busy school schedule, she assists in planning and presenting events for the Utah Asian American Student Alliance. “I think it is important for young people to meet together so we can share our experiences with each other and feel a sense of community,” she wrote.

Personal Statement

“I love stories. As I have grown older, I have discovered that compelling stories are found not

Congratulations Kaitlyn Katayama!

B.S. Business Administration
Management and Human Resources, Cum Laude
Cal. Poly Pomona

We’re so proud of your HR internships at
Anschutz Entertainment Group (AEG), AT&T
and Diamond Wipes Inc!

Love,
Dad, Mom & Brittney



The JACL NY/SC
Congratulates Our
Recent Graduated
Officers and National
Scholarship Recipients!



Jess Juanich
Mieko Kuramoto
Marco Torrez
Justin Kawaguchi
Caitlin Takeda
Jenna Aoki





only in books, but also in the events and people all around us. Every person on this Earth has their own experiences and history that have shaped who they are.

“Our personal stories provide us with a unique understanding of the world around us and influence our choices and actions. I have realized that to make informed decisions, I need to have a greater understanding of the stories of my ancestors and how their experiences have impacted my own personal story today.”

Larsen also was directly impacted by her participation in the JACL’s Kakehashi program: “Even though my grandparents have been very involved with JACL, I did not feel a strong connection to my Japanese heritage while I was growing up. I knew about what had happened to the Japanese Americans during World War II and I had heard stories from my relatives who were affected by these events, but I did not understand and appreciate their importance to me, my family and our country.

“During the trip, I developed a desire to have a closer connection to my Japanese ancestors. I came to understand that they were immigrants who faced hardship and discrimination, and their experiences in overcoming those challenges have made it possible for me to enjoy the opportunities I have today.

“My knowledge and understanding of the stories of my ancestors that I gained on this trip and through listening to my relatives has encouraged me to find ways I can share those stories with others. New immigrants to America continue to face the same obstacles my ancestors endured.

“One important story that we need to continue to raise awareness of is the treatment of Japanese Americans and the loss of their civil rights during World War II. We can prevent something unconscionable like this from happening again by sharing this story, a story that today many still do not know or appreciate. One way I am trying to do this is by sharing copies of my grandpa Floyd Mori’s book, “The Japanese American Story,” with my friends.

“This starts a conversation about our stories, which can then lead to dialogue about what happened and how and why. Understanding politics is really understanding how the decisions we make as a society affect each other’s stories and recognizing that our attitudes and choices shape those decisions, which can then have lasting effects for many generations.

“I think it is important for everyone, not just Asian and Pacific Islander American youth, to have an understanding of our history so that we can all work together to create a more inclusive community for all people.”



LOGAN MANO
JACL Chapter: Mt. Olympus
Recipient of the Alice Yuriko Endo
Memorial Scholarship
Utah State University
Notables

Logan Mano just completed two years of service as a missionary for the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints in Madagascar, where he mastered the Malagasy language. Among his many awards and honors, which include projects in math, science, history and wrestling, he is most proud of his participation as a state representative to Boys State, where he heard Kasey Kuminara tell stories of the 442nd, including its rescue of the Lost Texas Battalion. As an incoming freshman, Logan is planning to study computer science.

Personal Statement

“Go for Broke” was the motto of the 442nd Regimental Combat Team and 100th Infantry Battalion. That was the motto upheld by much of my family during the strenuous times of WWII. Many times, I’ve found myself fascinated by this time period: the roll that Japanese Americans played in the war, the struggle to display loyalty to a country that had turned against them, the war not only fought in Europe and the Pacific but also the war fought on prejudice here in America. Because of the effort and testimony of many members of my family who lived through that time, I, among thousands, am inspired when I recall the Japanese Americans in the Great War.

“Go for Broke” meant a lot to my Uncle Nibbs Mori. He served in the 442nd and accordingly, found himself on the front lines often. He received a purple heart. ‘Go for Broke’ wasn’t just a hopeful, wishful, whimsical statement. It was a charge, a declaration to take everything you have got within you and give it up for the sake of your country, your loyalty, your freedom. Nothing about ‘Go for Broke’ meant last-ditch effort: It meant to fight from the start till the end.

“Go for Broke” is the way I take on life. It is a pathway to success in whatever you do. It can be scary to set high expectations and desire to achieve a lot. Sometimes, I feel unequipped, unprepared, unskilled, etc. But, so were they, right?

“Go for Broke” is an identity that has shaped the way I live. It is a charge to go and get involved. Make the difference you want to see. Prove

yourself. It has affected my community involvement by pushing me to always seek opportunities to give back to my community — to be involved and not let things just happen around me but to play a role in what is happening. I hope to always ‘Go for Broke’ in my career, fulfilling my dreams and reaching my goals.”



MICHELLE E. OSHITA
JACL Chapter: Stockton
Recipient of the Shigeru Nakahira
Memorial Scholarship
University of the Pacific
Notables

A senior accounting major in a BS/MS program, Michelle Oshita is a leader in numerous preprofessional campus organizations as well as the Dome of Hope Club, which provides numerous services to disadvantaged students, families and senior citizens.

Personal Statement

Oshita reflected upon the parallels between injustices incurred nearly 80 years apart: “The year is 1942. The scorching heat and insufferable windstorms of the Oklahoma plains beat on the backs of 700 interned Japanese Americans at Fort Sill. In 2019, nearly eight decades later, little has changed.

“The current presidential administration strongly considered the detainment of Central American migrant children in tents at Fort Sill like the Japanese predecessors. Many Japanese internment camp survivors, Japanese American Citizens League officials and Native American groups noticed the direct correlation between these two troubling times. More than 400 demonstrators from these groups protested for justice at the Army

base in the sweltering sun. Their voices and cries for correction serve a crucial message to the nation and APIA youths that history shall not repeat itself without a fight.

“As Yonsei and Gosei Japanese Americans, we have heard alarming stories about camp from the older generation. If unethical detainment were to occur again, Asian and Pacific Islander Americans would be on the forefront in fighting these disreputable political decisions.

“The protests of fellow Japanese Americans and the JACL’s strong and condemning statements about the situation make me proud to be a member of the Japanese American community and this impactful organization.

“The JACL’s continuous effort to honor diversity through social justice and equality is prevalent in their statements and actions. This has greatly inspired my desire to learn about my Japanese heritage and make a difference in my community.”

Oshita also reflected upon her Kakehashi experience last year: “By meeting Japanese citizens and learning about their economic and political dynamics, I developed a deeper connection to my homeland and formed a desire to connect the communities of Japan with my own.

“After witnessing the work of the JACL throughout my life and my Kakehashi program experience, I have developed a greater need to actively assist my local and Japanese American communities. Understanding my ethnic identity and communities have shaped my personal beliefs and placed a significant importance on remembering and honoring those who came before me. All APIA youths can benefit from this understanding, which will allow them to promote a future of acceptance, unity and justice for all.”

CAMERON NOBUYUKI SUEOKA
JACL Chapter: Salt Lake City
Recipient of the Saburo Kido
Memorial Scholarship
University of Utah
Notables



Cameron Sueoka has been actively involved in JACL and other JA community events for many years. Following his Kakehashi program experience, he hopes to study abroad following his upcoming sophomore year in the Business Scholars program. Among his extracurricular activities is his participation as a founding member of the Asian American Collegiate Alliance, a statewide group that promotes networking to share common experiences and goals.

Personal Statement

Sueoka reflected upon his sense of civic duty in the context of Asian American history. “With the pandemic of the coronavirus, anti-Asian racism has come back with a vengeance. Now more than ever it is vital that APIA youth are involved and participate in politics as it relates to their identity as the Yellow Peril stereotype never goes away despite the assimilation and successes of APIAs today.

“Asians played an important role in the building of the West but were often the target of controversial laws restricting immigration, citizenship and land ownership that lasted over 100 years. The wartime relocation and internment of Japanese Americans was a crucial point in Japanese American history, resulting in their segregation and isolation from mainstream society.

“The assimilation process of Japanese Americans into American society post-incarceration was slowed due to discourse and racism. However, despite the history of discrimination against Japanese Americans in their social, economic and political aspirations, many Japanese Americans were a success story for assimilation and were



from your proud
Bachan
&
Jichan



referred to as the Model Minority.

“An important aspect of their history was working together to fight for social justice and equality not just for JAs but for all people. The Japanese American Citizens League, established in 1929, is the oldest and largest Asian Pacific American civil rights organization in America. From the vision and perseverance of Issei and Nisei generations to the activism of the civil rights and redress movements, JACL uses its history to call out injustices happening now and has come to the defense of other oppressed groups.

“The history of the definition of the term *Asian American* for all APIAs includes a shared and interconnected history of immigration, labor exploitation and racism, as well as a common political agenda.

“It is important to ensure that history does not repeat itself and that we take proactive action to minimize the racism and anti-Asian dissonance we see so rampant today. An important step is for immigrants and established Asian American communities to come together to fight for social justice, so we can continue as a united front against the continued discrimination, harassment and prejudice they have been fighting for over 100 years.

“We live in a society, in a nation where even the president uses racist words to define a virus, where they see us as looking the same and being the same. We must stand together. We must register to vote, and we must participate in the politics that affect us.

“It is important to be involved now more than ever to be a collective entity . . . calling for action condemning all forms of anti-Asian sentiment and protect the civil rights of all AAPI people. The AAPI community is continuously affected by political changes. As a member of the AAPI youth, we are the future. We must start now to develop strategies and develop coalitions to make a positive difference in our community, our nation and the world.”

GRADUATE WINNERS



SARAH BAKER
JACL Chapter: Seattle
Recipient of the Henry and Chiyo Kuwahara Memorial Scholarship
Seattle University — Public Administration
Notables

Passionate is a word that would describe Sarah Baker. She has been immersed in the JACL at all levels since 2014. She has participated in the Japanese American community as a Kakehashi Project supervisor twice and has made herself a valued leader of her college campus, community at large and LGBTQ community. Past JACL Seattle President Bill Tashima wrote, “Wow! Sarah is great. Few people match Sarah’s JACL commitment. She has been JACL Seattle president for an unprecedented four years. She is currently National VP for Public Affairs. She has personally raised thousands of dollars for the JACL.”

Personal Statement

“The histories of all people are intrinsically political — the moments in time that pushed or pulled our family to be where they are now or sell them outside of the political realm. In fact, to view politics in history as mutually exclusive would be a mistake.

“Within the United States, the policies set forth by our Founding Fathers shaped the discourse for how American people work, live and subsist. Unfortunately, these founding principles are built within a narrow frame of reference, and people

of color have historically been left out of the picture or worse, directly harmed through policy formation.

“The result of this is that communities of color, whether they are indigenous, immigrant or descendants of enslaved people, live a reality that is vastly different from our white counterparts. The fabric of our history is stricken and interwoven with the racist policies that keep us from reaching collective liberation; to achieve liberation, we must understand how we came to be where we are today.

“Through my work, I aim to not only uplift my community but also all communities. Each of our stories is unique and individual; what I have experienced as an API person is different than what my Black or Brown brothers and sisters have experienced. By honoring my history and its various intersections, I can help to create [a] more just world that brings equality to all people of color.”



QUINN FUJII
JACL Chapter: Sacramento
Recipient of the Dr. Newton K. Wesley Memorial Scholarship
University of California, San Diego — Physiology and Neuroscience; Minor, Japanese Studies
Notables

Quinn Fujii is a medical student who aspires to be a physician that will alleviate health-care inequities. Through her family history and her experiences, she is empathetic to our community needs. Dr. David Haller noted, “Quinn’s ability to observe and formulate intelligent, relevant questions regardless of the difficulty shows that she has tremendous maturity, knowledge and a willingness to learn more. She is a proud Japanese

American who lights up when she speaks of her heritage. A spirited, confident and kind individual like her is the most deserving candidate for your scholarship.”

Personal Statement

“I believe it’s important that APIA youth understand their identity and communal history in order to recognize an advocate against the mistakes of history, as well as help them find a meaningful future.

“The current events highlight just how important youth awareness is to avoid making the same historical mistakes. Due to COVID-19 being referred to as the ‘Chinese virus,’ Asian Americans are coming under increased racial prejudice and discrimination. This draws terrifying parallels to World War II and the historical internment of Japanese Americans.

“With the understanding of the past, the people, including the youth, of the present are able to speak out against this prejudice. The fact these events are happening in modern times highlights the need for people like the APIA community to understand our history and speak out to prevent these injustices.

“Throughout my personal journey, I sought to connect with my Japanese heritage and use my understanding of our history to fuel the person and physician I wish to become in the future. It is imperative that physicians show empathy toward all of their patients. I believe my APIA political history will help me to do just that. Furthermore, I plan on becoming a vision that works within my power to alleviate health inequities within the community. By knowing their heritage, other APIA youth can do the same.

“I will always continue to be interested in this heritage and use it to fill my pursuits as a physician, where I can do my best to alleviate health-care inequality. If the youth of today take the lessons of history, the future [will be] a better place than the present.”



JESS JUANICH
JACL Chapter: Seattle
Recipient of the Minoru Yasui Memorial Scholarship
Seattle University — Public Affairs/Political Science
Notables

Jess Juanich is going into public affairs. He is off to a great start, as he already is a leader with passion who is working with diverse pop-

ulations, fighting for accessibility to help tackle the inequities of our communities. Bernie Liang, director for student involvement at Seattle University, wrote, “Jess has been at SGSU for three years now, and I can see that he is one of the best examples I’ve seen of a student leader in student government. In ways that still amaze me, he approaches some of the toughest situations with a mixture of care, compassion, empathy, tact, advocacy and intelligence. He is a quiet leader. But this should not be mistaken for invisible but, in fact, incredibly powerful.”

Personal Statement

“One the most pressing challenges for APIA communities today is the challenge of accessibility within the realms of health care, government and housing. Accessibility manifests itself in different forms, and the APIA community in the United States is one of the most diverse and largest-growing minority groups. The areas of health care, government and housing play a big role in that they encompass not only the APIA community but also all Americans.

“However, accessibility comes in the form of language and translation services, physical accommodations and representation for the community members, especially elders, to fill included with the larger dialogue.

“Accessibility to health care is important in that as the API as a community becomes older, there needs to be more assistance in programs that provide access to the best affordable treatment. Accessibility in government plays a vital role in maintaining civic engagement. Lastly, accessibility to housing remains an important challenge to address in that the consequences of gentrification and urban revitalization are hurting the cultural integrity of APIA communities.

“This understanding impacted my community involvement especially when social justice is intertwined in me because I identify as a first-generation college student, person of color, youth and the son of two immigrants.

“Working together with anyone regardless of differences is the embodiment of social justice work and cannot come [without] compassion, communication and care. Being in community with other people of color gave me hope and empowered myself and those around me to learn about our individual histories and move forward in understanding how we can work together to create change.”

VINICIUS TAGUCHI
JACL Chapter: Twin Cities
Recipient of the Kenji Kajiwara Memorial Scholarship
University of Minnesota — Civil Engineering
Notables

SEATTLE JACL CONGRATULATES RECIPIENTS OF 2020 NATIONAL JACL STUDENT SCHOLARSHIPS:

SARAH BAKER Henry & Chiyo Kuwahara Memorial Scholarship

JESS JUANICH Minoru Yasui Memorial Scholarship

EMILY KAWAHIGASHI Grace Andow Memorial Law Scholarship

We wish you all the best in your studies!

頑張ってください





Vinicius Taguchi has been actively involved with the U.S.-Japan relationship since 2015, when he was sponsored by the Japanese Ministry of Foreign Affairs to attend the Kakehashi Program trip to Japan. As he became connected to his heritage and other APIA youth, his leadership became apparent. Taguchi's hard work and skills became evident, as his graduate adviser stated, "In addition to numerous travel awards to attended conferences, Vinny has already received seven honors in his time performing graduate research at the University of Minnesota. To receive seven awards while in graduate school is phenomenal and, in my experience, unprecedented, period. Vinny is truly a complete, high-achieving graduate student."

Personal Statement

"I didn't always feel connected to my Asian Pacific Islander American identity. In fact, I wasn't sure what to think about my racial/ethnic identity. I was born Vinicius DePaula Ribeiro, a Brazilian citizen in Germany. Two years later, we moved to North Carolina, where I spent the next 22 years. When my family naturalized as U.S. citizens, we made the decision to change our names for the convenience of Americans. So, my father, brother, and I all took my mother's maiden name, and I became Vinicius James Taguchi."

"I grew up in North Carolina, where my only link to Japan was my maternal grandfather in Brazil, who has been feeding us delicious sushi, sukiyaki and tempura as far back as I can remember. I was not connected to a Japanese American community. I did not speak any Japanese, and I was not easily identified as a person of Japanese descent."

"As a Taguchi, however, the average American began assuming that I was Italian. But more importantly, Japanese and JA people recognized my APIA identity, and most significantly, my Japanese language teacher encouraged me to apply for the JACL Kakehashi Program."

"But the true value I see of my political understanding [as an] APIA is not personal. Rather, I see it as an opportunity to serve my fellow humans and help make the world an equitable and just place. My passions are coming together and yielding unique opportunities. Recent immigrants and people of color are some of the most susceptible populations to displacement resulting from gentrification."



CAITLIN TAKEDA

**Chapter: New England JACL
Recipient of the Henry and Chiyo Kuwahara Memorial Scholarship
Brown University Warren Alpert School of Medicine
Notables**

Caitlin Takeda is a medical student who is passionate about being an advocate for the inequities of minority populations. She has been deeply involved with Tsuru for Solidarity and the JACL NY/SC. Former NY/SC Chair Kota Mizutani shared, "Indeed, Kaitlyn is now an indispensable leader for our community. From spearheading the NY/SC's collaboration with Tsuru for Solidarity's campaign to even focusing her senior thesis on the art of resistance in the incarceration camps, Caitlyn has demonstrated her life mission — embedded by family history and a strong sense of justice — to advance the Japanese American community in any way she can."

Personal Statement

"My cultural identity is inherently political. I am a descendent of the Japanese American incarceration of World War II. My great-grandparents and grandparents were unjustly imprisoned at four different concentration camps: Poston and Gila River in Arizona, Tule Lake in Northwest California and Heart Mountain in Wyoming."

"Their stories have been passed down to me by my parents, aunts and uncles in the form of broken oral histories. My family's stories of confinement echo the narratives of detained and deported migrants under the current presidential administration, and their experience of exclusion parallels xenophobic and racist actions such as the Muslim travel ban."

"There has never been a more important time to practice active remembrance of the past to have an impact on the present and improve the future. As a Yonsei, I feel it is my duty to preserve the narratives of my ancestors and fight for a better future where injustice against a minority group could never happen again."

"I aspire to continue to serve my community and the other immigrant communities as a physician. I plan on becoming a primary care physician while staying involved in social activism with organizations such as Doctors for Camp Closure, which protest against inadequate migrant health care provided by the govern-

ment and lobbies for the release of migrants in detention. I look forward to continuing to fight for migration justice and serving my community through activism and medicine."



KAYLA UMEMOTO

**JACL Chapter: Sacramento
Recipient of the Rev. H John and Asako Yamashita Memorial Scholarship
California Northstate University,
School of Medicine
Notables**

Kayla Umemoto has a family tradition of being politically involved, one that spans generations. She continues that legacy with her involvement in JACL and the Nikkei Student Union. Her community involvement is diverse as well and includes volunteer work at health clinics to being a basketball coach. Her passion for helping others is evident as she continues to work against inequities. Kim Fujiwara wrote, "Kayla has a caring grace about her that makes her very approachable. She has shown an aptitude for caring for people of all ages through her body language, listening skills and verbal interaction."

Personal statement

"From growing up listening to stories of past injustices my grandparents suffered and being fourth-generation Japanese American, a product of the immigration experience who is unable to speak the language of my ancestors, I value learning from the past and supporting all communities."

"I remember being 5 years old, listening to my grandma tell the stories of having to suddenly leave her family's farm in Los Angeles and being sent miles away to an incarceration camp. Growing up, I listened to stories of my grandfather's pio-

neering efforts participating in the California Democratic Party and as a member of the Democratic National Committee and then watched my father follow in his footsteps when my grandfather passed away."

"Valuing my Japanese American community in my own family's history of activism, at UC Berkeley, I joined and later became a board member of the Nikkei Student Union, a student organization focused around Japanese culture and heritage. As part of NSU, one event that I helped organize was the Day of Remembrance, which we put on in collaboration with the Muslim Student Assn., a community facing discrimination."

"As a physician, I think that understanding my own cultural heritage, history and APIA political environment is important because it will enhance my ability to better serve not only those of my community but also other communities."

"The existing inequities in our health-care system in terms of access has become starkly evident during the current COVID-19 pandemic, where communities of color have been disproportionately impacted, making it critical that physicians are a voice advocating for the health care needs of our communities."



KAKO YAMADA

**JACL Chapter: Philadelphia
Recipient of the Chiyoko and Thomas Shimazaki Memorial Scholarship
University of Pennsylvania Graduate School of Education
Notables**

Kako Yamada is a JACL board member-at-large in the NY/SC chapter. She is also a contributing writer for the *Pacific Citizen*, where

her passion for civil rights is evident in her articles. In addition, Yamada is an avid community volunteer who has helped diverse projects as a film director to intake helper at a domestic violence program. As a Shin-Nikkei, her eyes have been opened to many different people, ideas and inequities in our community through the Youth Legacy Program.


Personal Statement

"America is no longer and never has been black and white. It is the straddling of cultures, languages and history is that people can come to understand one another, and APIA groups add a layer to this and are distinct histories that must be fought for."

"It is important for APIA youth to have a political understanding of their identity and history in order to proudly claim to be seen and recognized and call out for change. My community involvement is rooted in this understanding that difference is an asset rather than a kink to be discriminated against."

"Growing up as a Shin-Nikkei on the East Coast, the scars of Japanese American incarceration were distant, and I did not place my personal experience with any political or historical narrative. Therefore, the opportunity to participate in the Youth Legacy Program was momentous for me. Through it, I opened my eyes to history I wasn't aware of, people with whom I identified and my responsibilities as a U.S. citizen to better understand vulnerabilities in the political systems."

"This motivated my pursuit of a major in political science in my intensive history research on Japanese American Incarceration with Dr. Eichiri Azuma. We are only as strong as the people's understanding of one another, and it is the responsibility of everyone to tell their stories."

"With this in mind, I focused my research on the story of the 1800 Japanese Latin Americans who were abducted and interned in the United States, then denied reparations for being illegal immigrants. The research taught me the need to not only know one's own identity and history but also those of others" 

Stockton Chapter Congratulates its 2020 Scholarship Recipients

*Kayla Hamamoto
Kristina Matsumoto
Stephanie Matsumoto
Chance Mizuno
Patrick Saiki*

*Congratulations to all graduates and students on your achievements.
Best wishes in your future studies and endeavors.*



in order to make sure that our causes are not excluding and hurting other groups.”



EMILY KAWAHIGASHI
JACL Chapter: Seattle
Recipient of the Grace Andow
Memorial Law Scholarship
*University of Washington School
of Law*
Notables

Emily Kawahigashi participated in the Kakehashi program in 2016 when she was an undergraduate. She is currently involved with Asian American groups on her campus and volunteers with Tsuru for Solidarity. She plans to pursue public interest law. Her professor of technology law and public policy said: “If you are looking to award a scholarship to someone of outstanding character, highly committed and with great potential to give back, Emily Kawahigashi is the person you are seeking. . . . She is a ‘quick study.’ That is, she can look at a situation, speedily identify potential concerns and develop imaginative, but practical solutions.” Kawahigashi hopes to apply her talents on behalf of the AAPI community.

Personal Statement

“APIA youth need to have a political understanding of our identity and history or else we will never be able to truly advocate for change because the tools that were used and are still being used to marginalize our communities and our brothers and sisters of color are legally sanctioned. . . . Our legal system is constructed in a manner that codifies the subjugation of marginalized peoples. Therefore, it is also not surprising that our society today finds different ways to justify persecution or marginalized groups. We can see the echoes of the unjustified and politicized fear that resulted in the incarceration of Japanese Americans families in the detention and deportation of immigrant families today.

“Law school has taught me a lot about how our country works and how discriminatory legal tools of exclusion are still upheld by the Constitution. Being able to access this education has given me the ability to navigate it, and that has fed into my community involvement to support others who have not had access to

the same education.

“My desire to work with marginalized communities, particularly communities of color, has led me to volunteer with and intern with public interest organizations with the hope of challenging these by working alongside the people most impacted.”



MADELEINE MATSUI.
JACL Chapter: San Francisco
Recipient of the Thomas T. Hayashi
Law Scholarship
Harvard Law School
Notables

Madeleine Matsui is a magna cum laude graduate of Brown University, where she majored in international relations and urban studies. She participated in the Kakehashi program in 2010. She also lived in Hong Kong for eight years and is fluent in Cantonese and Mandarin. In a gap year after high school, she studied Mandarin in Beijing. Prior to law school, she worked for Google as a legal investigations policy specialist and also served as a part of its Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Council.

Personal Statement

She sees the importance for APIA youth to have an understanding of their identity from a special perspective. “I am the fortunate grandchild of two sets of Asian immigrant families, one with a trans-Pacific path, and the other with an intranational journey. I am Chinese, Japanese, Asian and Asian American, different components of my identity that are not always understood in their complete complexity within the U.S.

“My Chinese and Japanese American heritage have significantly shaped my worldview and cemented my desire to being an engaged citizen and legal scholar. Unfortunately, the history of Asians in the U.S. has mostly been characterized by national, cultural and racial discrimination. Therefore, it is of paramount importance that APIA youth have a political understanding of their identity and the histories of their communities.

“This knowledge and understanding will allow our society to move away from reductive and misleading narratives and ideas about APIA people and contribute toward creating a better, more inclusive future for all people in American society.”

» See **SCHOLARSHIPS**
on page 16

A NATIONAL GUIDE TO NOTABLE COMMUNITY EVENTS

CALENDAR

Due to health and safety concerns in the U.S. because of the COVID-19 pandemic, please check regarding the status of events listed in this issue's Calendar section.

NATIONAL

CELEBRATION, an APAICS Event

Oct. 1

Virtual event

Price: Free

CELEBRATION honors Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders for their contributions to the AAPI community. This year's all-virtual event will include remarks by members of Congress, community leaders and include performances and celebrity appearances. This year's honorary co-chairs are Congresswoman Grace Meng (D-NY) and Congressman Andy Kim (D-NJ), and the Lifetime Achievement Award will be given to actor/activist George Takei.

Info: Visit <https://apaics.org/events/celebration/> to register for free.

Poston Virtual Pilgrimage

Oct. 3-4

Virtual event

Price: Free

The Poston Community Alliance Annual Pilgrimage will be held as an online event this year, and all activities will be free of charge. Programs will feature opening remarks by Dennis Patch, Tribal Chairman of the Colorado River Indian Tribes Reservation, and a video on the Poston Incarceration Site, which provide's Poston's unique history and updates on past and present Alliance projects. Workshops will be provided, followed with live Q & A sessions. Additional videos and films can be viewed “on demand” at www.postonpreservation.org. Special guest presenter will be Derek Mio, lead actor of the TV series “The Terror: Infamy,” who will present a reading of Marlene Shigekawa's children's book “Welcome Home Swallows.”

Info: To register and receive the virtual event link, visit <https://poston-virtual-pilgrimage.eventbrite.com>.

‘Broken Promises’ Virtual Exhibit

Burnaby, Canada

Ongoing

Nikkei National Museum & Culture Centre

Virtual event

Price: Free

The new traveling exhibit “Broken Promises,” co-curated by the Nikkei National Museum with the Royal British Columbia Museum and the Landscapes of Injustice research collective, explores the dispossession of Japanese Canadians in the 1940s. It illuminates the loss of home and the struggle for justice of one racially marginalized community. You'll learn about life for Japanese Canadians in Canada before World War II, the administration of their lives during and after the war ended and how the legacies of dispossession continues to this day.

Info: For more information about the exhibit, visit <https://centre.nikkeiplace.org/exhibits/broken-promises/>.

NCWNP

Big Steps for Little Friends Virtual 5K

Run/Walk/Ride

San Francisco, CA

Oct. 3-12

Virtual fundraising event

Nihonmachi Little Friends is hosting its seventh “Big Steps for Little Friends 5K” event virtually this year, with all proceeds raised benefitting the children's programs at NLF. There will be various virtual options available, including scavenger hunt routes, indoor and outdoor experiences and the option to bike, scooter, skate, etc., in addition to running or walking. Each participant will be entered into a raffle drawing.

Info: To register, visit www.nlfchildcare.org.

Silicon Valley Asian Pacific FilmFest

‘Let's Re-Connect’

Northern California

Oct. 2-10

Virtual event

Price: Festival passes available for purchase, individual packages and connect on TV.

More than 70 films are available to view during this year's online event, representing a tapestry of lives lived while pursuing and reconnecting with history and the importance for social justice. The Silicon Valley Asian Pacific FilmFest is a production of Contemporary Asian Theatre Scene.

Info: Visit <https://svapfilmfest.org>.

PSW

36th Annual Los Angeles Asian Pacific Film Festival

Los Angeles, CA

Thru Oct. 31

Online film festival

Price: Ticket packages are available for purchase

Established in 1983 by Visual Communications, LAAPFF is the largest film festival in Southern California dedicated to showcasing films by Asians and Pacific Islanders around the world. The festival presents approximately 200 films, as well as the C3:Conference, LT@Home series and much more!

Info: Visit festival.vcmmedia.org for more information.

LTSC 40th Anniversary Celebration Gala

Los Angeles, CA

Oct. 10

Price: Free with registration

Join the Little Tokyo Service Center as it celebrates its 40th anniversary with a virtual gala highlighting the organization's diverse programming, accomplishments and vision built on years of service to the community. Please kindly consider donating to help reach its fundraising goal as well. A silent auction will also be featured at the event.

Info: Visit www.ltsc.org/40thAnniversary.

‘United in Action’ Gala by Asian Americans Advancing Justice

Los Angeles, CA

Oct. 22, 5-6 p.m. PDT

Virtual event

Price: Free, but donations are accepted.

Join Asian Americans Advancing Justice at its 37th gala, held virtually this year to celebrate the community as it enters its next chapter of advancing justice. The event will also welcome new CEO Connie Chung Joe, as well as a tribute to Stewart Kwoh, president emeritus, and the presentation of the first annual Joseph Ito Courage Award. The event will be emceed by ABC7's David Ono.

Info: For more information and to register, visit <https://www.advancingjustice-la.org>.

Keiro Symposium: ‘Designing Your Future’

Los Angeles, CA

Oct. 24; 10 a.m.-Noon

Virtual event

Price: Free

Held online for the first time, this event connects baby boomers and older adults with leading experts in the field of health care, finance/retirement planning and technology to share their insights and tools to confidently prepare for our future. The discussion will feature four experts from different fields with an interactive Q & A session, including Johnese Spisso and William Dunne from UCLA Health, financial adviser Ric Edelman and KT-LA-TV's tech reporter Rich DeMuro.

Info: Registration closes on Oct. 22. To preregister, visit <https://keiro.org/symposium>. For questions, email programs@keiro.org or call (213) 873-5792.

GFBNEC's ‘An Evening of Aloha’

Los Angeles, CA

Nov. 14, 4-5 p.m. PST

Virtual event

Join the Go For Broke National Education Center as it streams live for the first time ‘An Evening of Aloha’ celebration gala honoring our brave Nisei veterans.

Info: Visit goforbroke.org.

JANM Online Museum Collection

Los Angeles, CA

Japanese American National Museum

Online

JANM's Museum Collections Online features selected highlights from the museum's permanent collection of more than 60,000 unique artifacts, documents and photographs. Among the collections that can be viewed online are the “Stanley Hayami Diary,” “Hisako Hibi Collection,” “George Hoshida Collection” and “Hideo Date Collection,” among others. Although the museum is temporarily closed, viewers can still experience its inside treasures.

Info: www.janm.org.

PNW

Wing Luke Museum Online Digital Content

Seattle, WA

Wing Luke Museum

Although the museum's doors are temporarily closed, there is still a plethora of curated stories, digital content and neighborhood resources available to access and view. Viewers can check out Education, YouthCAN, Collections and Community Art all online!

Info: www.digitalwingluke.org.

EDC

Japan Society of Boston Free Online Resources

Boston, MA

Virtual classes and information

Price: Free

The Japan Society of Boston is offering free online resources featuring Japanese language learning tools, Japanese cooking, origami, arts and lectures and much more, all in a virtual online capacity.

Info: Visit <https://japansocietyboston.wildapricot.org>.

ADVERTISE HERE

Events in the calendar section are listed based on space availability. Place a ‘Spotlight’ ad with photos of your event for maximum exposure.

FOR MORE INFO:

pc@pacificcitizen.org

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In MEMORIAM

Akita, Margaret, 89, Sierra Madre, CA May 6; she was predeceased by her sister, Helen Hori; she is survived by her husband, Kiyoshi; children, Mark, Andrea (Walter Zisette), Diana Yoshie (James Marshall) and Lisa (Mel Senft); gc: 6.

Furuya, Junie, 93, Los Angeles, CA, Feb. 15; she is survived by her children, Lisa (John) Nakamine, Nan-see Furuya and Kenneth (Denyse) Furuya; gc: 3.

Hattori, Toshiko 'Tish' Hirata, 96,

Los Angeles, CA; she was predeceased by her husband, Eugene "Tiger" Hattori and sisters Mish Pacilio and Fusa Matsuoka; she is survived by her daughters, Donna (Mark) Nakashima, Karen (Randy) Yoshimoto and Sandra (Gregg) Okada; a sister-in-law; gc: 6; ggc: 2.

Imoto, Violet Ayako, 97, Los Angeles, CA, March 23; she was predeceased by her husband, Jack Masaru; she is survived by her daughters, Sue (Dixon) Fukuda, Judi (Joe) Honma and Faye (Richard) Itaya; gc: 6;

many ggc, gggc.

Kaneshiro, Sachi, 100, Los Angeles, CA, Jan. 24; she was predeceased by her siblings, Aki Nosaka, Mary Karatsu and George Tamaki; she is survived by her children, Lynn (Michael) Fernandez and Lance (Deborah) Kaneshiro; siblings, Dorothy Kuwaye and Paul (Kay) Tamaki; gc: 5.

Matsuo, Hiromu, 91, North Hills, CA, March 24; she is survived by her children, Blossom (Ron) Kroman, Cherrie Wilson, Randy, Roger (Vicky), Ronnie (Darlene) and Richard; gc: 7; ggc: 8.

Nagahori, Ami, 93, Carson, CA, April 23; she is survived by her children,

Hoke, Lisa (Terry Ikemoto), Craig (Sylvia Gomez) and Kurt (Louise Lew) Nagahori; she is also survived by many nieces, nephews and other relatives; gc: 5.

Okamura, Hideko, 93, Los Angeles, CA, March 9; she is survived by her daughters, Eiko Amy Okamura and Hitomi Heidi (Kevin) Fitzgerald; gc: 1.

Shibata, Tomiko, 96, Long Beach, CA, March 30; during WWII, she was incarcerated at the Rohwer WRA Center in AR; she was predeceased by her siblings, Kazuye Kushi, Keiko Sandy Tomooka and Masaru Shibata.

Takemoto, Katsuko L., 81, Monterey Park, CA, March 6.

PLACE A TRIBUTE

'In Memoriam' is a free listing that appears on a limited, space-available basis. Tributes honor your loved ones with text and photos and appear in a timely manner at the rate of \$20/column inch.

CONTACT:

Editorial@pacificcitizen.org
or call (213) 620-1767 ext. 104

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TO P.C. READERS:

For an upcoming article, we are looking for any information regarding the first reunion that took place on or about the Labor Day Weekend in September 1980 between survivors of WWII's Lost Battalion (1st Battalion, 141st Texas Regiment, 36th Division) and their rescuers, the 100th/442nd Regimental Combat Team.

P.C. is looking for the location and dates of the reunion, a program for the reunion, list of attendees, name(s) of the organizers, etc.

Among 442 vets known to have attended: Hoppy Kaneshina (Gardena, Calif.), Shim Hiraoka (Fresno, Calif.), Monte Fujita (Los Angeles), Hideo Takehashi (Ontario, Ore.), Shiro Kashino (Seattle), Victor Izui (Evanston, Ill.), James Okimoto (Kaneohe, Hawaii), Isao "Henry" Nakada (Homer, Alaska).

Also, the P.C. is looking for descendants or in-laws of Tomiyo (H: Takeharu) Amemiya; Yeiji Fujino (aka Eiji Fujino, aka Yeaji Fujino); and Kaoru (H: Minoru) Yamaguchi.

Anyone able to help with the preceding requests is asked to send an email to editorial@pacificcitizen.org or leave a message at (213) 620-1767, ext. 104.

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SCHOLARSHIPS » continued from page 14**CREATIVE
ARTS**

HIROSHI KANEKO
JACL Chapter: New England
Recipient of the Henry and Chiyo
Kuwahara Memorial Creative Arts
Scholarship
Harvard Graduate School of Design
Notables

It was after moving to New York City to work for an architectural design firm that Hiroshi Kaneko became interested in his Japanese American heritage. In 2019-20, he served as president of the Japanese and Japanese Americans in Design student group at Harvard. In 2020-21, he is focusing his thesis on the “Japanese Incarceration Camps and their role in the knowledge and memory of landscape and architecture.”

Personal Statement

“The work I am pursuing in graduate school focuses on the political ramifications of the architectural wall. My own history as a Japanese Amer-

ican includes the incarceration of my American-born grandparents during WWII for being of Japanese ancestry.

“The delineation of wartime motive based on race and the formation of the Japanese Incarceration Camps were both political acts of building walls: a mental wall was needed to easily separate foe from friend; and a physical set of walls in the form of geographically isolated camps helped realize the construction.

“The architectural wall, when looked at politically and through the lens of community identity and history, signifies a raft of important questions I wish to explore.

“To this end, among many others, having political understanding of my identity and history gives me perspective to act upon the world in ways that affect more than just myself or my immediate community.”

JACKSON KUBOKAWA VOGTMANN
JACL Chapter: Sacramento
Recipient of the Aiko Susanna
Tashiro Hiratsuka Performing Arts
Scholarship
Notables

Jackson Kubokawa Vogtmann loves to play the guitar. He attended the Berklee 5 Week Aspire Intensive Music Program in the summer of 2019, as well as played with the Vista



del Lago Guitar Nation. Among his academic achievements, he maintained a 4.0 GPA throughout high school. Vogtmann’s interest in his heritage was sparked by a visit to Japan with his family.

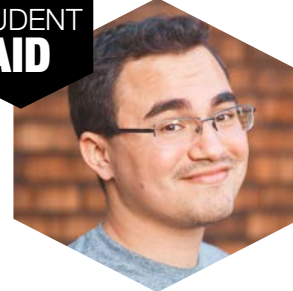
Personal Statement

“One of my most vivid memories from my vacation to Japan with my family was seeing the shocking and horrifying artifacts and pictures from the Hiroshima Peace Memorial Museum. . . . I remember just looking at these pictures dumbfounded and speechless — the reality of the tragedy was nothing like what I was taught in school. When I learned about internment camps and the bombings in class, it never had the same impact that it did when I was actually there in the city [where] it happened, looking into the scared eyes of the helpless victims through their photographs.

“When I look at my grandparents, I see their determination and grit, surviving through the Japanese

internment camps, returning to a prejudiced society after WWII and still being able to make a life for themselves and their children.

“To this day, they wear their Japanese heritage on their sleeves like badges of honor, solidarity and perseverance through their common struggles. . . . Us APIA youth have an obligation to use the experience of our forefathers to protect and spread freedom and equality to the people around us.”

**STUDENT
AID**

MARCO TORREZ
JACL Chapter: Berkeley
Recipient of the Dr. George Goro
and Nettie Muramoto Student Aid
Scholarship
University of California, Berkeley
Long Form Broadcast Journalism
Notables

Marco Torres is a journalist pursuing a master’s degree in broadcast journalism. His goal is to become an international/national broadcast correspondent with focus on AAPI

communities. He has an interest in both Japanese language and culture. In addition, he is an educator who teaches about history, current events and media relationships with the U.S.

Personal Statement

“It is imperative that our youth understand the history of the AAPI communities’ relationship with the U.S. government as well as understand how the legal representation system works on state and national levels. This is important because our youth need to learn about the injustices the AAPI community endured during World War II so they can educate the next generation.

“This understanding has affected my community involvement by igniting my passion to stand up for the human rights of all people, especially those of underrepresented communities. Specifically, working in the JACL has allowed me to help organize youth to galvanize support for this Tsuru for Solidarity Movement.

“As a Hispanic American, I am an ally of the AAPI community and, [I] help to protect the human and civil rights of all peoples. I have supported movements in my own way by reporting on these injustices to spread, inform and educate our fellow citizens so that they, too, can join us in speaking about these injustices.” ■

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