

NOTABLE 2024 LOSSES



Sakaye Aratani, 104, March 18

A former incarcerated of Arizona's Poston WRA Center, the widow of businessman and philanthropist George Aratani was herself also a philanthropist as president of the Aratani Foundation. Active with several community organizations — Japan America Society, Nisei Women's Golf Club, Japanese American Montebello Women's Club and Japanese Women's Society of Southern California, to name a few — she was recognized by Japan's government with its Order of the Sacred Treasure, Fourth Order in 1983. Aratani is survived by her daughters, Donna Kwee (Kwee Liang Tek) and Linda Aratani; and grandchildren and great-grandchildren.

Akira Hirose, 70, Sept. 26

The Kyoto-born chef and restaurateur who trained in France went on to combine that background with his native Japanese cuisine to acclaim in Los Angeles at L'Orangerie, Belvedere at the Peninsula Beverly Hills and Maison Akira in Pasadena. His family continues to operate his Little Tokyo restaurant, Azay. In addition to creating the menu for Japanese American National Museum and Go for Broke National Education Center events, Hirose and his team prepared the Sayonara Gala dinner at the JACL's 2023 JACL National Convention in Los Angeles. Hirose is survived by his wife, Jo Ann; and their children, Michelle and Philip, as well as other relatives in the U.S. and Japan.



Harry Kawahara, 92, May 10

Co-founder and first president of the Greater Pasadena JACL chapter in the 1960s, the educator, activist and counselor was a pioneer in getting Asian American studies classes into high school and college curricula in the early 1970s. He also served as the founding president of Pasadena City College's Coalition of Asian Pacific Employees in the 1980s. The San Leandro, Calif., native was with his family when they were incarcerated at the Topaz War Relocation Authority Center in Utah. The graduate of UC Berkeley, Pasadena's Fuller Theological Seminary and California State University, Los Angeles, was Monrovia High

School's first Asian American faculty member. He also testified in 1981 at Los Angeles' Commission on Wartime Relocation and Internment of Civilians hearing, served as the JACL's Pacific Southwest District Council vice governor and board member and helped Pasadena establish Fred Korematsu Day in 2011. Kawahara is survived by his wife, Jane; and sons, Tim Kawahara and Reed Kawahara (Trish); and two grandchildren.

Gann Matsuda, 61, Oct. 12

The Culver City, Calif., resident was known equally for his leadership and activism with the Manzanar Committee and his enthusiasm for NHL team Los Angeles Kings. His Japanese American community involvement stretched back to his days as an undergrad at UCLA, at which he was one of the founding members in 1981 of the UCLA Nikkei Student Union and later helped in the campaign to gain tenure for UCLA Professor Don Nakanishi. Matsuda is survived by his parents, Sue and Morley Matsuda; and many friends.

Gary Okihiro, 78, May 20

The educator and author of 12 books died in New Haven, Conn. He taught at Yale, Cornell, Princeton, Columbia, Humboldt State University, Santa Clara University and Nihon University. In addition to serving as president of the Association for Asian American Studies, he was the recipient of the Association for Asian American Studies' Lifetime Achievement Award and the Carl Bode-Norman Holmes Pearson Prize for lifetime contributions to American studies. Okihiro is survived by his wife, Marina Henriquez Okihiro.

Seiji Ozawa, 88, Feb. 6

The Grammy-winning internationally acclaimed maestro who spent 30 years at the helm of the Boston Symphony Orchestra and later served as music director of the Vienna State Opera died at his Tokyo home. During his career, he also directed the San Francisco Orchestra and the Toronto Symphony Orchestra, prior to his tenure in Boston, which began in 1970.

Yosh Uchida, 104, June 27

The Calexico, Calif.-born judo instructor helped to popularize judo in America and build the program at San Jose State University into a judo powerhouse. He held the rank of 10th-dan and is the namesake of SJSU's Yoshihiro Uchida Hall. When judo was introduced as an Olympic sport at the 1964 Olympic Summer Games in Tokyo, he coached the U.S. team, a duty he would repeat on several more occasions. He was an inductee into the San Jose Sports Authority Hall of Fame and SJSU's Legends Hall of Fame, as well as the recipient of SJSU's highest award, the Tower Award, for his decades of service to SJSU. From the Japanese government, he received the Order of the Sacred Treasure with Gold Rays with Neck Ribbon. Uchida was predeceased by his wife, Ayame, and daughter, Janice Uchida. He is survived by his daughters, Lydia Uchida Sakai (Steve Sakai) and

Aileen Uchida (Steven Shimizu); and grandchildren, nieces, nephews, grandnieces and grandnephews.



Bob Suzuki, 88, May 1

A founding member of the Greater Pasadena Area JACL, he died at his Alhambra, Calif., home. During WWII, his family and he were incarcerated at Idaho's Minidoka War Relocation Authority Center. He earned his B.A. and M.A. (mechanical engineering) at UC Berkeley and his Ph.D. (aeronautics) at Caltech. He served as California State Polytechnic University Pomona's president; California State University Northridge's vp, academic affairs; California State University Los Angeles' dean of graduate studies and research; and was a member of the National Science Board; the National Science Foundation; and the California Student Aid Commission. He was also the recipient of the San Gabriel Valley Economic Partnership's Technology Leadership Award and the National Education Association's Human Rights Award for Leadership in Asian and Pacific Island Affairs and from the Japanese government, the Order of the Rising Sun, Gold Rays with Neck Ribbon. Suzuki is survived by his wife, Agnes; and their children and grandchildren.

Hisako Terasaki, 95, April 15

The artist and philanthropist from the Los Angeles neighborhood of Boyle Heights was incarcerated during WWII with her family at Arizona's Poston War Relocation Authority Center. With her late husband, Paul Terasaki, she helped the Japanese American community and promoted Japanese culture via their philanthropic efforts. She is survived by Mark (Rindy) Terasaki, Keith (Cecilia) Terasaki, Taiji (Naoko) Terasaki and Emiko (Daniel Cook) Terasaki; grandchildren and a great-granddaughter.



Grant Ujifusa, 82, Oct. 21

The co-founder and co-editor of "The Almanac of American Politics" was also the JACL-LEC's legislative strategy chair who helped with getting passage of the 1988 Japanese American redress bill. The long-time Chappaqua, N.Y., resident had moved to the Philadelphia suburb of Lafayette Hill a few years ago. The

Wyoming-born Sansei graduated from Harvard University and earned a master's degree from Brandeis University and later worked in publishing. The Japanese government bestowed its Order of the Rising Sun, Gold and Silver Rays to him in recognition of redress work. In 2022, he established the Harry K. Honda Memorial Journalism Fund to help the *Pacific Citizen* pay current and new contributing writers. Ujifusa is survived by his wife, Amy Brooks Ujifusa; sons, Steven Ujifusa (Alexandra Vinograd), Andrew Ujifusa (Jennifer) and John; grandsons; and his sister, Susan Diamond.



Raymond Uno, 93, March 8

The Utah-born Nisei who became Utah's first minority judge and in 1970, the youngest person ever elected to the office of national president of the Japanese American Citizens League, died at Salt Lake City's Veteran's Hospital. During WWII, his family and he were incarcerated at Wyoming's Heart Mountain War Relocation Authority Center. Postwar, he enlisted in the Army and was assigned to the Military Intelligence Language School and later was transferred to Japan. Using the GI Bill, he earned an associate's degree from Weber Junior College and then transferred to the University

of Utah, earning a bachelor's degree in political science, followed by a juris doctor degree. In 1976, the Salt Lake City mayor tapped him for the Salt Lake Court bench. In 1984, he won the race for Third District Court and retired as its senior judge in 1990. He later became a senior judge who heard cases until 2003. In 1991, when the Utah Minority Bar Assn. was founded, Uno served as its first president. Japan's government awarded him with a Foreign Minister's Commendation in 2012 for promoting mutual understanding between Japan and the U.S. Uno is survived by his wife, Yoshiko; five sons, Tab (Bobby), Kai (Sheri), Mark (Kris), Sean and Lance; and grandchildren.



Patti Yasutake, 70, Aug. 5

The actress, whose career included appearing in the award-winning Netflix series "Beef," died in Los Angeles. She also acted in episodes of "Star Trek: The Next Generation," the movie "Gung Ho" and its short-lived sitcom offshoot, as well as the 1988 indie film "The Wash" and the play "Tea." Yasutake was predeceased by her parents and sister, Irene Hirano. She is survived by her siblings, Linda Hayashi and Steven Yasutake; and other relatives, friends and colleagues. ■

TRIBUTE

YOSHITO NAKAHARA



Yoshito Nakahara, 102, of Redwood City, Calif., passed away peacefully at home on Nov. 14. He is survived by his wife, Toyoko; daughters, Amy Moon and Judy (Mitchell) Rossi; siblings, James Nakahara and Miyuki Fukudome; and grandchildren, William, Andrew and Kimiko.

Born in 1922 in Kailua, Oahu, he was an avid gardener who enjoyed growing orchids year-round, bird watching, fishing, stamp collecting and following Bay Area sports teams. After being educated in Japan, he returned to San Francisco, eventually co-owning a family pearl restringing and jewelry business for 40 years. He enjoyed a good life, supported by many caring nieces and nephews.

Per his wishes, he will be laid to rest in a private ceremony. In lieu of flowers, kindly consider a memorial contribution directed to Stanford Medicine's Senior Care Clinic. Checks may be made payable to: "Stanford University," with a memo, "In memory of Y. Nakahara for Dr. Meera Sheffrin." Mail to: Stanford Medicine, U465, 485 Broadway St., Redwood City, CA 94063.

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