Power of Words on WWII euphemisms.

Carl Williams helps Japan relief efforts.

APAs still struggling after disaster.

Spoken word and Asian Americans.
NATIONAL DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Update on Status of JACL

By Floyd Mori

While the many JACL volunteers are appreciated, the organization cannot function without dedicated, hardworking staff. The national board is to be commended for their support in maintaining the current staffing level. I know difficult decisions are ahead, and I trust the board will promote a fair and equitable distribution of funds to continue advocacy and our focus on youth. There are always important issues of civil rights which need our attention.

People have asked about the reasons for the departure of Craig Ishii, former PSW regional director, and other PSW staff. Personnel matters are confidential but I can say that it was Craig’s personal decision to resign. He was one of our members. The timing but he had indicated tenure would be for a limited time. I am pleased to tell you, he has left.

While the PSW office space with the mandated by the 2010, it is our intent to staff, National JACL’s financial situation is difficult at this time as membership revenues have declined more than anticipated. Thus, several key positions have remained vacant including the PSW regional director position.

Last year, national JACL proposed a budget that eliminated the PSW administrative staff position. And once again the PSW regional director position remains open. Since Southern California has the largest JACL population and potential youth membership pool, it is wise to allow the leadership vacuum to persist. If National has funds to pay for staff, why not take a page from Ishii’s notebook and increase membership, bring in people who can implement innovative business strategies for the changing times.

By Floyd Mori

Correction

A potato croquette recipe from JACL’s Top Chef Bernice Kids in the June 3-16 Food Issue incorrectly listed the ingredients as 2 cups green peas. The corrected recipe should list 2 to 3 Tablespoons of green peas.
One Year After BP Oil Spill, AA Fishermen Struggle to Recover

Gulf Coast fishermen and community groups voice their frustrations one year after the Gulf Coast oil spill.

By Nalea J. Ko

Reporter

On a recent early morning, crabber Siriporn Hall, 60, sets out with her crew of two on the waters off the shores of Mississippi eager to see what the day’s catch will bring. The crew anchors near the Petit Bois Island on a sunny day as large waves lap against Hall’s boat. About this time last year Hall’s boat was parked in her front yard of her Alabama home with hundreds of dry crab pods stacked along her property line. She had been out work for months and was instead busy tabulating her mounting monthly bills.

Not much has changed for Hall since last year’s Gulf Coast area oil spill, which halted her crabbing business temporarily. She returned to crabbing last October, but Hall says she has had difficulty selling her catch. “Oh, it’s bad. You know we can barely make a living,” said Hall, a Thai American. “We can hardly find the crab. Nobody wants to buy it. The factory doesn’t want to buy it. The seafood [company] doesn’t want to buy it.”

The expedition to Petit Bois Island came a day after Hall says she was denied a claim from the Gulf Coast Claims Facility, which was established last August by BP claims fund. The Gulf Coast fishermen and community groups say those affected by the oil spill also received help from organizations like JACL, which in May held its Environmental Justice Youth Summit in New Orleans, La. Summit attendees were waist-deep in their work, planting marsh grass in a wildlife refuge in that state.

The BP claims process has been jammed up with more requests than solutions. There is a question of the fairness of the process for forcing fishermen to choose prematurely to a partially funded alternative. “Nobody gets anything right now. After the new year we never got a dime,” she said. “We don’t have any money to put in our pockets or the bank. All we have is enough to pay our bills.”

BP has paid out over $4.8 billion in payments to individuals and businesses for claims as of June 23. That total includes over $395 million of claims paid by BP to individuals and business prior to Aug. 23.

For her losses, Hall was compensated about $40,000 last year. Her dockhands received additional compensation. But Hall says the compensation she received also covered equipment purchases and mechanical repairs to her boat. This year Hall says she has been uncompensated by BP. “Nobody gets anything right now. After the new year we never got a dime,” she said. “We don’t have any money to put in our pockets or the bank. All we have is enough to pay our bills.”

The future of the fishing industry might be unstable in the Gulf Coast, but Hall’s optimism is brightened by the day’s good weather and the promise of a hefty mackerel catch. “In my opinion, the Gulf Coast has not fully recovered since the Deepwater Horizon Oil Spill. Many affected individuals have not returned to their jobs as deckhands, boat captains, oyster shuckers and etcetera,” said Tuan Nguyen, deputy director of the Mary Queen of Vietnam Community Development Corporation in Louisiana. “Not all claims have been paid either.”

A total of 518,095 individuals and businesses have been paid as of June 24, according to the GCCF. Some 87,264 claims have been denied.

Community organizations say those affected by the oil spill are still picking up the pieces. “People are still hurting,” said Grace M. Scire, Gulf Coast development director of the Boat People SOS. “The fishermen, especially the oystermen, don’t know when they will get back to where they were before the oil spill. There are a lot of stressors and a lot of mental health issues, even among the children.”

About $42 million was distributed for behavioral health payments in Mississippi, Louisiana, Florida and Alabama. Those impacted by the oil spill like Hall say they are more concerned about the future of the fishing industry than the BP claims process.

Instead of catching crab, Hall has been fishing for Spanish and King mackerel ever since about 50 percent of her 500-pound catch of crabs died en route to a buyer in Atlanta. “We’ve had a hard time selling our crab,” said Hall breaking into a laugh. “The seafood [company] from Atlanta came and got it for a little while and now the thing is my crabs [have] died. They died easily and smelled real, real bad. So they cancelled. Here I am. We cannot sell the crab. So we just came out here and went fishing.”

Hall says she believes the “corrosive water” in the area from the oil spill is responsible for the crabs dying so easily. But the 60-year-old’s belief that the winter months this year will bring a better catch of crabs strengthens her resolve.

Although rumors are circulating about the safety of Gulf Coast seafood, officials with the U.S. Food and Drug Administration say it is safe to eat. “We’re very confident that the steps that we have put in place to assure the safety of seafood have worked,” said Don Kraemer, acting director of the FDA Center for Food Safety and Applied Nutrition, in a press release. “We put in an extensive program of sampling, at that time and since then, and the results have consistently been 100 to 1,000 times below our levels of concern. So, we’re quite confident that the seafood that’s in commercial channels is safe.”

BP established a $500-million research initiative to study the potential long-term effects to people’s health and the environment. Community organizations working with those affected by the oil spill say Hall’s story is not uncommon in the Gulf Coast. Other Asian American fishermen have sought the help of these community organizations to help them recover.
Moving Beyond Euphemisms: Defining the WWII JA Experience

A movement to change government euphemisms used to describe WWII incarceration camps is gaining pace in the Japanese American community.

By Nalao J. Ko
Reporter

A growing movement to change government euphemisms used to talk about the Japanese American experience during World War II is gaining momentum.

Members of the JA community and scholars say certain terms used by the government to discuss the incarceration of 120,000 people of Japanese descent during WWII need to be changed.

They say terms like “evacuation” are misleading when talking about the forced removal of IAs following the bombing of Pearl Harbor by the Japanese and the signing of Executive Order 9066 by President Franklin D. Roosevelt.

“Changing from euphemisms to more accurate terminology is vital, necessary and urgently needed,” said Mako Nakaegawa, who was incarcerated with her family during WWII. “Euphemisms can, and too often do, create a completely falsified story and convey a misleading picture of what actually happened.”

Nakaegawa, 74, was the primary author of the Power of Words resolution that was passed 83 to 1 at last July’s JAIC national convention held in Chicago. JAIC delegates passed a resolution to suggest substituting terms like internment camps for incarceration camps.

Members of the JAIC’s National Education Committee formed an ad-hoc committee to determine how best to implement this resolution. They also created a draft of the Power of Words Handbook to address accurate terminology to describe the incarceration of people of Japanese descent during WWII.

“The handbook is a first step and not the last in the process,” said Greg Magarini, a member of the committee who worked on the handbook. “The handbook is designed to provide chapters and the JAIC membership with something to read and digest so they can begin to implement the appropriate terminology, make them a part of their presentations, incorporate them in their newsletters. What the next steps will be will depend on the chapters believe they should be.”

That handbook will be discussed at the upcoming 2011 JAIC national convention that will be held in Los Angeles, Calif., from July 7 to 10.

The nine-page handbook outlines target euphemisms that the authors say need to be replaced. Words like evacuation, relocation, internment, assembly center and relocation camp are emphasized as being misleading terms. Authors of the handbook suggest substituting terms like evacuation and relocation with “forced removal.”

If words like assembly center and relocation camp are used, the handbook also suggests placing these words in quotation marks. It further notes that these labels could be replaced with the term American concentration camp.

“I hope the Jewish community will acknowledge the term ‘concentration camp’ is a correct term that confused our people during World War II,” Nakagawa said.

In 1998, the Japanese American National Museum led a bicentennial, cross-cultural dialogue with leaders of the major Jewish American organizations, the IAIC, Syn. Daniel Inouye and Rep. Norman Mineta, to develop a consensus over the terminology used in the Ellis Island National Park Service Museum exhibit on the Japanese American wartime incarceration experience.

In 1998 an exhibit called “America’s Concentration Camps: Remembering the Japanese American Experience” opened at the Ellis Island Immigration Museum. The exhibit led to a meeting between leaders of the American Jewish Committee and the JA community.

It was determined that the exhibit should also include a historical explanation of the term concentration camps, which officials indicated “was first used at the turn of the century in the Spanish-American and Boer Wars.” Further explanation was given to distinguish between American concentration camps and Nazi concentration camps, where millions of Jewish people perished.

“They are accurate terms for the War Relocation Authority and U.S. Army facilities in which over 120,000 Japanese Americans, largely U.S. citizens, were confined,” said Roger Daniels, a retired history professor from the University of Cincinnati. “President Roosevelt described them as concentration camps on several occasions. And it has become the preferred term for most scholars and journalists writing about them today.”

Daniels is scheduled to participate in a one-day symposium Oct. 22 to discuss government euphemisms used to discuss the Japanese American experience during WWII. Other speakers include Karen Ishihara, Tetruen Kashima, Mako Nakaegawa, Neil Gotanda, Don Hata and Ritu Teshukah.

Nakagawa says using the appropriate terminology to describe the WWII incarceration of IAs and Japanese nationals is personally important to her.

“My father was abruptly taken away from our home leaving mama with four young daughters,” Nakagawa explained. “It was on my oldest sister’s 11th birthday that father was taken away.”

She says her father was sent to Missoula, Montana while her mother and three sisters were at Payuplip and then Minidoka.

When the family reunited two years later at Crystal City in Texas, Nakagawa says she did not recognize her father.

“He was confused too. He mistook his second daughter as his oldest daughter,” Nakagawa said. “He was surprised the baby was walking. She was afraid of him and kept running away from him. Papa was hurt that his own daughter was scared of him.”

The Power of Words Handbook outlines educational efforts to increase awareness about using the appropriate terms to discuss experiences like Nakagawa’s during WWII.

The authors of the handbook recommend disseminating educational materials and hosting teacher-training workshops. It also suggests reaching out to the media to spread the word about these government euphemisms.

As a former educator Nakagawa says it is a great relief that the movement to change government euphemisms is underway.

“I feel pride being a Japanese American, telling our own story, with terms of our choice that best suit the situation, from our perspective, from our memories, our research and our scholarship, and with our own sense of integrity,” she said. “We, as Japanese Americans, own this story.”
Volunteer Extraordinaire: Carl Williams Bring His Expertise to Victims of Japan’s Earthquake Disaster

The Dallas resident is working with Direct Relief International and JACL to ensure victims of Japan’s recent tragedy get the help they need.

Christine McFadden
Correspondent

Working in the city of Ishinomaki in the earthquake and tsunami-devastated Miyagi prefecture, volunteer Carl Williams overhears a Japanese woman working with a cash-for-work non-governmental organization (NGO) program.

“She told us a story about how she had lost her mother and her daughter in the tsunami, and that now she’s living in a shelter,” said Williams, a Dallas resident. “But because she no longer has a family, she’s far back on the list to move out of the shelter into a temporary house.”

Feeling isolated, missing her family and mistakenly identified as not requiring as much help as she actually needed, the woman turned to helping others.

“That story was really touching, and I could probably walk two houses down and hear a very similar story,” Williams said. Listening to the victim’s stories is difficult, he says, but is something “that you have to train yourself to do, to just listen.”

A trained emergency manager currently volunteering for Direct Relief International (DRI), an NGO that provides medical assistance to areas affected by disaster, and the JACL in Japan as a Disaster Relief and Recovery coordinator, Williams is no ordinary volunteer.

Having spent the last 13 years as a software developer and disaster recovery coordinator with IBM, Williams previously spent 22 years in the Air Force and is an emergency manager by education. He now coordinates projects with numerous NGOs and additionally provides an ear for victims in need.

His work has taken him to the Philippines, to the Dallas area post-Katrina, and to the sites of various nuclear accidents, most of which he says are classified. When the March 11 earthquake and subsequent tsunami hit Japan, Williams knew almost immediately that he needed to be there to help with the recovery.

“I was shocked at first to see the level of devastation, but within a couple of days of watching, I knew that I would have to go and do something to help,” he said.

He left just one and a half days after the earthquakes to volunteer with Peaceboat International, a non-profit Japan-based NGO that does volunteer work via a chartered passenger ship.

Wanting to stay longer after his work with Peaceboat, Williams contacted the JACL and inquired about other opportunities in Japan. He came into contact with National Director Floyd Mon, who asked Williams to stay on as the JACL’s and DRI’s Japan Disaster Relief coordinator.

“He has done an excellent job in coordinating our efforts, helping the NGOs in various aspects of dealing with disaster, and he has gained the trust of the groups we have funded,” said Mon in an email to the Pacific Citizen.

What was initially planned as a couple weeks of volunteering in the Tokyo area turned into a six-month assignment.

“I have a great regard for Carl, since it must have been a very difficult and risky option for him to come to Japan,” said DRI co-worker and intern Yoko Chiba in an email to the FC.

Working with Carl in Japan since early May, Chiba is originally from Japan and had immediate family affected by the earthquake and tsunami.

“After I was approached by JACL and Direct Relief to stay, I couldn’t say no,” said Williams. “It’s what I’ve been training for my entire life.”

Authoring Recovery Plans, Lending an Ear

Williams has traveled several times through all three prefectures that were affected by the tsunami and earthquake. Although his nuclear accident response experience might have prepared him for work around the Fukushima power plant, he promised his family that he would stay at least 50 kilometers away from the perimeter.

Despite not being ethnically Japanese (Williams is African American), Japan is a familiar place to him. Williams attended both junior high and high school in Japan and was stationed at the Yokota airbase near Tokyo for five and a half years.

His knowledge of the region enabled him to co-author a disaster recovery plan for the mutual support agreements for the Tohoku region. Williams has also been working with nine different NGOs, helping with shelter, food delivery, cleanup and mud removal, medical aid, and caring for the elderly and disabled.

Men, who communicate with Williams on a regular basis, is impressed with Williams’ genuine desire to help the people of Japan.

“He has had the right temperament to work with and assist the groups we are funding… We have quickly become very good friends as well as work colleagues,” Mon said. “His experience has been extremely valuable in saving time and effort by all of us back here in the U.S.”

Williams speaks “some Japanese” and comes in contact with victims affected by the disaster on a regular basis.

“They just want to tell their stories,” he said. “They have to get the information out of their system.”

And Williams listens.

“As a person, he never forgets his kindness, thoughtfulness and respect for others. He always steps into other people’s shoes,” said Chiba.

Williams said that after the woman in Ishinomaki shared her story, “she seemed a little bit relieved that she was able to talk about it openly. She did cry.”

However, he notes that not all people had the same reaction to the woman.

“I’ve seen people who didn’t want to do anything or who didn’t want to work because the devastation was so great; it just seemed hopeless,” he said. “But after some crews went through and started moving things, started clearing things… people saw that there was hope and that they could make a difference.”

“People started coming out,” he said. “You can see activity again, you can see the color in the streets.”

“The situation is as dire now as it’s ever been”

Williams predicts that it will take between three and five years for things to start to look “normal again,” estimating the amount of debris as approximately 27 years worth of displaced garbage. He acknowledges that his assessment may be skewed due to his perspective.

“It may look clean to me, but to you it may appear like it just happened.” He also notes that the meaning of “back to normal” is entirely different for the victims.

“To the people who are affected… it will never be the same. It could be better, but better is also a perspective.”

Physically, he says, restoration in some areas is virtually impossible since the level of the land has dropped by a meter or two.

When asked to deliver a message to the people of Japan, he directed it not at those affected, but to the people who are unaffected: “I hope that they don’t forget… what’s going on there.” The situation is as dire now as it’s ever been. It’s a very critical period right now.

Despite the enormity of what Japan is still going through, the number of volunteers is way down. Although numerous people are sheltered, many are still being left behind or are prone to suicide.

Williams sees the same set of volunteers coming back and emphasizes the need for additional help. He thanks corporate sponsors who provide the best help now and he encourages corporations in Japan to send volunteers for a week at a time, or long enough to understand the enormity of the situation.

“Those who haven’t gone, they believe that the work is done already; but it’s not,” he said. “It’s really just started.”
Building Empathy for WWII Incarceration, One Game Level at a Time

Recently released video game “Drama in the Delta” puts gamers in the shoes of former JA internees.

By Christine Fukushima
Contributor

“Japanese American Internment Camps: The Game” sounds like a controversy waiting to happen. But “Drama in the Delta,” a proposed video game that recently released a prototype level, tackles the loaded topic in the name of a higher mission: educating and building empathy about this oftentimes overlooked experience in American history.

“Drama in the Delta,” available for download on PCs at http://dramainthedelta.org, was created by Emily Roxworthy, a professor at the University of California, San Diego. A team consisting primarily of UCSD students and led by Amit Chousaria of the San Diego Supercomputer Center worked on the technological aspects of the game.

“It sounds like a really bad idea,” said Professor Roxworthy, addressing the controversy that a video game about the JA internment experience might inspire.

“That’s part of the reason we decided to make the first level from the perspective of a 14-year-old girl. It’s like, what could this girl have done to deserve this? Nothing.”

The prototype level is set at Jerome, one of the two JA internment camps located in Arkansas. Rohwer is the other. In comparison to camps like Manzanar and Tule Lake, much less research has been done on the Arkansas camps. As a result, fewer JAs and Americans in general understand their complex history.

In the prototype, gamers play as 14-year-old Jane, whose friend asks her to find an object that Jane finds, such as a dance card or a baseball that she finds, in order to show her continuing interest in the arts to her parents and three older sisters who she was interned with.

Sophomore Justin Salgado saw a demo of the prototype level at UCSD’s Day of Remembrance in March this past year.

“I wondered if it was going to be historically accurate or if it’s more of an adventure game or more like one of those old-school mystery games that you used to play when you were a kid,” he said.

After seeing the demo, he thought it looked like a sandbox game, meaning a video game where the gamer explores a limited environment. He still wondered whether it would be historically accurate since “the game so far seemed pretty empty.”

John Concillo, a junior at UCSD, actually played the prototype level as an extra credit assignment for Roxworthy’s class. Although Concillo knew that the JA internment experience happened, he did not know how JAs were treated at the camps. After playing the prototype, he also still had questions.

“Did the internment camp really look that clean? Also, the children seemed a little happy, but were they really? I guess I doubt whether the game is actually true,” he said.

June Berk was one of the former internees who Roxworthy consulted for the game. She was 10 when she arrived at Rohwer in 1943, where she was interned until the camp closed in November 1945. Berk recalled performing kabuki to entertain the older internees, an experience that inspired one of the proposed levels of “Drama in the Delta.”

Proposed storylines for the game involve performances like Berk’s in order to show the interactions between interned JAs, whites and African Americans in the post-Confederate state, Roxworthy explained.

Historical records show that recreational events and performances provided a space for interracial encounters.

Berk said she wouldn’t want to play the game; it would bring up too many bad feelings.

“We were young kids back then so for us we weren’t so much concerned with the lives being taken away; we weren’t concerned about going to college. I was happy and my parents never made us feel bad that we were in camp.”

But, “I wasn’t as aware of it as a child as I am today about how wrong it was to deprive a lot of people of their lives, the older people especially,” she added.

Roxworthy also consulted Takayo Fischer, Berk’s longtime friend and fellow internee at Rohwer.

Fischer did not know that a character in one of the proposed levels was named after her but it only made her more curious about the game. Unlike Berk, she would want to play the prototype if she could figure out how to install it on her computer.

“I still wonder, how do you make a game out of being in Rohwer?” she asked.

Fischer, now an actress, was only nine when she arrived at camp so she also remembered having fun participating in kabuki performances with Berk and credits her continuing interest in the arts to her camp experience.

But looking back, she always gets emotional when thinking about what her parents and three older sisters went through during that time. She recalled watching her father break their Japanese records, the only prized possession that her family owned, with a baseball to make it seem like a game for her.

“When I think of that my heart breaks.” She added, “They didn’t go on and on and make it worse for us. They tried to protect us.”

Despite painful memories like these, Fischer is not opposed to a video game about the internment experience if it helps later generations understand the internment experience.

“I’m really anxious to play the game. I’m really anxious to learn what it’s all about. It would be terrible if it’s educational,” she said.

Progress on “Drama in the Delta” is contingent on further funding. They’ve already received grants from the National Endowment for the Humanities and the University of California.

Roxworthy stressed that the nonprofit video game is still in its beginning stages, and that the missions in the final multi-level version will be based entirely on historically accurate stories.

“It’s important that young people know that this happened in our history and that it could happen again. But if they don’t care about this history then they’re never going to get that message,” she said.

“So I thought this would be a way to make it more engaging and to make it seem more personally relevant to a very diverse range of people.”
JACL, CJACLC to Host Nikkei Conference

The gathering will address "The State of Japanese America: 2011."

Though the promise of glitz and glamour draws tourists to Hollywood, Calif. every day, the famed destination will have a lot more to offer when the Nikkei Conference comes to town.

On July 9, the JACL and CJACLC (California Japanese American Community Leadership Council) will convene at the Renaissance Hollywood Hotel and Spa to discuss "The State of Japanese America: 2011" at the Nikkei Conference. The event will take place during the national JACL convention, July 7 to 10.

At the Opening Plenary Session of the conference, Melany De La Cruz, head of the Asian Pacific Islander Community Development Data Center at UCLA, will present the most current Japanese American census and demographic information.

Community leaders Karen Narasaki, president of the Asian American Justice Center in Washington, D.C.; Paul Okami, executive director of the Japanese Cultural and Community Center of Northern California and Craig Ishii, former PSW regional director and member of Kiwami, a new organization involving young Nikkei in the community, will host a panel to discuss the changing nature of the JA community.

Additional workshops will feature noted experts such as Vice President of Toyota Tracey Doi, who will address various topics that relate to the issues and future challenges confronting the JA community.

OTHER WORKSHOPS INCLUDE:

- Future of JA Art and Culture
  Presenters: Chris Ahn, Tracy Kato-Kiryuma, Tad Nakamura, Roy Hirabayashi
- Role of JAs in U.S.-Japan Relations
  Presenters: Consul General Junichi Ihara, Tracey Doi, Kaz Mamiwa, Bryan Takeda

Effective Strategies to Raise Funds for Your Nonprofit Organization
Presenters: Tim Olent, Peter Namnung, Gaye Yamada

Developing a New Paradigm of Leadership Development for the JA community
Facilitators: Jon Osaki and Craig Ishii

Civil Rights
Presenters: Floyd Mori, Karen Narasaki, Alex Fukui, George Wu

Serving Nikkei Seniors
Presenters: Sophie Horiuchi-Forester, Steve Nakaj, Amy Phillips, Frances Chikahisa, Tazuko Shibasawa

Preserving and Sharing the JA Experience
Presenters: Akemi Kimura Yano, Lone Hirabayashi, Alyson Nakamoto, Thomas Fujita-Rooy

Community Preservation & Development
Presenters: Donna Graves, Beth Takosawa, Sharon Lowe, Uma Hasegawa

Sustaining and Preserving Japantowns
Presenters: Jill Shiraki, Lynn Voorheis, Larry Okai, Barbara Takeda

INFO:
jac.org/convention/niikke_conference
For more information: Alan Nishio at
atinatio@pacificcitizen.org

WHY I'M A JACLER

Lillian Kimura: A Trailblazing JACLer

EDITOR'S NOTE: 'Why I'm a JACLer' celebrates members who make a difference in the organization and the community. In addition to highlighting remarkable JACLers, this piece aims to encourage activism and raise the visibility of the JACL.

A Southern California native, Kimura's life was turned upside down after Japan's 1941 attack on Pearl Harbor unleashed a new wave of anti-Japanese American sentiment. At the height of wartime hysteria, Kimura and her family were forced to leave their home and flower shop business in Glendale, Calif. for the austere barracks and barbed wire fences of Manzanar. She was 13 at the time, so even though her parents did not talk about it, Kimura understood the injustice they faced.

After World War II, Kimura earned her master's degree in social work at the University of Chicago and began working as a program director at Chicago's Olivet Community Center before being recruited by YWCA in 1973. From the YWCA, she brought over strategies to the JACL, including the Program for Action, said Kimura.

With the JACL, she worked as the Junior JACL adviser, the Midwest district's civil rights chairperson, and governor of the Midwest and Eastern districts on the national board.

"I've been to every [JACL] convention since 1970," said Kimura.

With so many leadership roles under her belt, the decision to run for JACL national president came organically, she said. Gayce Uyehara, a Philadelphia JACLer and one-time director of the JACL Legislative Education Committee, told Kimura: "If you have something to say, say it."

In 1992, Kimura ran and won the JACL national presidency with Uyehara by her side as campaign manager. Her campaign slogan was, "Kimura for Kaicho" (Kimura for president).

"I was kind of proud to do that," said Kimura about being the JACL's first female president. "It took a lot of people to help me."

During her tenure as president, Kimura said she was most proud of passing the same-sex marriage resolution. The JACL, in 1994, was one of the first civil rights groups in the nation to affirm its support for marriage equality. The organization was stated in a resolution that marriage equality "was a constitutional right that should not be denied because of a person's sexual orientation."

"To this day, we are one of the very few national organizations that have taken a stance on same-sex marriage," said Kimura, the current EDC vice governor and treasurer of the New York JACL. ""I still think JACL is still the only game in town."

To get more youth involved in JACL, Kimura wants to be a mentor like the one that a mentor from a mentor that changed her life while she was in college.

"Don't think they are aware of the bias and prejudice that still exists today," said Kimura, who thinks JACL leaders should tap into the interests of the youth and the Shin-Iseis and Skin-Niseis.

"She is probably one of our main local and national leaders because of her knowledge."

To nominate a JACLer to highlight, send the nominee's contact information, chapter affiliation and a brief explanation of why he/she is a noteworthy JACLer to: pc@pacificcitizen.org.
What Evacuation-Bred Polls Wrought

A SIDEBAR TO any discussion of words provoked by Evacuation is to consider the political and social environment as calculated in national polls.

"Though Japanese Americans were treated decently outside of the West Coast, a national poll conducted in March, 1942, showed that 93% of the American public approved the removal of Japanese aliens from the Pacific Coast. Almost 60% condoned the wholesale incarceration of Japanese American citizens who had lived on the West Coast.

"As late as April 1945, a poll demonstrated that 32% of the American people believed at least half of the Japanese American citizens "would try to do something against the United States if they had a chance", while only 19% replied "practically none of them" to the same question.


OUR BEST STAND-BY for facts of West Coast JAs during World War II, "The Great Betrayal" by Andie Grünner and Anne Loftis, reports a Gallup poll at the end of the year 1942-1943 in five Western states (Washington, Oregon, California, Nevada, Arizona) "that while there was almost unanimous approval of the evacuation and detention of the Japanese minority, 53% of those polled would allow citizens to return to their homes. Of this figure, 29% would include both citizens and aliens, and almost equal number would oppose return of any group."

A Los Angeles Times poll at the end of 1943, revealed 9,855 readers would exclude American Japanese from the Coast against 999 opposing exclusion. "Furthermore, 11,263 readers favored taking concentration camps control away from WRA and returning it to the Army; 1,139 would free loyal Japanese in the Midwest, 9,750 would not. It should be noted that the Times was asking questions of readers who had been subjected to months of the paper's propaganda on the subject."

Chapter 13: "Breaking Through" in "Great Betrayal" observed "a real change in opinion" is a national poll in June, 1944 of college students presumed to be better informed and more broad-minded than average newspapers, which showed that half of them opposed return of alien evacuees, and only 14% opposed the return of Nisei."

"The California Joint Immigration Committee was still the "primary force behind anti-Japanese movement. Under V.S. McClatchy, this group took the most reasonable tone, was the best organized, and the most influential." Publisher of the Sacramento Bee, McClatchy's name appeared on various boards.

"Co-authors Grünner and Loftis added "because of the threatening nature of some of these expressions of feeling, many individuals within and outside the camps expected the worst if the evacuees were released. The leftist-liberal newspaper, PM, feared the possibility of mass murder."

"The L.A. County district attorney reported receiving letters from three organizations threatening to kill returning Japanese."

Southern California ACLU attorney, A.L. Wirin, defending Japanese cases since the start of Evacuation, continually tried to point out to the public that most of the clamor was coming from those with commercial interests, such as the Associated Farmers and Farm Bureau Federation, a state branch of small farmers. Other examples:

"The A.P. of L. urging revocation of Nisei citizenship rights at its 1942 Long Beach convention though the proposal (the Stewart bill) died in Congress. While CIO unions accepted Japanese membership, including Harry Bridges' Longshoremen's Union which opposed Evacuation, Dan Tobin's International Teamsters drove "a violently reactionary campaign against the rights of American Japanese".

"When Filipinos met at their Inter-Community Convention in Fresno and called for "permanent postwar exile of all Japanese from California," P.C. editor Larry Tajiri (9-23-44) commented: "No one will put the full blame for the recent "anti-Jap" resolution upon Filipino residents of our Western states. For they are only following precedents set down by a long list of California chambers of commerce, city councils, Legion posts, and other organizations." Members of the convention, on second thought, later tabled the exclusion proposal.

"Is it time to recall orders from this era? Power of Words may be a cause to reflect."

Harry K. Honda is the Pacific Citizen editor emeritus.

The JACL Should Pursue Change We Can ALL Believe In

As the oldest Asian American civil rights organization in the U.S., the JACL is an important representative of the Asian American community. That's right. Not just Japanese Americans, but AAAs. Since that broader subset of Americans is growing faster than any other racial group, it should be a time of burgeoning membership and an agenda that encompass the challenges of new immigrants, multi-racial marriages, gender representation in the media and board rooms, and the deleterious effect of affirmative action on our meritorious youth in college admissions. Instead, the organization is on life support, in the 12th year of an otherwise inexorable decline in membership. Suffering from deteriorating finances and an agenda that emphasizes issues that are, at best, tangential to the vast majority of AAAs. How did this come to pass? Certainly, a decade-long effort on the part of the community across generations was key to the successful growth of the organization through 1988. It demonstrated how a focused agenda and a common cause that unifies AAAs, regardless of party affiliation — can yield tangible results that achieve both justice and enthusiastic participation. Upon President Reagan's signature on the legislation, there was a joyful celebration. Unfortunately, there was not a comparable goal or agenda that followed.

Two other key factors behind the membership decline is the utter lack of immigration by Japanese into America for the last 80 years and the barely replacement level birth rates within the JA population. Moreover, JAs are quite different from other Asian ethnicities in that the "out"-marriage rate is extremely high. As a Hapa of Japanese, German, English, and Irish heritage, I was the exception in the 1970s, but I am more the rule in the 21st century.

I have noticed a tendency among some JACL leaders to cling to 1960s-era alliances with other "peoples of color." I believe that the JACL can be an effective and important voice for AAAs in the 21st century. The organization should develop a life cycle- and value-based approach to membership that acknowledges the historical context and relationships of the older generation; the family and corporate resources of the 30-, 40-, and 50-somethings; and the energy and technological savviness of the younger generation. If the organization focuses on the elements that unite AAAs, the JACL will be recognized as trusted advisors and partners.

James Kumpel is a JACL New York chapter board member and former JACL scholarship winner.
Art as Activism: Asian Pacific Americans and the Spoken Word Scene

Many Asian Pacific American spoken word artists perform in the name of activism rather than applause.

By Christine Fukushima
Contributor

From Youtube parodies to death threats, former UCLA student Alexandra Wallace's video about "Asians in the library" inspired a sometimes humorous, oftentimes enraged response from the Asian Pacific American community.

But Bear Sia, a prominent APA spoken word artist known for his multiple appearances on HBO's Def Poetry Jam, saw her rant as an opportunity to address greater issues of ignorance and racism in the U.S.

"I saw all the people's responses and I heard their pain and their frustration but I felt like their reaction didn't help their cause," Sia added. "I wanted to try to create a way for people to make better choices when they're feeling angry or frustrated than to attack other people."

In the past two decades, a growing number of APA spoken word poets like Sia have used the art form as a tool for activism and community building.

"With pieces that sound like a cross between rap songs and theater monologues, they use rhythm and expression to communicate their message."

There are no symbols for what your face is supposed to look like. The APA community is growing, and they want to be heard.

"You're utilizing these elements that you just cannot have on paper," Sia explained of the difference between spoken word and more traditional forms of poetry.

Spoken word artists also sometimes compete in poetry slams, which are competitions during which they have three minutes to perform a piece, typically without music, costumes or props.

With his crazy hair and boundless energy, 41-year-old Regie Cabico doesn't seem old enough to be the "grandfather of Asian American slam poetry." But the self-proclaimed title is fitting.

"I like to say, and I will say, that I am the first Asian American slammer to win the top prizes of the time. I knew how to play the game," Cabico said with his infectious smile.

Utilizing his theater skills, Cabico quickly became popular on the slam circuit after graduating from NYU in 1992. He found that he was usually the only APA poet performing at the famed Nuyorican Poet's Cafe on New York's Lower East Side.

"They've never had a young, gay Filipino person who's off book. To this day I don't think people know what to do with me." He added, "I push the Asianess, I push the queerness."

Cabico's unique voice and perspective earned him spots on the '94 Lollapalooza Poetry Tour, HBO's Def Poetry Jam, and MTV's 'Free Your Mind' Spoken Word Tour. He is also a three-time winner of the National Poetry Slam, the annual poetry slam championship tournament.

"To me spoken word is political theatre and it's the best way to get your point across," Cabico said. He promotes this idea through his organization Sulu D.C., which provides emerging and established APA artists with a space to nurture their artistic growth, build their community and raise awareness of issues relevant to APA communities-at-large.

Chinese Taiwanese American spoken word artist Kelly Tsai also believes that spoken word can be used to raise awareness about issues that are often forgotten or dismissed by the mainstream media.

Chinese Taiwanese American spoken word artist Kelly Tsai also believes that spoken word can be used to raise awareness about issues that are often forgotten or dismissed by the mainstream media.

In her piece "Black White Whatever," she addresses the tendency of political candidates to ignore APAs, delegating them to the "whatever" category in their speeches.

"If we are going to relegate our communities to these sloppy pots and essentialize to the colors of the rainbow I would like to mention that 'whatever' does not represent me," Tsai says in her popular video, which was featured on Youtube's homepage the night before the 2008 presidential election.

Jasmine Osorio, currently a student at Stanford University, represents a new wave of APA spoken word artists.

Osorio took her deeply personal poetic style to the White House in 2009, performing "Kumulipo" for an audience that included President Obama. With an original sound and subject matter — in "Kumulipo," she talks about trying to retain her Hawaiian roots with a voice that literally shakes with emotion — Osorio brings something different to the scene.

But like the older artists that she admires, the young artist still uses the medium of spoken word to bring awareness to issues that she finds important.

"I was extremely aware of how important it was that I was there and what it meant not only to represent my family but to represent my people in a way that we have never been able to," Osorio said of her performance at the White House.

Though Cabico jokes that he hates young poets of this new wave for stealing his gigs, he's happy that he now has company in the struggle to raise awareness about issues in the APA community.

"I've been waiting for this time. I was the only Asian American slam poet. The only one," said the grandfather of slam. "I'm really glad I'm not alone anymore."

The "grandfather" of slam poetry Regie Cabico (above) is an inspiration to many spoken word artists who consider him a pioneer of Asian American spoken word.

Kelly Tsai (left) uses spoken word as a tool to raise awareness about issues affecting Asian Americans.
NPS Grants Awarded to Japanese American Internment Camp Projects

The National Park Service is awarding 24 grants totaling $2.9 million to preserve and interpret sites where Japanese Americans were confined during World War II. The internment of Japanese Americans during World War II is an unfortunate part of the story of our nation's journey, but it is a part that needs to be told," said Secretary of the Interior Ken Salazar. "The internment of Japanese Americans during World War II is an unfortunate part of the story of our nation's journey, but it is a part that needs to be told," said Secretary of the Interior Ken Salazar. "The internment of Japanese Americans during World War II is an unfortunate part of the story of our nation's journey, but it is a part that needs to be told."

"The internment was a dark chapter in our history," Salazar said. "These sites represent a painful chapter in American history, but they also serve as reminders of the fragility of our constitutional rights in the face of prejudice and fear." American citizens - followed Japan's attack on Pearl Harbor in 1941. "The internment was a dark chapter in our history," Salazar said. "These sites represent a painful chapter in American history, but they also serve as reminders of the fragility of our constitutional rights in the face of prejudice and fear."

"The internment of Japanese Americans during World War II is an unfortunate part of the story of our nation's journey, but it is a part that needs to be told," said Secretary of the Interior Ken Salazar. "The internment of Japanese Americans during World War II is an unfortunate part of the story of our nation's journey, but it is a part that needs to be told." The National Park Service is honored to help preserve these sites and tell their stories, and thus prevent our nation from forgetting a shameful episode in its past."

The incarcerated JA's - two-thirds of whom were American citizens - followed Japan's attack on Pearl Harbor in 1941. This year's awards will provide $2.9 million to projects in 11 states. These undertakings include restoration of an internment camp cemetery at Rattlesnake Relocation Center in Arkansas, production of a film exploring the lives of mothers and children detained at Poston, Ariz., and production and distribution of a documentary on the jazz bands that flourished at many internment camps. The grants range from $5,000 to preserve documents and artifacts at Chicago's Japanese American Historical Society, to $291,025 to reconstruct a water tower and a guard tower at the Granada Relocation Center (Amache) in Colo.

Congress established the Japanese American Confinement Sites Grants Program in 2006 and authorized up to $38 million in grants for the life of the program to identify, research, evaluate, interpret, protect, restore, repair and acquire historic confinement sites. The grants are made as part of a competitive process in which $2 of federal money matches every $1 in non-federal funds and "in-kind" contributions. The goals of the grant program are to touch present and future generations about the injustice of the confinement and inspire a commitment to equal justice under the law. For details about winning projects, go to: http://www.nps.gov/history/lpser/parc/index.html.

Tammy Duckworth Resigns from VA Post

By Associated Press and P.C. Staff

CHICAGO—Assistant Secretary of Veterans Affairs Tammy Duckworth has resigned her position. The Chicago Sun-Timer reported June 13 that Veterans Affairs Secretary Eric Shinseki says Duckworth submitted her resignation.

In a statement Shinseki says: '[Duckworth] has served the Department of Veterans Affairs with distinction. Her unwavering dedication to veterans and their families has strengthened VA's ability to perform our mission — providing veterans the health care and benefits they have earned. "Tammy Duckworth uniquely understands the needs of today's veterans and their families, and her commitment to serving veterans and increasing VA's outreach has helped the department serve more veterans and serve them well. We will miss her advocacy and leadership, but wish her the very best in the years to come."'


Over the Memorial Day weekend she made it clear to reporters in Hawaii that she would not be running for a Senate seat in her hometown. Instead, if she were to run, she would do so from her current home in Illinois where her National Guard unit is located.

The Hoffman Estates veteran was a helicopter pilot in Iraq where she lost both her legs and partial use of one arm in a rocket-propelled grenade attack in 2004. She is married to 1fuj. Bryan Bowlsbey, an Iraq war veteran and a National Guard officer.

The U.S. Senate confirmed Duckworth's nomination to the Veterans Affairs post in April 2009. She previously was chief of the Illinois Department of Veterans Affairs.

Competitive Eater Plans to Gobble on July Fourth

NEW YORK—Hot dog eating champ Takeru Kobayashi was arrested last Fourth of July when he stormed the stage at Nathan's on Coney Island.

This year, the Japanese eating pro will compete mile away on a Manhattan rooftop. He has been banned since last year from the actual event because he refuses to sign an exclusive contract, which he says limits his freedom to compete elsewhere.

On the Fourth, when the Coney Island eaters start gobbling their hot dogs, Kobayashi plans to stuff his face near the Nathan's event.

Native Hawaiians Increase Numbers by One-Fifth

HONOLULU—The population of Native Hawaiians in Hawaii increased by over one-fifth in the last decade, according to new U.S. Census information.

Native Hawaiian families are having more children, and more Hawaiians embraced their race when filling out government Census forms, said Malia Kauikhe, chief knowledge officer for the Office of Hawaiian Affairs.

People who identified themselves as Native Hawaiians alone or in combination with other races increased by 21 percent to a total of 289,970 in the state, Census data show.

29th Anniversary of Vincent Chin Sparks Anti-Discrimination Talks

WASHINGTON, D.C. — Members of the Congressional Asian Pacific American Caucus denounced anti-Chinese rhetoric in political advertising on the 29th anniversary of the death of Vincent Chin.

Chin, a Chinese American, was fatally beaten on June 23, 1982, by two auto-workers in the wake of increasing anti-Japanese sentiment. The 29th anniversary of his death shined the spotlight on the growing trend of anti-Chinese rhetoric in political ads, said members of the CAPAC on June 23.

"I am deeply disturbed by the xenophobic implications of recent political ads that use China as a scapegoat to discuss the US. economy," said Rep. David Wu.

Over 250 anti-China ads were aired during the 2010 campaign cycle, according to the Washington Post.

AA New York Population Explodes Past One Million

NEW YORK—the population of Asian Americans in New York for the first time has surpassed 1 million, according to U.S. Census data.

Census data from April show that one in eight New Yorkers are AA, more than populations in San Francisco and Los Angeles, Calif. There was a 32 percent increase in New York's AA population since 2000.

"We are 13 percent of this city's population!" said community organizer Steven Choi in an interview with the New York Times. "We are 1 million strong, and we are not going away!"

Preservationists Fight to Save JA Flower Building

EL CERRITO, Calif. Preservationist groups in Northern Calif. hope to save a historic flower shop building slated for demolition.

JA greenhouses once flourished in El Cerrito and Richmond, Calif. Before the outbreak of World War II, in 1908 the city of El Cerrito purchased what is believed to be one of the last florist shops in the area. Plans are underway to have developer Ellen Homing Inc. build senior housing, retail stores and more on the site.

Some JA community members along with historians and preservationists hope to have the flower shop incorporated into the new development. Officials with the design firm PB&S, Inc. say the shop may not be eligible for federal or state historic registers.

A historic consultant has been brought in to conduct further historical analysis.
China Alley Listed as Endangered Historic Place

The once-bustling Chinatown was founded in 1877, located between the Chinatowns in San Francisco and Los Angeles.

By Associated Press and Pacific Citizen staff

HAFORD, Calif. - The smell is the wooden floors covered with the original owners' gone long dead.

The shop in China Alley in the rural central California town of Haford once bustled with commerce.

But now the buildings in which was used to be one of the largest Chinatowns between San Francisco and Los Angeles are mostly deserted.

China Alley was named June 15 as one of America's 11 most endangered historic places by the National Trust for Historic Preservation.

The non-profit group spotlights places which are threatened by neglect or are affected by bad preservation funding by legislation across the country.

In China Alley, community members hope the designation will help them find funds to save its 19th century buildings.

"What is so unique about the alley is that it's a living piece of history," said Anna Wing, president of the Historic Temple Preservation Society which is working to restore the buildings and artifacts inside.

The town, created in 1877 after Southern Pacific Railroad tracks were laid through a steep canyon, had a substantial Chinese population starting in the 1870s.

China Alley became a thriving community in the 1920s and 1930s, recalled 83-year-old Camille Wang, who is Annie's mother and China Alley's resident historian.

China Alley began to fade in the 1950s after the city shut down the gambling houses and the next generation of Chinese Americans moved on to jobs away from Haford.

But the neighborhood survived thanks in part to Imperial Dynasty, a restaurant run by the Wing family.

The closure of Imperial Dynasty in 2004 brought the final, drastic decline of the neighborhood.

The preservation society is hoping to reverse that tide. Of the alley's 11 historic buildings, there are owned by the organization, including the temple.

The society is working with a Fresno-based historic architecture firm to stabilize the L.P. Suen Meat Co. building. Society members raised enough money for the first phase of the renovation, but it's not enough to complete the full renovation of the herb shop or other China Alley structures.

Annie Wing, a chef by profession, hopes to reopen a restaurant in the same building where her great-grandfather ran a noodle shop at the turn of the century and where her uncle worked up his famous escargots at the Imperial Dynasty.

"This is for me a way to keep the Alley alive," she said.

Filipino American Journalist Says He's Undocumented

The Pulitzer Prize winning journalist has worked at the Washington Post and most recently at the Huffington Post.

By Associated Press and Pacific Citizen staff

WASHINGTON - A Pulitzer Prize-winning journalist went public June 22 with a secret he says he has been keeping for nearly two decades: He is an illegal immigrant.

Jose Antonio Vargas, whose mother sent him from the Philippines to live with his grandparents in California when he was 12, says that now he wants to push Congress to pass the DREAM Act that would allow people like him to become citizens.

"I don't want that life anymore," he says.

He says he didn't know about his citizenship status until he applied for a driver's permit and a clerk told him his green card was a fake.

Vargas confronted his grandfather, who acknowledged he purchased the green card and other false documents.

His grandfather imagined the false documents would help Vargas get low-wage jobs. College seemed out of reach, until Vargas got Mountain View High School Principal Pat Hyland and school district Superintendent Rich Fisher about his problem. They helped him find a scholarship fund that allowed him to attend San Francisco State University.

Vargas was hired for an internship at The Washington Post and used his fake driver's license to cover Washington events, including a state dinner at the White House.

Vargas eventually told his mentor, Peter Perl, now the newspaper's training director. They kept the secret until Vargas left the paper.

On June 22, Washington Post spokeswoman Kris Cantrill confirmed the situation.

Vargas entered Pulitzer Prize for the Post's coverage of the Virginia Tech shootings.

"To me, that's an American," he told ABC.

On June 22, Vargas launched a campaign called Define American to use stories of immigrants to urge Congress and the Obama administration to pursue immigration reform. His high school principal and superintendent have signed on as board members.

APAs in the News

By Pacific Citizen Staff and Associated Press

Hawaii Sen. Daniel Inouye Receives Japan's Spring Imperial Decorations

The Japanese government awarded United States Sen. Daniel Inouye with the Grand Cross of the Order of the Paulownia Flowers, the highest level of national order for nonresidents.

The Japanese American senator received in 1959 the Grand Cross of the Order of the Rising Sun for his contributions to strengthening the United States-Japan relationship. The Grand Cross of the Order of the Paulownia Flowers distinguishes recognizes the senator's ongoing work to enhance relations between the two countries.

His efforts to institute an exchange between the Japanes Diet and the U.S. Senate are also being recognized.

Sen. Inouye, the president pro-tempore, is the only person outside Japan to receive the award this spring.

Asian American Man Honored for Aiding D.C. Officers During Attack

Officials in Washington, D.C. recognized a civilian for coming to the aid of two police officers as they were being assaulted.

Vil Li was awarded June 22 for intervening in an attack on the officers during the evening of June 11 in Chinatown. The altercation left both officers injured. The incident occurred after one of the officers confronted a man with an open bottle of alcohol.

Li helped one officer pull off the other officer. The suspect has been charged with assault on a police officer while armed.

Mayor Vincent Gray and Police Chief Cathy Lanier honored Li, calling his actions selfless and heroic.

Iowa Governor Names San Wong Human Rights Director

Iowa Gov. Terry Branstad has appointed San Wong as the director for the Iowa Department of Human Rights.

Wong is Des Moines Area Community College's director of workforce and education initiatives. She also served as president-elect of the Asian American Council from 2005 to 2007, president of the Iowa Asian Federation from 2005 to 2009 and chair of the Iowa Asian Alliance from 2006 to 2007.

Branstad announced Wong's appointment on June 22, saying she has worked in many capacities to eliminate barriers for minorities. Branstad says Wong will ensure that all Iowans have the opportunity to contribute and benefit from the state's economic, cultural and social activities.

Wong is slated to start her new July 11. Her nomination is subject to confirmation by the Iowa Senate.

Seattle Central Honors Alan Sugiyama With Distiguished Alumni Award

Japanese American Alan Sugiyama was selected by the Seattle Central Community College to receive the Distinguished Alumni Award, the first such award in its 45-year history.

Paul Killpatrick, Seattle Central president, established the Distinguished Alumni Award this year, which will likely be given out annually.

Sugiyama, a Seattle resident, was selected for his contributions to the community and his work in fighting discrimination while attending the college. He led protests raising awareness about the lack of Asian American administration in 1971.

"Alan is the kind of person whom I hope our students will emulate," said Killpatrick, in a press release.

Sugiyama founded the Center for Career Alternatives, a nonprofit that helps economically disadvantaged adults. For eight years he also served on the board of directors for Seattle Public School.

He spoke to students during their commencement exercises on June 10.
College APA Leaders Meet in D.C.

The next generation of leaders in the Asian Pacific American community recently met to discuss the role of APA civil rights organizations in affecting public policy.

Sponsored by the JACL, the third annual Collegiate Leadership Conference was held in Washington, D.C. June 9 to 12. Fourteen APA college students from around the country attended skills training and issue-based workshops intended to provide them with the tools to create positive social change on their own campuses.

The workshops were conducted by prominent members and activists in the APA community. J.D. Hokoyama, CEO and founder of LEAP (Leadership Education for Asian Pacifics) led a workshop that connected APA cultural values, effective leadership behaviors and stereotypes. Representatives from the Asian American Justice Center, the Environmental Protection Agency and the National Education Association, among others, also led workshops.

“The different generations of activists brought together from all over the country for a shared cause made me realize how much hope and potential there is for change and that we are all agents for that change,” said Sue Yee Chen, a student at Bryn Mawr College.

Mackenzie Walker Named Mike M. Masaoka Fellow

By Pacific Citizen Staff

Starting this fall, University of Washington graduate Mackenzie Kiyomi Walker will take her talents to Washington, D.C. as the 2011 JACL Mike M. Masaoka Fellow.

While there, she will be assisting the Congressional Asian Pacific American Caucus, an assembly that is a key element in advocacy work for the Asian American Pacific Islander community.

“I'm excited to be in D.C. and to work further with the JACL. Being a member of the JACL has given me the opportunity to appreciate the importance of API leadership and visibility at the national level,” said Walker.

Walker’s long list of accomplishments include an internship for the JACL Bridging Communities - Seattle Program, placing as a finalist in the JACL Minoru Yasui Oratorical Competition, and board membership of the JACL Seattle chapter. She also attended the 2011 JACL/CCA Washington, D.C. Leadership Summit, where she made a presentation to a Capitol Hill staffer to encourage the advancement of an anti-bullying and anti-racial profiling bill.

The Mike M. Masaoka Fellowship Fund was established in 1988 to honor Mike Massaoka (1915-1991) for a lifetime of public service to the nation and the JACL. The fellowship is the JACL's national secretary, field executive, national legislative director of the JACL's Anti-Discrimination Committee and JACL Washington D.C.'s representative.

“Mackenzie’s achievements and service to the community thus far have been outstanding, and we expect that she will be a strong future leader within the JACL,” said National Director Floyd Mori.

“The JACL Mike M. Masaoka Fellowship is one of the flagship programs of the JACL,” said National President David Kawamoto. “We are happy that Mackenzie Walker will be able to have this wonderful experience in Washington, D.C.”
SFV JACL Sponsors Musical ‘Manzanar’

By Pacific Citizen Staff

“Manzanar: Story of an American Family” uses an unlikely art form to tell the story of the Japanese American internment experience. The musical was performed on June 18 to a sold-out crowd of over 300 people at the San Fernando Valley Japanese-American Community Center. The event was sponsored by the San Fernando Valley JACL chapter.

The cast, which consisted of seven of the 14 original cast members, received a standing ovation. Co-written by Russ McCoy and Dan Taguchi and directed by Mike Hagiwara, “Manzanar” is loosely based on the internment experiences of Taguchi’s mother, Meko, and other family members.

“Mom is all right with it,” said Dan Taguchi, about his mom. “She hardly ever goes anywhere, but each time the show has been performed, she has shown up.”

The storyline follows the Shimada family, JAs who were herded into the Santa Anita racetrack and housed in horse stables as a temporary holding facility while Manzanar was under construction. Dan Taguchi says he co-wrote the musical to increase awareness about the JA incarceration experience.

“Very few people outside of JAs know much, if anything, about the internment camps. There is little or no information about the JA internment camps in American history books,” he said.

SFV JACL member Nancy Gohata says her husband Yas has been responsible for bringing the play to the Community Center. She recalled seeing the play with him in 2002 and 2003.

“We both loved it. We have the CD and it’s one of his favorite selections on his iPod,” said Nancy Gohata.

“It was an electrifying afternoon,” she raved of the June 18 showing. ■

JACL PSW to Honor Community Leaders

The JACL Pacific Southwest District will honor community leaders and organizations at their 15th Annual Awards Dinner Oct. 29. The theme of the dinner is “Looking to the Future: Partnerships Across Communities and Generations.” It will be held at the Rose Center Theater in Westminster, Calif.

Honorees include Bill Watanabe, executive director, Little Tokyo Service Center; Mary Anne Foo, executive director, Orange County Asian and Pacific Islander Community Alliance; and Madeline Ong-Sakata, executive director, Little Tokyo Community Center.

The honorees “were chosen because they exemplify the spirit of JACL’s tradition, which is to work with diverse groups and ages to achieve a shared vision of civil rights for all,” said Andrew Yick, development coordinator.

Proceeds from the dinner will go towards JACL PSW’s fundraising goal of $50,000, which will help the chapter continue their work in community development, youth leadership development and civil rights work. ■

JACL Fremont Donates to Sister City Fukaya

Fremont JACL recently donated $1,000 to Fukaya, a city in Japan, in support of their efforts to help those devastated by the earthquake and tsunami.

Though their Sister City Program was discontinued in 2009, the City of Fremont, Calif. still feels a connection with the City of Fukaya in Saitama Prefecture, Japan.

So when the devastating earthquake and tsunami hit Sendai on March 11, JACL Fremont chapter’s board of directors decided to donate directly to relief efforts being undertaken by the City of Fukaya.

Fukaya, which is approximately 200 miles southwest of the major damage, was largely untouched by the disaster. But cities throughout Japan were asked to assist their fellow citizens and Fukaya answered the call wholeheartedly.

With the assistance of the City of Fremont and the Japanese Consulate in San Francisco, Fremont JACL President Alan Miki and donated Fukaya Mayor Susumu Kojima and the Fremont chapter transferred $1,000 directly to the city.

“We wish that citizens of Fremont and people of the JACL Fremont Chapter who supported us this time will continue to prosper, and the friendly relations between the City of Fremont and Fukaya will be further developed,” wrote Mayor Kojima in letters to the City of Fremont and the JACL Fremont chapter. ■
Okin Festival Dance Workshop
SACRAMENTO, CA
July 5, 6:30 to 7 p.m.
Buddhist Church of Florin
7235 Pritchard Rd.
The Buddhist Church of Florin welcomes the public to its 57th Annual Oken Festival! An Oken practice will take place from 7 to 8 p.m. There will also be workshops led by Cheryl Mize, a master expert; Lisa Honkawa, Buddhist minister assistant; and John Kanemoto, Florin JACL youth rep.
RSVP: By July 3 to andynoguchi@hotmail.com or call 916/363-1831

The 20th Annual JACL Golf Tournament
HUNTLEY, IL
July 21, 9:30 a.m.
Pinecrest Golf Course
Thirty-two golfers can be accommodated for the event. The fee includes golf cart rental, prizes and a lunch buffet.
Info: Call Michael Oshtaga 513/498-7683 or 773/728-7117.

JACL San Fran Youth Gone Fishin’
The perfect fishing weather greeted anglers of all ages at the San Pablo Dam Reservoir on June 11 for the Youth Fishing Derby, sponsored by JACL’s San Francisco chapter.

Though some of the fishing holes were inaccessible, 16 kids competed to catch the biggest fish.
San Francisco Nisei Fishing Club members dispensed advice to the young anglers and their parents on how to bait and cast.
They helped me with casting the rod. I didn’t do a very good job at first, but I did after they helped me,” said Max Chan, 13.
He caught a trout weighing 2 pounds and 3 ounces, winning first place.

Go For Broke Evening of Aloha
BEVERLY HILLS, CA
Nov. 5
Beverly Hilton Hotel
9876 Wilshire Blvd.
Cost: $200/Individual; $175/Student
Join Go For Broke for its 10th Annual Evening of Aloha Gala Dinner where the newest Congressional Gold Medal recipients will be honored. A special dinner inspired by Chef Roy Yamaguchi of Roy’s Restaurants Worldwide and Chef Hiroshi Akira of Maison Akira will be prepared.
Info: www.goforbroke.com

Fukuhara Art Exhibit ‘50 Years and Still Clicking’
ORANGE, CA
July 24, 4 to 8 p.m.
Fukuhara Inc. Studio/Gallery
11220 Algonquin Rd.
The USC IGM Art Gallery and Fukuhara Inc. Studio/Gallery invite you to Richard Yuka Fukuhara’s “50 Years and Still Clicking.” The exhibit is a creative imagery from the 60s to the present.
RSVP: Call 714/998-8790 or richard@fukuhara.com

JACL’s Twin Falls Idaho chapter presents “Conscience and the Constitution” as a part of the 6th Annual Civil Liberties Symposium. A discussion with producer Frank Abe will follow the screening. Sponsors include the Friends of Minidoka, the College of Southern Idaho and the Minidoka Internment National Monument.
Info: Call 208/877-2588
Sadao Baishiko
April 26, 1922 - June 12, 2011

Sadao Baishiko, son of Toichi and Tsune Baishiko, was born on April 26, 1922 in Stockton, CA and entered Nisei no on June 12, 2011 in Sacramento. A graduate of Stockton High, he received an AA degree from Stockton Junior College. During WW II, Sadao and his family were sent to the relocation center in Rohwer, AR. He left the relocation center in 1944 after marrying Midori Yoko, and subsequently served in the US Army and was stationed in Germany. He retired from Sylvania/GTE after 29 years and then again from Varian after 10 years. He was a member of the Florin Buddhist Church, the JACL of Sacramento and VFW Post 1985 in Sacramento. He was interested in sports, golfing, gathering abalone, and mostly bowling. Even though legally blind for the last 10 years of his life, he continued to bowl in two leagues and occasionally bowled over 200. He even received a Big 4 Split patch. He died of cancer at age 89.

TRIBUTE

Fred Hashimoto
October 28, 1919 - April 20, 2011


Fred Mitsuru Hashimoto born in Suisun, CA October 28, 1919. He has two sons: Calvin Shigeru Hashimoto of Kealakekua, HI (Oct 15, 1943) and David Juichi Hashimoto of Merced, CA (March 17, 1950). He attended Cressey Grammar School (1925 - 1932) and Livingston High School (1932 - 1937). He entered the University of California, Berkeley and Davis (1938 - 1942). He attended the University of Oregon, Law School and received his Juris Doctorate in 1945. West coast opened up in Jan. 1945 so Fred went to Seattle to California to retrieve the farm which was closed out. The family was able to resume farming shortly thereafter. Calvin was born on October 1945 at the Mercy Hospital in Merced. Fred moved his family to Chicago (1947-1950) which he worked as a mechanic and later opened a auto repair shop. There was an offer of managing a fruit shipping and packing cooperative, the Livingston Fruit Exchange. Fred accepted the offer and moved the family to Livingston 1950-1955. David was born in Chicago in 1950. Fred's father died in 1955, so Fred started to farm in 1955 to 1988 when he retired. Fred was active in various organizations. He served on the board of the following: Livingston United Methodist Church, Livingston Farmers Association, Livingston Lion Club, Allied Grape Growers, California Canners & Growers, California Peach Association, and Japanese American Citizens League. He moved to Hilt in 1985 and to Las Vegas in 1991. He married Sun R. Fuze in 1991.

TRIBUTE

Walter Naoaki Fuchigami
December 1, 1925 - May 31, 2011

Born and raised in Marysville, Calif. and his family were incarcerated in the Amache Japanese Internment Camp, Granada, Colo., in 1942. He entered the U.S. Army serving in the JAG Corps from 1945-1948. He was born on December 1, 1925. He served as Chairman of the Legal Aid Committee, Chairman of the Civil Rights Committee and was appointed to the Oregon-U.S. Civil Rights Advisory Commission. He also served as President of the Portland JACL. In 1986, in 1975 he left Oregon to serve as the Special Assistant to the District Attorney of San Francisco as a founder and Director of the Family Support Bureau. He retired in 1968. Walter worked for the Legal Department of the U.S. Army Reserves JAG Corps from 1959-1978. He was appointed Judge Advocate for the Oregon Reserve Officers Association, Chief Legal Officer and Government Affairs Division Chief, retiring as a Lt. Colonel in 1978.

TRIBUTE

Tomiye Katsumoto Miyamoto
April 26, 1921 - June 15, 2011

TOMIYE KATSUMOTO MIYAMOTO (TOM) Born April 26, 1921, in Union City, CA. Laid to rest June 15, 2011. Husband: Fred J. Miyamoto (July 15, 2010). Interned at Topaz Interment Camp. Past JACL president at Eden Township, San Lorenzo, CA. Representative and member in JACL district and national programs as a volunteer. Survived by sons: Wayne Miyamoto (Littleton, CO) and Steven Miyamoto (Los Banos, CA); and Mrs. Toshi Shimmoto (Southfield, MI), Dr. Kiyori Katsumoto (El Centro, CA), and Mr. Takeshi Katsumoto (Los Gatos, CA).

TRIBUTE

John Nishizaka
March 5, 1930 - May 24, 2011

John Nishizaka of Granada Hills, Calif., died peacefully on May 24, 2011 at the Fairlawn Convalescent Hospital from congestive heart failure and stomach cancer. His wife, Harriet, had just left the same facility a week earlier, after spending two months in physical therapy for a fractured hip. They were married for 62 years and were able to spend the last few months together.

With the Nishizaka family having settled in New York years earlier, John was born in Imaizumi, Japan during a family visit there. He was the fourth of eight siblings and grew up in Brooklyn, where his father owned a shoe last ball company in Coney Island. John graduated from Brooklyn Polytechnic and married Harriet Ikedie in 1957. The young couple, with their first daughter, Susan, married to Sacramento, California in 1959, where their son, John's career as a civil engineer in the aerospace industry spanned nearly 40 years until his retirement in 1994. John was a long time active member of the San Fernando Valley JACL and served as chapter president in 1971. He also served as a SF JACC President in 1989, was active in the founding of Nikkei Village in Atoka, and was part of the board of directors for MIS Veterans in Little Tokyo. John was survived by his wife of 54 years, Harriet and children, Susan, Steven, Scott, and grandchildren Aria and Maya. He is also survived by sisters Itsuko and Miyoko and many in-laws, nieces and nephews.

A memorial service will be held on Saturday, July 9, 2011, 11:00 A.M. at Chatsworth West United Methodist Church, 10824 Topanga Canyon Blvd., Chatsworth. Donations in John's memory may be donated to the American Heart Association, JACL or a charitable organization of your choice.

To Place a Tribute, Call 800/986-6157
programs that were previously assigned to staff positions which are vacant. Fellowships and internships whose stipends are funded by corporate sponsors have been valuable assistants. Staff has been exemplary in taking on extra work to allow us to accept funding that is specific to a program.

There have been questions about continuing youth programs in PSW. These programs have been largely funded through various grants that have been obtained through our work at national JACL. As long as grants for the projects are available, programs can continue. If successful programs are cut, there is a problem with funding. The regular JACL revenues will not provide for these new programs. A high priority is to keep programs running, particularly those that involve our youth because we know that young people are very important to the future of the organization.

It is true that there is a budget shortfall. To help remedy the deficit, we have cut spending and increased revenues. A major reason for this is the decline in membership revenues. Thus, I feel we need to be more aggressive in our membership program and revise the structure of our memberships to broaden the reach of JACL. It is important for districts and chapters to become more involved in trying to get new members as our long time members are aging. It is also essential for chapters to engage youth members since this group lapses at a very high rate with many seemingly joining only to apply for the scholarships without developing a commitment to the JACL.

We continue to solicit funds from corporate partnerships, foundations and government grants. This has become increasingly difficult as funds are tight in this economy. Donations from members of the JACL in our fundraising campaigns are down as well. We have developed a president’s council of major donors and I have suggested having at-large national board members who would help with fundraising.

It has been necessary to borrow some funds from the JACL National Endowment Fund. Although it is not a requirement to repay that money, the national board voted to require a repayment of the money with interest. This places a hardship on staff. A lot of time is spent trying to raise funds with the availability and amounts being uncertain.

A large portion of the JACL budget continues to be for the Pacific Citizen. Printing and mailing costs are high and the PC is already providing an electronic version. Most newspapers are online and many papers have folded because of the costs of printing and postage. The JACL must make some decisions regarding the paper. A former PC editorial board chair stated that the PC needs to go to only electronic but not yet. With the budgetary problems facing us and declining membership causing discretionary funds to dwindle, solutions must come soon.

The national JACL convention is just around the corner. Thanks to Gary Mayeda, Sonya KiKi, Karen Yoshitomi, Kerry Kaneichi, Matt Fitch, president’s council of major donors and I have suggested having at-large national board members who would help with fundraising.

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