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Jan. 28-FEB. 3, 2000

Energy Probe Finds Racial Profiling in Wake of Wen Ho Lee Case

By ASSOCIATED PRESS

WASHINGTON—A six-month Energy Department investigation has found evidence of racial profiling and an "atmosphere of distrust and suspicion" toward Asian Americans at nuclear weapons labs because of the uproar over alleged Chinese espionage.

Energy Secretary Bill Richardson, vowing to stamp out such profiling, insisted Jan. 19 that Taiwan-born scientist Wen Ho Lee was never singled out or fired from his job at Los Alamos National Laboratory because of his race.

But Richardson acknowledged the issue has already hurt U.S. defense labs.

"We are not having as much success in recruiting top flight scientists," he said.

"This perceived hostile work environment imperils an invaluable partnership between the Energy Department and Asian Pacific Americans. Worse ... [it] can foment a dangerous 'brain drain' where we lose our best scientists, hobbling our research quality, leading-edge science and ultimately our national security," Richardson said.

Sen. Jeff Bingaman, D-N.M., during a colloquium in Los Alamos backed up Richardson's remarks, saying the overzealous reaction by some in Washington to the allegation of espionage has put the labs in a difficult position.

"If the security program becomes so restrictive, we will drive

away many good people ... That's a real threat to our long-term national security," said Bingaman, a member of the Senate Energy and Natural Resources Commission.

AA scientists widely believe they have been unfairly targeted because of their race since Lee's dismissal last March for security violations, according to a task force report on racial profiling in the department.

Lee, at the center of a three-year espionage investigation, was indicted in December for copying top-secret nuclear weapons files and remains in jail awaiting trial. He has strongly denied giving secrets to China or anyone else, and he is not accused of espionage.

"While specific incidents and examples of racial profiling may differ from site to site, the general concerns and issues were virtually identical department wide," said the report, ordered by Richardson last summer when the uproar over alleged Chinese espionage at weapons labs was at its peak.

Despite directives from Richardson against racial profiling, managers and supervisors at the weapons labs — Sandia, Los Alamos and Lawrence Livermore — and other DOE facilities were found to question "the loyalty and patriotism of some employees based upon racial factors," the report said.

Yvonne Lee, a member of the U.S. Civil Rights Commission and a task force member, said

there is "a general sense of fear" among AAs of being unfairly targeted. They cited as an example, she said, a practice by the FBI to call AA scientists simply because of their race "to see if they knew Lee."

Tom Tamura, another task force member, said AA scientists related how counterintelligence officials joked about the Chinese connection in briefings to scientists. The briefers would ask the scientists whether they knew why there were so many Chinese restaurants in town. "Why for spying of course," the briefers would say according to Tamura.

Richardson said no specific case of racial profiling has been proven but "we're admitting to a problem, a problem of perception, of mistrust."

To emphasize that such profiling "is never welcome" Richardson said there would be a department-wide satellite-linked "stand-down" in the coming weeks so employees can focus on the issue and discuss their concerns. Richardson also appointed Jeremy Wu, former deputy director of the Office of Civil Rights, as a department ombudsman on worker issues.

Since Wen Ho Lee's indictment Dec. 10, a growing number of AA groups have come to Lee's support, creating a defense fund and scheduling rallies. These groups claim Lee was singled out because of his race.

"I reject the view that racial

See WEN HO LEE/page 6

White House Forgoes Recess Appointment of Bill Lann Lee

The White House's recent decision not to appoint Bill Lann Lee as assistant attorney general for civil rights through a January recess appointment has disappointed and angered various national Asian Pacific American organizations.

A recess appointment would have formalized Lee as the head of the Department of Justice's civil rights division and removed "acting" from his title. Lee has been serving as the "acting" head of the civil rights division since 1997 when his nomination to the position was first forwarded by President Clinton.

Sen. Orrin Hatch, a Republican from Utah, has continued to block Lee's confirmation as assistant attorney general. Despite Lee's impressive credentials and the endorsement of six former assistant attorney generals for civil rights, Hatch has prevented a full Senate vote on the nomination because of his opposition to affirmative action programs, the law of the country.

Under Lee, the civil rights division has prosecuted hate crimes, rooted out worker exploitations, protected Americans with disabilities and ensured fair housing and fair lending for all Americans.

"No one can question or criti-

cize Bill Lann Lee's qualifications and credentials, his dedication to the cause of equal opportunity, or his job performance as acting head of the civil rights division," said Karen Narasaki, executive director for the National Asian Pacific American Legal Consortium.

"The failure of the Senate to confirm Mr. Lee for this critical post and President Clinton's refusal to move forward on a recess appointment before Congress begins its new session is an insult to the Asian Pacific American community and all Americans who believe in equality and fairness in our society," added Narasaki.

"In the past two years, Bill Lann Lee has more than proven to the nation that the 'acting' portion of his title should be removed," said Daphne Kwok, executive director of the Organization of Chinese Americans and chair of the National Council of Asian Pacific Americans.

"With less than one year left in the Clinton Administration, it is time our community demand that Bill Lann Lee not be treated as a second class citizen and be recognized and rewarded for the excellent work he has done."

Both Narasaki and Kwok urged Lee supporters to voice their disapproval of Clinton's decision to John Podesta, Chief of Staff at the White House, 1600 Pennsylvania Ave., NW, Washington, D.C. ■



Emotional Protests Around Asia as Conference Denies Nanking

By ASSOCIATED PRESS

OSAKA, Japan—Emotional protests were held throughout Asia on Jan. 23 against a conference calling a wartime massacre of Chinese civilians by Japanese troops "The Biggest Lie of the 20th Century."

The Chinese Foreign Ministry had urged Japan earlier in the week to stop the conference, and ministry spokesman Zhu Bangzao read a statement Sunday on national television news saying the event had "harmed the feelings of the Chinese people and interfered with the normal development of China-Japan relations."

But inside the conference, some 300 people packed an auditorium to hear former soldiers and a his-

torian deny the so-called Rape of Nanking, where some historians say the Japanese military killed hundreds of thousands of Chinese civilians.

Another 200 who could not get into the controversial conference, titled "The Verification of the Rape of Nanking: The Biggest Lie of the 20th Century," stood outside.

Roughly 100 protesters, mostly Chinese and Japanese, assembled nearby. Some of them waved banners with slogans such as, "Nanking is an undeniable fact."

Supporters of the speakers heckled protesters, but there was no violence.

Some historians say Japanese imperial soldiers killed as many as 300,000 people during Tokyo's 1937-38 occupation of the Chinese city of Nanking, now called Nanjing. A postwar tribunal in Tokyo said more than 140,000 were killed.

But like many right-wing

See NANKING/page 6

APIA Vote! Launches Outreach Campaign to Recruit Minority Voters

By TRACY UBA
Writer/Reporter

With the March primaries just a little over a month away, minorities, and particularly Asian Pacific Islander Americans, are being urged to make their voices count by voting in the first elections of this millennium.

In only its second year of existence, APIA Vote!, a non-partisan Los Angeles-based project of the Asian Pacific Policy and Planning Council (A3PCON), recently kicked off its voter registration and education campaign on Jan. 20, urging its California constituency to participate in a process which will determine which candidates represent the APIA community at various levels of government.

"We want to say, hey, let's make a big show at this year's [elections]," said APIA Vote! project director Dinah Choi, "to say we're active, we're a definitive political force and that if you don't address our needs, we won't vote for you. It's going to take a lot, but that's what we're trying to push our community

to." Their programs include voter education, voter hotlines and research on APIA voter behavior. Educational workshops on the election process, a public relations campaign, recruiting and training of voter registration volunteers, bilingual hotlines, exit polls, phone surveys and an APIA voter registry for Los Angeles

Center, National Korean American Service and Education Consortium, Korean American Coalition, Vision 21, FilVeto, Guam Communications Network, Thai Community Development Center, Asian Pacific American Labor Alliance and Asian Pacific American Legal Center (APALC).

"The issue is power," said Warren Furutani, founding chair of APIA Vote! and former president of A3PCON. "We no longer are the minority's minority. There are more Asian Pacific Americans than there are African Americans in L.A. County now and in the state of California."

Yet, if you look at the comparative representation, he continued, there are much fewer APAs serving in electoral office, which is why it is crucial for the different APA communities to mobilize and work together.

"The key element is that APIA Vote! is a coalition," Furutani said. "We need to establish a cornerstone that is API, but we can also build around a foundation that is multiethnic ... We



Dinah Choi, project director for APIA Vote!, urges Asian Pacific Islander Americans to register to vote in the upcoming March primary elections.

County will all be featured as part of the APIA Vote! drive.

A3PCON is a coalition of over 50 national and local community-based organizations serving the Chinese, Filipino, Thai, Korean, Cambodian, Pacific Islander and Japanese American communities. They include JACL, Little Tokyo Service Center, Chinese American Citizen's Alliance, Chinese Americans United for Self Empowerment, Korean Resource

See APIA VOTE! page 8

Inside the P.C. Weekly

- Announcements
- Calendar page 2
- National News
- National Newsbytes 3
- Community News 4&5
- A Bridge Across the Pacific 6
- Obituaries 7

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JACL Calendar

National

Fri.-Sun., Feb. 11-13—National Board Meeting, San Francisco.

Mon., June 26-Sun., July 2—36th Biennial JACL National Convention; Doubletree Inn, Monterey, Calif.; special rate for JACL conventioners. Reservations: 831/649-4511, <www.doubletreemonterey.com>

Eastern

WASHINGTON, D.C.
Fri.-Tues., March 31-April 4—Washington, D.C., Leadership Conference; Doubletree Hotel. Info: Tom Ehle, 415/921-5225

Midwest

CHICAGO
Sun., Feb. 6—Day of Remembrance program, co-sponsored by the Chicago JACL and the Japanese American Service Committee (JASC); 2 p.m., JASC, 44427 N. Clark St.; speaker, professor George DeVos of the Japanese American Interdisciplinary Research Group. Info: Chiye Tomihoro, 773/48-6380.

Intermountain

ONTARIO, ORE.
Fri., Feb. 11—Annual Crab Feed and Auction; 6 p.m., Four Rivers Cultural Center. RSVP: Mike Iseri, 541/889-8691.

Pacific Northwest

PORTLAND

Sun., Feb. 6—"Mochitsuki 2000"; 1-4 p.m., Portland State University, Smith Memorial Center Ballroom, 1825 SW Broadway, special performance by renowned storyteller Robert Kikuchi-Yngyoi. RSVP: 503/224-1458.

Sat., Feb. 19—Opening of the Heart Mountain photo exhibit at the Oregon Nikkei Legacy Center, 117 NW 2nd Ave. Info: 503/224-1458.

SEATTLE

Through April—Exhibit, "A Different Battle: Stories of Asian Pacific American Veterans"; Wing Luke Asian Museum, 407 Seventh Ave. S. Info: 206/463-5124.

Northern California

Intermountain

Snake River

Fri., Feb. 11—Annual Crab Feed and Auction to benefit scholarship fund; see Community Calendar.

Pacific Northwest

PORTLAND

Sun., Feb. 6—Mochitsuki 2000; see Community Calendar.

NC-WN-Pacific

DISTRICT COUNCIL

Sun., Feb. 6—First Quarter District Council Meeting; Marlin.

FREMONT

Fri., Feb. 11—Bingo at SACBC. Early helpers arrive by 5 p.m.

Sun., Feb. 13—JASEB Crab Feed; see Community Calendar; helpers: to arrive by 3:45 p.m.

Central California

CLOVIS

Sat., Feb. 5—Clovis/CCC Shrimp Dinner.

Pacific Southwest

BERKELEY

Sun., Feb. 6—Nikkei Widowed Group Meeting, 12 noon; new members, men and women welcome. Call for meeting place: Tetsu Ibara (415/221-4568, or Kay Yamamoto, 510/444-3911).

Sun., Feb. 6—San Mateo Kabuki Group; 1:30 p.m., San Mateo JACL Community Center, 415 S. Claremont St.; continuing "Cushin Gura"; also, NHK Special New Year 2000 program. Info: 650/343-2793.

ALBANY

Sun., Feb. 13—20th Annual JASEB Crab Feed; 4-7 p.m., Albany Veteran's Memorial Hall, 1325 Portland Ave.; takeout available. Tickets: Esther Takeuchi, 510/223-2258.

SACRAMENTO

Through Jan. 30—Play, "And the Soul Shall Dance" by Wakako Yamauchi, about two families farming in the Imperial Valley during the dust bowl years; the Broadway Playhouse, 4010 El Camino Ave. Tickets, info: 452-6174.

Wed., Feb. 9—American Bar Association 18th Annual Lunar Celebration & Installation of Officers; 6 p.m., New Canton Restaurant, 2523 Broadway; honoring Mayor Jimmie R. Yee and Lori Fujimoto; guests Michael Yamaki and Ron Wong. RSVP by Feb. 2: ABAS 1201 K St., Suite 100, Sacramento, CA 95814.

Fri., Feb. 4—Program, "Let's Go to Japan" travel alternatives discussion; 7 p.m., Belle Colledge Community Center, 5699 S. Land Park Dr. Info, RSVP: 489/1291 or 446-9844

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DISTRICT COUNCIL

Sun., Feb. 27—PSWDC Quarterly Meeting; JACCOC, 240 S. San Pedro St., Little Tokyo.

Sun., Feb. 27—2000 District Oratorical Contest; 11 a.m., JACCOC, 244 S. San Pedro St., 2nd Floor, Little Tokyo; open to high school students 16 or older. Deadline, Feb. 18; General, PSW District Office, 213/626-4471.

RIVERSIDE

Sun., Feb. 6—Installation Luncheon; 12 noon, Chark's Oriental Cuisine, 1445 University Ave.; guest speaker, Kaz Oshiki, member, NJAMF board of directors. RSVP: Junji Kumamoto, 909/684-0864.

VENICE-CULVER

Sat., Feb. 5—Chapter Installation Luncheon; see Community Calendar.

DEADLINE for Calendar is the Friday before date of issue, or a space-available basis.

Please provide the time and place of the event, and name and phone number (including area code) of a contact person.

SAN FRANCISCO

Through Sunday, Jan. 30—Comedy Performance, "My Own Private Sukipratta," by the 18 Mighty Mountain Warriors; Theater of Yugen/Noh Space, 2840 Mariposa Ave. Times, tickets: 415/522-8752, e-mail: <hornbuck@sfsu.edu>

Sat., Feb. 26—Tenth anniversary celebration of exhibit, "Strength and Diversity—Japanese American Women, 1885-1990"; 6:30-9 p.m., Grand Hyatt at Union Square, 345 Stockton St.; Rep. Patsy Mink, keynote speaker and honoree. Info: National Japanese American Historical Society, 415/921-5007.

SAN JOSE

Thurs., Feb. 3—Performance, "Stories of Life," by Etsu-Noh-Tec presented by Contemporary Asian Theatre Scene; 7 p.m., Milpitas Community Center, Milpitas. Info: 408/298-2287; e-mail: <ccatsonline@yahoo.com>

Sat., Feb. 19—Yu-Ai Kai Crab/Spaghetti Feed; 6 p.m., San Jose Buddhist Church Betsuin Annex; "crab" race, "No Attendance Required" fundraiser drawing. Tickets, info: 408/294-2505; e-mail: yuaitai@prodigy.net.

Southern California

LOS ANGELES

Sat., Feb. 5—Venice-Culver JACL Installation Luncheon; 12 noon, Sea Empress Restaurant, 1636 W. Redondo Beach Blvd., Gardena; members and non-members are welcome; guest speaker, John Tateishi, national JACL executive director. Info, RSVP: Hitoshi Shimizu, 310/391-8628.

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Legislation Aims to Improve Native Hawaiian Health

By ASSOCIATED PRESS

HONOLULU—When Agnes Cope hears Hawaii described as the "health state," she shakes her head in disbelief.

A Hawaii resident lives years longer, on average, than the typical American. But the statistics tell a sadder story for the state's indigenous population.

"During my mother's and my grandparents' time, they were all husky, healthy people," said Cope, 75, who is half-Hawaiian. "Not today."

Native Hawaiians have some of the highest rates of diabetes, cancer, stroke, heart disease and obesity in the nation and have the worst health of any ethnic group in the islands.

That's slowly changing as a result of programs funded through the Native Hawaiian Health Care Improvement Act. Sen. Daniel Inouye, D-Hawaii, said Jan. 21.

Inouye heard testimony on a bill to reauthorize the 12-year-old act through 2012. It is scheduled to expire at the end of next year.

The legislation currently provides \$5 million a year to a hodgepodge of disease-prevention and health-education programs throughout the state.

Unlike federally funded health programs for American Indians, "this measure was essentially conceived and made in Hawaii, by Hawaiians, for Hawaiians. It was not a product of Washington by well-meaning bureaucrats," Inouye said.

The reauthorization bill includes a proposal to create a bipartisan commission that would determine whether Native Hawaiian health programs should be funded as entitlements—meaning they would be treated, like Social Security, as non-discretionary spending in the federal budget and, therefore, could not be removed in tight fiscal times.

The commission then would make a recommendation to Congress.

"I think the biggest change I've seen in the past 10 years is, the sense of powerlessness in our community is greatly abated," said JoAnn Tsark, a public health expert with Papa Ola Lokahi, a statewide umbrella organization

for Hawaiian health programs.

Hawaiians best understand the problems facing their community, said Dr. Clayton Chong, who is president of the 80-member Ahaui o Na Kauka, a 2-year-old association of Native Hawaiian physicians.

"Native Hawaiians, like American Indians, like Eskimos, have tradition," Chong said. "They have beliefs. And it's very hard for an outsider to come into the community and try to make an impact."

But many said the health problems facing Hawaiians are still daunting.

Hawaiians have the shortest life expectancy in the state—74 years, compared with a general population average of 78 years. Residents of Chinese ancestry live an average of eight years longer than Hawaiians.

Infant mortality, heart disease, cancer, stroke, diabetes and accident mortality have among the highest incidences in Native Hawaiians compared with other Asian and Pacific Islanders, said Iwalei R. Nahuia Elise of the Native Hawaiian Center of Excellence at the University of Hawaii medical school.

"These poor health indicators are in sharp contrast to the vigorous health that our Native Hawaiian ancestors possessed before Western contact," she said.

Inouye said statistics show an actual increase in incidences of some diseases among Hawaiians since the Native Hawaiian Health Care Improvement Act was first passed. But he said that may be a result of better statistics-gathering and more Hawaiians seeking help for their health problems.

The 220,000 Native Hawaiians in Hawaii make up about 20 percent of the state's population.

Cope, president of the board of directors of Ke Ola Mamoo, the umbrella Hawaiian health organization for Oahu, said poverty and lack of access to education contribute to Hawaiians' health problems.

But beyond that, diet is the biggest factor, she said.

Inouye hopes to get the reauthorization approved by the Senate this year and the House of Representatives next year. ■

Uninsured Rate Continues to Increase for Minorities, Including APAs, Latinos

Despite California's booming economy, the number of Californians without health insurance grew at an alarming rate between 1997 and 1998. The increase has mostly affected the minority populations of the state, including Asian Pacific Americans.

The uninsured rate for APAs rose from 19 percent in 1995 to 22 percent in 1998. African Americans saw important gains in job-based health coverage (from 47 percent in 1996 to 55 percent in 1998), but declining Medi-Cal coverage left 23 percent uninsured in 1998.

The overall increase in the number of uninsured persons in California averaged about 23,000 per month. With 260,000 newly uninsured persons, California accounts for one in every three of the nation's newly uninsured, three times its share of the nation's population.

Assembly Speaker Antonio R. Villaraigosa (D-Los Angeles) released the findings of the report, "The State of Health Insurance in California, 1999," on Jan. 20. The speaker was joined by the report's principle co-authors, Helen Halpin Schaffner, Ph.D., director of the UC Berkeley Center for Health and Public Policy Studies, and E. Richard Brown, Ph.D., director of the UCLA Center for Health Policy Research.

"This report reveals clearly that we have our work cut out for us in Sacramento this year," said Speaker Villaraigosa. "These numbers are staggering and unacceptable. California has the seventh largest economy in the world and is experiencing tremendous economic growth, yet one in six of the nation's uninsured lives here."

"The alarming growth in the number of uninsured Californians, particularly children and minorities, is extremely troubling," added Villaraigosa. "We are reaching epidemic proportions in terms of the uninsured. All of us have a responsibility to ensure that every single child in this state has access to basic

health care services. The future health of our state rests upon the health of our people. At this point, we are behind the curve. We need to now move forward full throttle."

Virtually all population subgroups in California, with the exception of non-Latino whites, saw an increase in the uninsured rate. Most affected is California's burgeoning Latino population. Forty percent of California's Latino population was uninsured in 1998. Only 40 percent of Latinos have job-based insurance, and Medi-Cal coverage of Latinos dropped from 22 percent in 1995 to 17 percent in 1998.

Latino women have the highest uninsured rate of any subgroup of women, with 45 percent without health insurance in 1998, an increase of six percent since 1995. Latino children have the highest uninsured rate among children (32 percent) and the lowest rate of job-based coverage. One in three Latino adults has never had health insurance coverage.

"We need to immediately enact new policies and expand on existing ones, such as the Healthy Families Program I authored in 1997 for uninsured children of the working poor," said the speaker. "We need to work closely with the governor to take full advantage of federal dollars available to us. This trend is unconscionable. It is our job to ensure that it does not continue."

The Health Insurance Policy Program is a joint project of the UC Berkeley Center for Health and Public Policy Studies and the UCLA Center for Health Policy Research. "The State of Health Insurance in California, 1999" report provides the latest available data and analysis of California's uninsured and an overview and analysis of employer-sponsored health plans, purchasing groups and the integration of public health into California's health care system. The fourth in an annual series, the report provides comparisons to previous years and to national data. ■

NAPALC Files Amicus Brief Challenging Proposition 209

The National Asian Pacific American Legal Consortium (NAPALC) and the Asian Law Caucus (ALC), joined by several Asian Pacific American organizations, recently filed a "friend of the court" brief in the California state Supreme Court in defense of the City of San Jose's outreach program to minority and women-owned businesses.

The lawsuit, *Hi-Voltage Wire Works, Inc. v. City of San Jose*, represented the first challenge to a city's affirmative action program following passage of Proposition 209. By appealing the decision, the City of San Jose sought to overturn the lower court's decision rendering its public contracting program unconstitutional under Prop. 209.

At issue is whether expanding the available pool of bidders to include groups frequently excluded from bidding "discriminates against, or grants preferential treatment to, any individual or group on the basis of race, sex, color, ethnicity, or national origin."

"Asian Pacific Americans continue to be denied access to business opportunities resulting from discriminatory practices in the bidding process, such as lack of notice of government procurement opportunities," said NAPALC executive director Karen Narasuki. "Where minorities and women still face an uneven playing field, it is appropriate and necessary that the outreach efforts conducted by the City of San Jose are continued, not dismantled."

Also joining the amicus brief were several organizations who wanted to call attention to the existing discrimination in public contracting against APAs. The additional amici included the Asian American Contractors Association, the Asian American Legal Defense and Education Fund, the Asian Pacific American Legal Center of Southern California (APALC), the Asian American Bar Association of the Greater Bay Area, the Asian Law Alliance and the Filipino for Affirmative Action.

"We filed the brief because we thought it was important that the Asian Pacific American voice be heard in this significant case," said ALC staff attorney Khin Mai Aung. ■

By Pacific Citizen Staff and Associated Press

JA Man Found Guilty of Attempted Rape

ALEXANDRIA, Va.—Ronald Suzukiwaka, a Defense Intelligence Agency computer analyst for 26 years, was recently convicted by a jury of attempting to rape several neighbors in the apartment complex where he lived.

From 1992 to 1995, Suzukiwaka, 50, allegedly broke into seven homes in the 17-story Aspen House complex with the intent to rape. Six of the seven victims were women. In the seventh case, Suzukiwaka said he thought he was breaking into a woman's apartment but was startled to find a man.

The case remained unsolved until last year when Suzukiwaka told DIA officials during a routine security clearance review that police had earlier questioned him about a series of attacks and nighttime break-ins. DIA officials then interrogated him about the allegations for 23 hours on at least seven occasions. On July 16, he admitted to investigators he had committed the crimes and was turned over to the police.

Suzukiwaka's defense attorneys argued during the trial that police had gotten a "false confession" from their client by supplying him with details of the crime and by wearing him down with their interrogation.

The jury sentenced Suzukiwaka to 67 years in prison and a \$20,500 fine.

Anti-Immigration Ads Upset Iowa Community

STORM LAKE, Iowa—City leaders recently lashed out at a national group that used the northwest town to make a political argument against immigration.

Several newspapers and TV stations have refused to run ads sponsored by the Washington-based Federation for American Immigration Reform, which was trying to drum up publicity before the Iowa caucuses on Jan. 24.

Although it was not filmed in the city itself, one ad claims Storm Lake is a place "where quality of life is but a memory," saying its schools, jails and hospitals have been overburdened by foreigners. It portrays a business forced to close its doors, a neighborhood in disarray and people being arrested.

Mayor Jon Kruse said the depiction is false. "I am denouncing a public apology to our community for the inconsiderate, uninformed, out-of-state, political, special interest group," Kruse said.

"I call it very demeaning," added Dale Carver, who heads an area diversity task force. "The photographs in the commercial were totally misleading. They didn't portray Storm Lake at all in a true

manner."

Meatpacking company IBP Inc., a large employer in Storm Lake, heavily relies on an immigrant work force.

Meanwhile, Federation spokesman Rick Oltman said the group is sticking by the ad.

Hmong Community Shows Up on Ballots

EAU CLAIRE, Wis.—Members of the Hmong community, who first came to Wisconsin after fighting for the United States in the Vietnam War, are beginning to gain greater representation by running for public office.

Chong Chang Her, saying he wanted to open the way for more Hmong Americans to become involved in civic affairs, recently announced he will seek election to the school board on April 4.

Neng Lee is running as an at-large candidate for Eau Claire's city council. Having two Hmong candidates running for public office in a city of 63,000 is unusual, said Ka Ying Yang, executive director of the Southeast Asian Action Resource Center in Washington, D.C.

Joe Bee Xiong was elected to the city council in 1996, the first known Hmong American to be elected to such a position in Wisconsin. Not only did his election attract national attention but it happened in a predominantly white

community, said Yang.

"It was a really big deal when Joe Bee was elected," he said. "That event really encouraged Hmong people across the country to run for public office. It showed them that, 'Hey, we really do have a chance.'"

Man Who Displayed Ho Chi Minh Poster Would Do It Again

WESTMINSTER, Calif.—A year after a poster of former North Vietnamese leader Ho Chi Minh sparked large protests, Tran Van Truong, the man who hung the poster and a communist Vietnam flag in front of his Hi Tek video store, said if he had a chance to go through it all again, he would.

"The display would be right up on the wall again," he said. "But I would try to eliminate extremism on both sides. As the protesters got more paranoid, I became more stubborn. We locked heads and nobody backed down."

A judge upheld his constitutional right to display the poster and flag, but Truong later removed them anyway.

"Even I never thought it would get so out of hand," he said. "I expected people to disagree but also to give me a chance to explain my views."

Instead, he said, his business failed and he was ostracized by the

community.

Truong, who now works at an electrical company, is serving three years' probation for video piracy.

Census Report: Population Decrease in Hawaii

HAWAII—Hawaii was among five states to experience a decrease in population for 1999, the U.S. Census Bureau reported.

Compared to 1,190,472 in July 1998, Hawaii's population fell 0.4 percent in July 1999, totaling 1,185,497.

Census estimates for 1998 revealed that 20,112 more residents left the state than moved in.

In the last decade, Hawaii has recorded a net loss of nearly 100,000 residents to other states. Local economists say the decrease is a result of a lagging state economy and people leaving to find work elsewhere.

The four other states to see a decrease in population were Pennsylvania, West Virginia, North Dakota and Wyoming, while states with increases included Nevada up 3.8 percent, Arizona up 2.4 percent, Colorado up 2.2 percent and Georgia up 2 percent.

California remained the state with the highest population at 33.15 million. Texas boasted 20 million, followed by New York with 18.2 million, Florida with 15.1 million and Illinois with 12.1 million. ■

National

COMMENTARY

An Open Letter in Support of Masaoka Quote

Editor's Note: The following letter is a continuation from last week's issue. Written by Gerald Yamada and addressed to J. Carter Brown, Chairman of the Commission of Fine Arts, the letter supports the inclusion of the Japanese American Creed written by Mike Masaoka on the Japanese American National Memorial in Washington, D.C.

"Based on his lifetime commitment to civil rights, Mr. Masaoka has earned his place in history by making unparalleled contributions in promoting the interests of persons of Japanese ancestry. His contributions are real and significant as opposed to the vague innuendos made by Professors Yamamoto and Iijima.

"B. Mike Masaoka Supported Redress Legislation.

"Professors Yamamoto and Iijima are opposing including Mr. Masaoka in the Memorial's inscription because he allegedly opposed redress. This is simply untrue. This unfounded allegation can be dismissed out-of-hand by the attribution made by Senator Daniel Inouye of Hawaii:

"Mike was the founder of Japanese-American redress — an enlightened and bright chapter in our Nation's history which has helped to cleanse the darkness of internment ... In large part, Mike was responsible for making it a reality." 137 Cong. Rec. S9099.

"As a sponsor of the redress legislation, Senator Inouye was in a key position to speak with authority about Mr. Masaoka's contribution to the redress legislation.

"C. 'Suicide Battalion' Proposal.

"The Lim paper reported that JACL leaders proposed a 'suicide battalion' to the federal government. Mr. Masaoka addressed the name 'suicide battalion' in an article written by *Baltimore Sun* reporter Gene Oishi, entitled 'The Anxiety of Being a Japanese-American,' that was submitted by Senator Inouye for reprinting in the Congressional Record:

"Once they [Japanese] were there [in the relocation camps], the league [JACL] lobbied Washington successfully to allow nisei to volunteer for the armed forces and to be subject to the draft. At one point, Mike Masaoka, a league leader, was reported to have urged the formation of an all-Japanese 'suicide battalion.' Masaoka today says he does not recall having used the words 'suicide battalion,' and goes on to say that even if he had he did not have in mind anything like the kamikaze units formed later in the war by the Japanese enemy." 131 Cong. Rec. S5222.

"Mr. Masaoka's proposal was rejected initially but later accepted by the federal government resulting in the formation of the 442nd Central Postal Directory, 1946, at p. 38. The significant contributions made by this heroic U.S. Army unit while suffering extremely high casualty rates are undisputed. Mr. Masaoka's proposal

resulting in such a substantial contribution to the war effort and to the later acceptance of Japanese Americans into the mainstream is not a reason to exclude Mr. Masaoka from the Memorial's inscriptions.

"III. JACL ROLE IN EVACUATION.

"Dr. Takahashi is asking the Commission not to include the 'JACL Creed' in the Memorial's inscriptions because of JACL's positions and actions in the 1940's.

"A. JACL Collusion?

"In support of her request, Dr. Takahashi submitted a portion of her unpublished 1980 Ph.D. dissertation, entitled 'Comparative Administration and Management of Five War Relocation Authority Camps: America's Incarceration of Persons of Japanese Ancestry During World War II.' There is a fundamental difference in perspective between JACL and Dr. Takahashi in addressing the federal government's role during World War II.

"Dr. Takahashi's perspective is reflected by the following statement in her unpublished dissertation at p. 79:

"The purpose of this section is to pinpoint the significant factions and roles this organization [JACL] played as well as to analyze its impact on evacuee behaviors in WRA [War Relocation Authority] camps. It will be seen that the WRA and JACL collusion caused a great deal of unrest and bitterness among the evacuees." [Emphasis added.]

"The use of the term 'collusion' is a telltale indication of the perspective with which she wrote her dissertation. The term 'collusion' is defined as 'secret cooperation for a fraudulent or deceitful purpose acting in - with the enemy.' [Emphasis added.] Webster's Third New International Dictionary (Unabridged). Dr. Takahashi's underlying assumption appears to be that the federal government was the enemy and that JACL should not have colluded with this enemy.

"JACL took a different approach. JACL adopted a policy of working in cooperation with the federal government as American citizens even though there were strong feelings that the federal government's actions were infringing the constitutional rights of Japanese Americans.

"Dr. Takahashi's dissertation should be recognized for the purpose for which it was written — an academic exercise in support of obtaining a Ph.D. in the field of social work. Furthermore, Dr. Takahashi's later employment shows that she could not have taken her dissertation thesis of JACL 'collusion' seriously. After she wrote the dissertation in 1980, she went to work in 1987 and 1988 for the JACL as its Acting Director for the JACL-Legislative Education Committee and as JACL's Washington Representative working with former JACL leaders such as Mr. Masaoka on redress legislation.

"However, if Dr. Takahashi is now seriously advocating the thesis that JACL 'collusion' caused the federal government to evacuate more than 115,000 Japanese Americans to 10 re-

mote militarily controlled areas, I am personally appalled by such a thesis or perspective. Such a thesis serves to deflect attention away from or minimize the overtly open discriminatory actions taken by the federal government by attempting to shift blame to JACL, Mr. Masaoka, or other Japanese Americans.

"A thesis that JACL 'collusion' caused evacuation reflects a complete lack of understanding of the historically open and hostile discrimination that prevailed during the 1940's against Japanese Americans. Followed by its logical conclusion, such a thesis would argue that the federal government erred in making redress payments and issuing a national apology because JACL purportedly caused the evacuation of Japanese Americans. Such a thesis is irresponsible and out of touch with reality.

"B. Achieving Program Goals?

"Dr. Takahashi offered the following insight at p. 94 of her dissertation of what should have been done:

"All of these situation factors should have been assessed by an astute administrator and manager. The challenge should have been directed at how to deal with these dynamics in a constructive, creative manner, so that program goals could be achieved." [Emphasis added.]

Her awkward, text-bookish statement of the obvious — what she would have done if she were there — is unimpressive. Her dissertation is unpersuasive and fails to recognize that the JACL leaders were in fact attempting to deal with a completely hostile federal government in a constructive, creative manner with no measurable political support at the height of unparalleled war hysteria in American history. Faced with an environment of hate and suspicion unprecedented in our history, Dr. Takahashi appears to be merely concerned about 'achieving program goals.'

"C. Japanese Americans Continue to Benefit from Statement of Democratic Principles Written By Mike Masaoka.

"Dr. Takahashi uses the name 'JACL Creed,' but the statement of democratic principles written by Mr. Masaoka in 1941 is better known as the 'Japanese American Creed.' The Japanese American Creed was not written by Mr. Masaoka for JACL although JACL adopted it in 1946 as part of its bylaws.

"The Japanese American Creed is not, and never has been, an oath of allegiance. The Japanese American Creed sets forth a set of principles that was written to articulate the loyalty of Japanese Americans at a time when such loyalty was being seriously questioned. Although the Japanese American Creed offered a protective shield in 1941, Japanese Americans have continued to benefit from it.

"The Japanese American Creed was read on the floor of Congress in support of passage of the redress legislation, 134 Cong. Rec. H6309, and in sup-

port of passage of legislation authorizing the establishment of the National Japanese American Memorial, 138 Cong. Rec. H6831. Hence, every person who received a redress payment benefitted from the statement of principles in the Japanese American Creed and every person who will visit the Memorial will benefit from Japanese Americans' dedication to our shared ideals and principles of justice and equality as reflected in the Japanese American Creed.

"IV. NJAMF SUPPORTS INSCRIPTIONS THAT INCLUDE MR. MASAOKA.

"The NJAMF Board of Directors on three separate occasions has voted overwhelmingly to accept inscriptions that include Mr. Masaoka. A small number of Board members are unwilling to accept rule by majority vote and are asking the Commission to change the inscriptions already approved by the NJAMF.

"The NJAMF is authorized to establish a memorial on Federal land in the District of Columbia or its environs to honor Japanese American patriotism in World War II." Public Law 102-502, Oct. 24, 1992, Section 1(a). Hence, the NJAMF has been vested with the authority to recommend the design and inscriptions for the Memorial.

"However, if the Commission believes that it is better positioned to evaluate the pulse of the Japanese American community in drafting the Memorial's inscriptions, then it should be prepared to receive a barrage of support to include Mr. Masaoka as a part of the Memorial. By opening the door to such a de novo review, the Commission also should be prepared to reopen already resolved issues relating to other parts of the inscriptions. For example, the Commission has already received other written comments asking that only quotations of U.S. Presidents be included or that no quotations from U.S. Presidents be included and that challenge the inclusion of the names of only Japanese American soldiers killed in World War II.

"V. CONCLUSION.

"In closing, the perspective that Mr. Masaoka shared with Ms. Lim in her interview with him should be followed here:

LIM: This is Deborah Lim. This is February 2. I am here in Washington, D.C., with Mike Masaoka and Etsu Masaoka. This interview is pursuant to Resolution Number Seven, the research project. Before we get started, Mr. Masaoka, did you want to make some preface comments?

MASAOKA: I think that, as you found out all along, going back forty-five years or so is very difficult, especially since most of us don't have any documents or reference points to follow through. Not only that, situations have changed so much that I think it is difficult to have people today in the context of what they know today to try to assess a situation as it was then. In a sense, as some philosopher has said, to try to pass judge-

ment of what happened forty, fifty years ago honestly, accurately, historically, is practically impossible, especially if done in terms of present, more advanced notions of society and so on. For example, I think it is basic in all of our thinking that, basically, democracy at that time practiced the principle of assimilation, that is, trying to make America kind of a melting pot, bringing all the diverse units in American together and trying to make them into a diversified whole. Whereas today our objective is ethnic diversity, which is exactly the opposite. To try applying the thinking of today in terms of ethnic diversity to what we had to go through and trying to demonstrate our assimilation is quite difficult, particularly when you consider the circumstances of war and the fact that media and other things have changed so much. For example, had there been television in those days, I think an entire situation could have been changed greatly. Because of the lack of media attention, not only among Japanese Americans themselves but among the larger American (population) and such, that we never got historic coverage. Imagine also, if I may put it kind of crudely, that if you were able to use television to focus upon old women and young children, we could demonstrate to the larger population of American that we couldn't be very dangerous to the people and all that. None of these things happened at that time. So that the changes in our thinking as a country, our objectives as a country, and media changes was [sic] not available. [Masaoka Interview Transcript at pp.1-2.]

"It is difficult to have a full appreciation of that period of time one did not actually live through the experiences leading to evacuation. As Commissioner Carolyn S. Brody stated at the Commission's October 21, 1999 meeting, the inscription related to Mr. Masaoka and the Japanese American Creed is an internal issue which should be worked out within the NJAMF.

"As mentioned above, the NJAMF has the legal mandate to establish the Memorial. In carrying out its responsibilities, the members of the NJAMF Board of Directors did carefully consider the issues related to the inscriptions. The reasons as to why Mr. Masaoka should not be included in the Memorial's inscriptions were presented by those Board Members who oppose including Mr. Masaoka. The Board of Directors at its October 24, 1999 meeting voted by a three to one margin to accept the inscriptions that included Mr. Masaoka and his quotation.

"I strongly urge the Commission to accept the recommended inscriptions approved by an overwhelming majority of the NJAMF Board of Directors.

"For the purpose of disclosing my interest in the Memorial, let me inform you that I am serving as NJAMF General Counsel on a pro bono basis. This letter sets forth my personal views." ■

Union Bank of California Contributes \$15,000 to KVIE Film on Japanese Americans and Agriculture During World War II

Union Bank of California has contributed \$15,000 to KVIE Channel 6, Sacramento, to help produce a half-hour documentary about the experiences of Japanese Americans in agriculture during World War II.

Titled "Forgotten Fields: California's Japanese American Farmers and Growers During World War II," the documentary will help educate the public about the experiences of those who worked the land in California and were incarcerated or voluntarily relocated. The program will depict the role agriculture played in the settlement of California and the challenges the first-generation Japanese faced in common with the Chinese, Filipino and Mexican farm workers, including discrimination in owning property, education, marriage and citizenship.

The program will complement other recently produced public television programs on JA history in California. It will be offered nationally to public television stations and, after broadcast, would be distributed to libraries, colleges and schools. There will also be Internet components to extend the viewing experience, especially for students.

The program is expected to be broadcast throughout California and will also be uplinked nationally to PTV stations. The program will be distributed off-air by the national Asian American Telecommunications Association to schools and colleges as well as film festivals.

The audio of the documentary, and clips of the video, will be posted on California Heartland's home page, which has been recognized for its graphic quality and content.



PHOTO: TOKO FUJII
Union Bank of California Sr. V.P. Raymond Kozuma presents \$15,000 check to David Hosley, president and general manager of KVIE channel 6, Sacramento.

The script of the program and transcription of interviews will also be posted. Both will be donated to JA and agriculture museums in the state. It will also be made available to public school media centers and regional libraries free of charge, and made available to community groups at cost.

Jan Yanehiro will be the host of the documentary. Nationally known for her work on Westinghouse's Evening Magazine, she is a veteran of a quarter century in television. Yanehiro was a founding member of the Asian American Journalists Association, San Francisco chapter and is an Emmy Award winning journalist.

Union Bank of California has been very active in supporting charitable activities of ethnic minorities, and KVIE is preserving the history book of Japanese Americans working in our communities," said Ray Kozuma, UBOC senior vice president. The program is also undistributed by the Takahashi Charitable Foundation.

Based in San Francisco, Union Bank of California (NYSE:UB) is a bank holding company with assets of \$32.5 billion as of September 1999. Its primary subsidiary is Union Bank of California, N.A., the third largest commercial bank headquartered in California, and among the 30 largest commercial banks in the United States. Union Bank of California has 241 banking offices in California, six banking offices in Oregon and Washington, and 18 international facilities. ■

NCWNP District to Hold Program on 'Homosexuality and Proposition 22'

The Northern California-Western Nevada-Pacific District of JACL will sponsor an education program titled, "Understanding Homosexuality and Proposition 22" on Sun., Feb. 6, in San Rafael, Calif.

The program, featured as part of the district's regular quarterly meeting, will be held at San Rafael Joe's, 931 Fourth St. The district will begin its business session at 10 a.m. and the program will get under way at 1 p.m.

"We felt this topic was an important one to address," said District Governor John Hayashi. "The issue of homosexuality and same-sex marriage has been a controversial one for our organization and we hope we can continue to talk about this openly and come to fully understand the issues."

Recently, the Vermont Supreme Court ruled that denying same-sex couples access to the same rights and responsibilities as heterosexual couples is discriminatory. As of yet, no state has legalized same-sex marriage, but it has been the practice in California that marriages performed in other states are recognized and treated as being legal here. Should Proposition 22 pass, it

will make it policy that "only marriage between a man and a woman is valid or recognized in California."

"This subject is a timely one," added Regional Director Patty Wada. "Californians will be voting on Proposition 22 in the March elections, and it is critical that we understand what is at stake. The anti-miscegenation laws of the not-too-distant past once put limits on whom Japanese Americans could and could not marry. The question before us now is whether we are going to legislate that same decision for someone else."

The program will be comprised of two panel discussions. The first will feature Elsie Uyeida Chung and her son Richard, who will share their experiences when he first told her and she first learned that he was gay. The second panel will explore the spiritual/moral side of this issue and the specifics of Proposition 22, with both proponents and opponents represented. Speakers thus far confirmed for the second panel are the Rev. Lloyd Wake and Lorrie Tanioka.

The program is free and open to the public. For more information, call the JACL NCWNP regional office at 415/345-1075. ■

San Jose Hosts Teacher Training Workshop

By ANN MUTO
Special to the Pacific Citizen

The all-day workshop titled "An American Story: From the Bill of Rights to Redress" recently took place at Wesley United Methodist Church in San Jose, Calif. It was jointly sponsored by the Japanese American Resource Center/Museum (JARCM) and the JACL.

There were over 40 participants, the majority being public and private school teachers. Although the workshop flyers were sent only to local school districts, participants from as far away as Manteca and Oakland attended the session.

Following a video representing the government version of the evacuation of "persons of Japanese ancestry," three surviving internees shared their experiences of that same time in history.

Dr. Wright Kawakami described his father's heartache at not being able to be the ombudsman for the Japanese Americans of his community after the war. Mas Yamashita shared his perspective of a fun-loving, 12-year-old in the camps and his love for playing any kind of sport.

Jimi Yamachi's clear, factual accounting of 100 miles of barbed wire and 39 guard towers at the Tule Lake Relocation Camp pointed out the government evasion of facts related to the camps. Dr. Wendy Ng of San Jose State University served as the moderator for the panel.

Later in the program, this time after viewing a segment of the video "Honor Bound," three veterans sat



Participants of the WWII veteran panel are seriously wounded 442nd veteran Katsumi Hikido, 442/522 Field Artillery Veteran George Oye and MIS Ret. Col. Thomas Sakamoto.

on the same platform.

Katsumi Hikido described the pain of the year it took for him to learn how to walk after being wounded in the war. George Oye's voice shuddered as he told of the camps at Dachau and how cruel man could be to one another. Tom Sakamoto humbly expressed pride in his ability to translate verbal and written information in an instant and his own kind of wonder that he was able to do it as well as he did under daunting circumstances. Dr. Steve Fugita of Santa Clara University acted as the moderator for this panel.

As the evaluations showed, the sharing of personal accounts brought home the impact of the events and was considered the strength of the workshop. Their survival as well as that of over 100,000 "persons of Japanese an-

cestry" is a story that is still largely untold in history books. The goal of this workshop and the six prior sessions throughout the nation is to fill in those blanks. One of the teachers who attended the workshop recognized the far-reaching lessons beyond the Japanese American experience (e.g. racism, injustice, propaganda, resistance, first amendment, redress of grievances).

The Steering Committee was made up of Roy Matsuzaki, Dr. Aggie Idemoto, Ken Iwagaki, Ann Muto, and Dr. Joe Yasutake of JARCM and Jeff Yoshikawa of San Jose JACL. Greg Marutani, Carol Kawamoto and Dr. Izumi Taniuchi from the national JACL were also present.

In total, twenty-three teachers learned about the internment, resettlement, the contribution of Nikkei veterans and redress. ■



Blue Shield of California offers group health care coverage to current JACL members age 18 and over who reside in California. Plans may include a wide range of benefits, including vision care, worldwide emergency coverage, dental care, prescription drug benefits and more. For more information about these plans, call the JACL Health Benefits Trust today at 1-800-400-6633.

Website: <http://www.jaclhealthbenefits.org>



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Deadline for National Awards Nominations Approaching

Every two years a number of national JACL awards are presented at the national convention. This year's national convention is scheduled for June 17-17, 2000.

Three of the awards, JACLer of the Biennium, Edison Uno Civil Rights Award and the George Inagaki Chapter of the Biennium Award, are selected by the National Awards Committee. Nomination forms have been sent to chapter presidents. Larry Grant, governor of the Intermountain District Council, is chair of the awards committee.

The JACLer of the Biennium recognizes a JACL member who has made major contributions to the strength and growth of the national JACL during the immediate

biennium.

The Edison Uno Memorial Civil Rights Award is reserved for individuals who have made outstanding contributions in the field of civil rights. This award memorializes Edison Uno for his work in civil rights.

The George Inagaki Chapter Citizenship Award is a cash award given to a chapter. Nominated chapters are evaluated on their participation in social, civic, educational, environmental, or legislative activities which result in the betterment of society as a whole. A first prize of \$800 and an honorable mention prize of \$400 are awarded.

These prestigious awards depend on nominations from chapters and districts. Deserving indi-

viduals and chapters must be nominated by chapters and districts to be considered. Please carefully consider nominating individuals and chapters for these awards. The nominees are not limited to the geographic area of your chapter or district. The awards are not limited to those who have had national impact; nominees who have had local impact are welcomed.

The deadline for nominations is March 15, 2000. This is a little sooner than in past years because the convention is scheduled earlier this year. JACL members are encouraged to take this opportunity to recognize deserving individuals and chapters whose good works may otherwise be unseen and unrecognized by the larger community. ■

APIA VOTE!

(Continued from page 1)

have to work with the Anglo community, Latino community, black community, all of these different communities."

"Even at our biggest, APIs are [just under] 20 percent in L.A. County," added APIA Vote chair Kathleen Yasuda, "so in any case we're going to have to work in coalition, and it's not just that we have to, but we want to. We want to be working with other like-minded groups that share similar issues so that we have more power and more influence over things that are important to us."

In 1990, APAs comprised 11 percent of the U.S. population, with approximately one million residing in the County of Los Angeles. Researchers estimate that in 2000, APAs will account for 13 to 15 percent of the county's population.

"When you look at that potential," said Stewart Kwah, A3PCON policy vice chair and executive director of APALC of Southern California, "it really speaks to having a tremendous population influence in the state of California and in L.A. County. However, in L.A. City, there's no Asian American on the city council, there's no Asian American on the board of supervisors and in the state legislature there are only two Asian Americans."

The message, said Kwah, is that "the potential is there, but the facts speak to something else — that we have not arrived."

What is particularly difficult is that because there are relatively few APA representatives, many policymakers do not understand the diverse needs and issues of a community which includes everyone from well-educated American-born professionals to more recent immigrants facing severe economic, social and political barriers. In some API communities, poverty rates exceed 40 percent.

APIA Vote! is attempting a multi-pronged approach to reach that broad spectrum of people.

"I definitely think that our partnership with the county registrar's quarters, the multilingual assistance that they're offering, is our way to target more of these immigrant communities by educating them on what's available," said Choi.

"Another way we want to target the more sophisticated and perhaps more fluent later-generation Asian Americans is to host issue forums and try to engage their interest because maybe for them it's not an issue of language that's an obstacle. For them, it may be apathy," she continued.

Japanese Americans, for instance, who are up to the fourth and fifth generations, often have a low voter turnout, said Furutani. "I've been thinking we need to start a Japanese American voter project because our strength is that we're mostly all American citizens, but our voting and registration percentage is not really great."

"It's almost like they [JAs] don't feel the urgency to vote," added JACL Pacific Southwest District's youth director Gerald Kato, who has been part of an outreach effort that visits college campuses to encourage students to register to vote.

With statistics showing that youth, ages 18-24, are one of the most difficult demographics to reach, APIA Vote! began a project two years ago called Student Advocates for Voter Empowerment (SAVE), a high school group based in the San Gabriel Valley which is specifically geared towards registering those 18 and older to vote.

In preparation for this year's elections, SAVE has held several voter registration drives just in the past few months. The drives have taken place at each of its three chapters, San Gabriel, Rosemead and Mark Keppel High Schools.

One of the main reasons why students don't vote is lack of mo-

tivation," said SAVE officer Bryant Yang, 17, a senior at Mark Keppel. "That's why we go into the government classes, which is all seniors, we pass out voter registration applications and then we collect them."

We do whatever we can to get them to register, said Yang, including sending those who've just turned 18 a birthday card along with a voter registration application and also holding a raffle. Students who fill out the application are automatically entered into the raffle and the winner gets free movie tickets.

SAVE is currently working to expand their voter registration drives to Arcadia and other area high schools. They target not only APAs but the general student population.

With the presidential elections in November, APIA Vote! is preparing various issue and candidate forums for its community as well as a rally to precede the Democratic National Convention this summer.

"The Asian American community is pulling together a slate of issues that they want to present to the Democratic National Convention," said Choi. "We don't want to be overlooked as a constituency group. We are trying to make this active effort to be noticed not only by the Democratic community but by the political community at large."

To get ballot information in a language other than English (particularly Japanese, Chinese, Tagalog, or Vietnamese) or to inquire about serving as a bilingual pollworker, call the L.A. County Registrar's Office at 800/481-8683 or the L.A. City Election Division at 800/994-8683.

To vote in the March 7 California primary elections, you must be registered before Feb. 7. ■

JAGCC Receives \$300,000 Grant From James Irvine Foundation

The Japanese American Cultural and Community Center of Los Angeles has received a three-year, \$300,000 grant from The James Irvine Foundation for program development and the creation of an opportunity fund which will allow the center to "capitalize on unforeseen opportunities, address deferred needs and leverage corporate support," it was announced by Eric Hayashi, executive director.

"This extremely timely grant will help us improve research, increase travel opportunities and build new and renewed relationships with artists, including commissioning fees and coverage of expenses associated with presenting and touring," Hayashi explained. "The Irvine grant will enable us to realize many things which we have had to place on hold and help the JAGCC meet the challenges of the future." Hayashi added that funding from the grant will help staff to maintain closer relationship with artists and presenters in Japan as well as help the JAGCC encourage local artists.

"The JAGCC in the past 20 years since its founding has established a nationwide reputation as the premier presenter of Japanese and Japanese American art and artists in the United States. We appreciate

the faith that The James Irvine Foundation has placed in us once again, and will make every effort to make every dollar count in going forward with new and strengthened programs in the future," he said.

Kathryn Doi Todd, chair of the JAGCC board of directors, noted that The James Irvine Foundation was the first major foundation to fund the ambitious project to build the JAGCC 20 years ago by giving \$250,000 to fund the James Irvine Garden. Just last year, it also funded the consultancy of former executive director Gerald D. Yoshitomi to ease the transition to a new administration.

"The JAGCC has gone through a major change in the past two years. Many improvements, including more bilingual members on the staff and a streamlined financial reporting system, have prepared us to roll up our sleeves and go forward with what we do best — being the best presenter of Japanese and Japanese American performing and visual arts in the United States," she declared. ■

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