



PACIFIC CITIZEN

Snow-covered roofs in Aizu, Japan

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All You Need to Know About Utah JA History for JACL's National Convention

ODE TO SPRING (CAMPAIGN)

AH, SPRING!

Spring is a time of renewal, rebirth and reconnecting. Like baseball, spring also means a fresh, new beginning — where all teams start a new season in first (and last) place.

In 2019, the Japanese American Citizens League turns 90 years young. Throughout JACL's history, the *Pacific Citizen* has chronicled, discussed and advocated on behalf of the JACL and Japanese Ameri-

can communities. Over the past 90 years when the United States has been repeatedly divided by racism, hatred of immigrants and economic injustices, the JACL and the *Pacific Citizen* have endured. But what about the *next* 90 years?

In baseball, the most important pitch is the next one coming, not the ones that came before. The mission of the *Pacific Citizen* has been to “educate on the past Japanese American experience and preserve, promote and help the

current and future Asian American and Pacific Islander communities.” It is vitally important that the JACL and the *Pacific Citizen* remain engaged players in the game for many years to come.

Please join me in contributing to the *Pacific Citizen's* 2019 Spring Campaign, which is now in full swing (literally!).

Let's all help the JACL and the *Pacific Citizen* continue to keep our “eye on the ball” while always watching for that next pitch!



To the next 90 years,
Ron Kuramoto,
President, JACL
Wisconsin Chapter, and
MDC P.C. Editorial
Board Member

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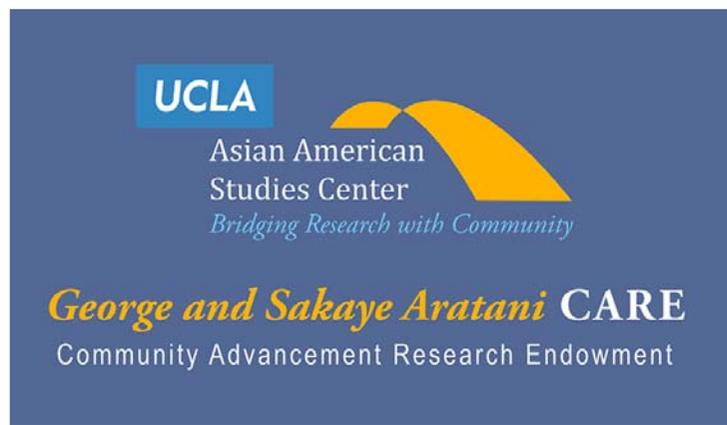
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2018-19 GEORGE AND SAKAYE ARATANI 'COMMUNITY ADVANCEMENT RESEARCH ENDOWMENT' AWARDS GIVEN

The UCLA Asian American Studies Center is pleased to announce on March 12 that 15 community groups and individuals have been awarded 2018-19 George and Sakaye Aratani Community Advancement Research Endowments. The awardees include the Gardena Pioneer Project, the Gardena Valley Japanese Cultural Institute, the Go for Broke National Education Center, the Grateful Crane Ensemble, the Japanese American Cultural & Community Center, the Japanese Community Youth Council, Mary Uyematsu Kao, Kizuna, Koreisha Senior Care & Advocacy, the Nichi Bei Foundation, the UCLA Nikkei Student Union, UCLA Nikkei Student Union Odori, Rising Stars Youth Leadership



Program and Vigilant Love.

The George and Sakaye Aratani “Community Advancement Research Endowment” or Aratani CARE Awards are given to projects that will benefit and advance

the Japanese American community. The award application process for 2019-20 begins in December. Projects that strengthen ties between the Japanese American community and UCLA students,

staff and faculty receive particular consideration. Award recipients must list and acknowledge UCLA's Asian American Studies Center and the Aratani CARE Award as co-sponsors on public relations and programs.

Nonprofit organizations and qualified individuals are invited to apply for awards that generally range from, but are not limited to, \$1,000-\$5,000. Information about the funding and how to apply is available at the Aratani CARE website at <http://www.aratanicare.org/>.

Specific questions about the Aratani CARE Award that are not covered on the website can be sent to the Aratani Care Team's e-mail address at aratanicare@aaasc.ucla.edu.

PACIFIC CITIZEN



2019 SPRING CAMPAIGN

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

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A MOTHER'S TAKE

THE GREATEST OF THESE IS LOVE

By Marsha Aizumi

Last month, a special session was called within the United Methodist Conference to specifically address the issue of LGBTQ individuals serving in clergy positions and performing same-sex marriages, which has not been allowed. Being raised in a Japanese American Methodist church and still a member of one, I was very interested in this special convening, hoping to hear that the church I was raised in would finally let LGBTQ clergy serve and marry same-sex couples.

From what I had heard from Methodist LGBTQ individuals there was great hope, especially since many of their churches were becoming more welcoming to the LGBTQ community. At Okaeri 2018, a short documentary was unveiled that featured Rev. Allison Mark from Faith United Methodist Church, who talked about the need for acceptance for LGBTQ individuals.

And so I joined all the hopeful who believed that the Methodist church would move toward a more inclusive stance called the One Church Plan. This plan gave churches latitude to decide what this stance would look like. Many churches within the denomination (like in

Africa and Russia) are decades behind in this issue, so this would give them the opportunity to slowly move to a more inclusive position.

That wasn't to be the case. Although it was a relatively close vote (a 50-vote difference), the Methodist conference voted to stay with a more Traditional Plan, which would not allow clergy to marry same-sex couples or serve if they were LGBTQ. It was a heartbreaking message to send to their LGBTQ clergy, the LGBTQ community and the families that love their LGBTQ children.

Many were devastated and deeply hurt. I heard from different sources how toxic it was to be at this event, how tears flowed from the vote of nonacceptance and how clergy both LGBTQ and allies walked away stunned and grieving from the experience.

In a Facebook post, Rev. Mark shared, "I humbly apologize for the harm that the UMC denomination has inflicted on the LGBTQIA community. Everyone is of sacred worth, no matter what anyone else may say to the contrary. In the Western Jurisdiction and at Faith UMC, I can speak with confidence that our doors are always open to all because ALL MEANS ALL."

West Los Angeles UMC, a church that became reconciling in 2017, posted this comment on its Facebook page: "In the midst of a painful and divisive General Conference,

the Western Jurisdiction will lead the way in demonstrating One Faith, One Church, One Commitment to Serving Christ, and an Inclusive Welcome to All People."

Both Rev. Gary Oba and Rev. Janet Cromwell have been amazing advocates for the LGBTQ community, inviting Aiden and I to speak and hosting an event where people from their church vulnerably shared their experiences being LGBTQ.

Finally, I received an email from the Sage Granada Park UMC, which is the church where our PFLAG San Gabriel Valley Asian Pacific Islander group meets. Rev. George Marsden reached out to me after the vote and said, "Please be assured, that the SGVAPI PFLAG still has a home at Sage Granada Park UMC. I want to continue providing space and support for the important conversations that PFLAG encourages."

After the news came out about the vote, I texted Aiden to see if he was OK. He said he was fine, since he has no ties to religion any longer. This was a child that loved church and God so much that at one time he wore a bracelet that said WWJD or *what would Jesus do*. But today, he doesn't feel connected to religion. For now, I think that is OK . . . at least he is not hearing hurtful messages that tell him he is unworthy of love and belonging.

It is so hard for me to see LGBTQ individuals

choose between church and their own well-being, when the church is where we go often go for comfort, strength and a place that fills a special part of who we are.

I met a young gay individual recently who shared with me that he has moved away from his conservative Asian church. He grew up in the church and really misses it, but like Aiden, he no longer trusts it to be a place where he is unconditionally accepted and embraced. I find that heartbreaking and wonder if God's heart is breaking, too.

It is also hard for me to see churches asking parents of LGBTQ individuals to choose between their church and their child. My child did not choose to be who he is, but I have a choice and so does the church. I choose to love him and stand by him, like many Methodist churches.

I am so grateful for the Methodist Western Jurisdiction, who are taking an inclusive stand despite the United Methodist conference vote. They are choosing to love not judge, to welcome not reject, to be open to change, not guided by ways of the past, but looking forward to what will bring greater humanity to the world in the present and the future.

*"And now these three remain:
faith, hope and love.
But the greatest of these is love."*

1 Corinthians 13:13:

Marsha Aizumi is an advocate in the LGBT community and author of the book "Two Spirits, One Heart: A Mother, Her Transgender Son and Their Journey to Love and Acceptance."



By Judd Matsunaga, Esq.

LEGAL-EASE: AN ATTORNEY'S PERSPECTIVE

MAKING ENDS MEET

Here's a frightening statistic: More than 25 million Americans aged 60-plus are economically insecure, which means that millions of seniors struggle to meet their monthly expenses, even though they live above the federal poverty level of \$29,425 per year for a single person and are not considered "poor."

Furthermore, 1 in 7 seniors have no retirement savings whatsoever (*Source: The National Council on Aging*). These older adults struggle with rising housing costs and health-care bills, inadequate nutrition, lack of access to transportation, diminished savings and job loss (*Source: Bankrate.com*).

On average, older women received about \$4,500 less annually in Social Security benefits in 2014 than older men due to lower lifetime earnings, time taken off for caregiving, occupational segregation into lower wage work and other issues. Older women of color fared even worse (*SSA, 2015*).

Imagine pitching your tent on the edge of a cliff — one major adverse life event would

push you over. That is an everyday struggle for seniors who are living near the poverty level. For example, the loss of a spouse could mean a 50 percent loss of income. It's no wonder that many seniors are all stressed-out.

Unfortunately, Medicare is not a fix-all program for the elderly. Medicare will not cover all your medical costs. If you get sick, the out-of-pocket expenses for your medical care can be quite extensive. In fact, studies estimate that 1 in 5 seniors skipped seeing their doctor because of high out-of-pocket costs.

We all know that seniors can face huge hits to their pocketbooks from health-care costs. According to a report by the Employee Benefits Research Institute, in 2011, the average out-of-pocket household cost of health care for seniors 85 and older was \$6,603, constituting 19 percent of total household expenses.

Nursing-home stays place a particularly big financial burden on the elderly. Of those 85 and older, 62.3 percent had stayed in a nursing home overnight before death, and 51.6 percent were living in a nursing home before death. For people in that age group, during a two-year period, the average cost of a nursing-home stay was \$24,185.

Now, I'm not a financial planner, but I did graduate from UCLA with a Bachelor of Arts degree in economics. So, if you're struggling

to make ends meet, I know there's only two possible solutions: (1) increase your income; or (2) reduce your spending. There are two public programs that might help you do both.

In my article "What Is In-Home Supportive Services" (*Pacific Citizen, July 2018*), I discussed how to increase your income by qualifying for a little-known public program called "In Home Supportive Services." IHSS will send you money each month if you can first qualify for Medi-Cal.

Now, I want to address how to reduce your spending. The answer is the same: Qualify for Medi-Cal. Other patients, who go to the same doctors and pharmacists that you go to, will pull a white card with "State of California" on it. That's a Medi-Cal card. No more "co-pays." You are now "Medi-Medi," i.e., Medicare and Medi-Cal.

You can qualify for Medi-Cal and keep your home, your income, your savings, retirement accounts and your car, even if your loved one is already in a nursing home. If you were told you have too many assets to qualify, you may convert nonexempt assets into exempt assets. If you were told the state will take your house, there are legal ways to protect your home.

You may also "spend-down" excess assets to qualify for Medi-Cal. For example, you can pay off your mortgage, remodel or repair your

home, buy new furniture, pay off other bills and debts and/or buy new clothing or medical equipment. You may also buy a new car even if you don't drive.

But, be careful! Medi-Cal uses a 30-month "look-back" period to determine if a Medi-Cal applicant made an "improper" transfer. This doesn't mean that every gift you made in the previous 30 months will result in a penalty. You can still give away or transfer property and be eligible for Medi-Cal depending on when the gift was made and how much you gave away.

Simply put, even if you have been told you have too much money to qualify for Medi-Cal, you can legally gift away excess money if done properly. The rules are very tricky. It would be advisable not to gift or transfer any assets away without first consulting with an attorney with experience in Medi-Cal qualifications.

Judd Matsunaga is the founding attorney of Elder Law Services of California, a law firm that specializes in Medi-Cal Planning, Estate Planning and Probate. He can be contacted at (310) 348-2995 or judd@elder-lawcalifornia.com. The opinions expressed in this article are the author's own and do not necessarily reflect the view of the Pacific Citizen or JACL. The information presented does not constitute legal or tax advice and should not be treated as such.

SAVE THE DATE: COPANI (PAN AMERICAN NIKKEI CONVENTION) 2019

The international convention is set to be held in San Francisco's Japantown the weekend of Sept 20-22.

PHOTO: COPANI

SAN FRANCISCO — In case you haven't heard of COPANI, it stands for the Spanish words *Convención Panamericana Nikkei*, which translates to Pan American Nikkei Convention. It is the destination conference for international Nikkeis—Japanese descendants—from all across the Americas, bringing together hundreds of people from more than 14 countries. Although it is not well known here in the United States, it has been held every two years since 1981 in a member country of the Asociación Panamericana Nikkei (APN) or Pan American Nikkei Association (PANA).

At the previous COPANI in Lima, Peru, in 2017, APN delegates chose San Francisco, a city known for its rich and diverse history and home to one of only three remaining Japantowns in the United States, to host the next convention.

Previously held in Los Angeles in 1989 and New York City in 2001, this convention is returning to the U.S. for the first time in 18 years. Set for Sept. 20-22, COPANI XX will aim to continue the tradition of exchanging experiences and knowledge by bringing new visions, ideas and opportunities to various communities with a forward-thinking San Francisco approach to technology.

This year's organizing committee is being led by President Roji Oyama, who is looking forward to welcoming former U.S. Secretary of Commerce and U.S. Secretary of



PHOTO: COPANI/APN

The COPANI 2019 Organizing Committee with the APN (PANA) delegates at the official residence of the Consul General of Japan in San Francisco after the APN delegates meeting and site inspection in September 2018. Sitting (from left) are APN President Fernando Suenaga, Consul General Tomochika Uyama and COPANI 2019 Organizing Committee President Roji Oyama.

Transportation Norman Y. Mineta as the convention's keynote speaker, as well as other guests including Art Miki, past president of the National Association of Japanese Canadians; Carole Hayashino, president emerita of the Japanese Cultural Center of Hawaii; and Alberto Shunji Matsumoto, a consultant/scholar from Buenos Aires.

"This event will bring together Nikkei from Canada, Hawaii, Latin America, Japan and Europe," said Oyama. "This event will offer a rare opportunity to engage with fellow Nikkei who share our ancestral roots

but have had very unique and different immigrant experiences in their respective countries. Attending my first COPANI in Bolivia in 2003 totally transformed my own self-image and my perception of what it is to be Nikkei. The meaning of 'Nikkei pride' was redefined and expanded by my encounters."

"As Nikkei, it's important to improve current situations for a better future by learning about each other's communities and exchanging ideas. The next COPANI happening in my hometown of San Francisco will be a



PHOTO: ASUKA NAGASE

Delegates from the U.S. at the AELU Matsuri, held during and in conjunction with COPANI Lima 2017.

great opportunity to share the Japanese American experience with new friends," said COPANI VP Asuka Nagase, who attended COPANI for the first time in 2017 with COPANI Secretary Lesli Hamamoto.

Register today at copani.org to participate in this three-day, one-of-a-kind, international event packed with presentations, workshops on various topics and other activities.

Scheduled workshops will cover



Official event poster

topics including social justice/civil rights (issues facing current communities and beyond), business (the Japanese value of *ikigai* and its significance to one's career path), youth/young adult (the Nippon Foundation and Discovery Nikkei will present the Global Nikkei Survey on

young Nikkei), community (Densho and Discovery Nikkei will present the importance of preserving community through documenting stories) and arts/culture (working with the National Japanese American Historical Society to present a virtual exhibit of up-and-coming young Nikkei artists).

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'NORMAN MINETA AND HIS LEGACY: AN AMERICAN STORY'

The documentary based on the statesman's life premieres May 20 on PBS.



PHOTO: COURTESY OF THE MINETA LEGACY PROJECT

The Hon. Norman Mineta is a man of many firsts: first Asian American mayor of a major city, the first Japanese American from the mainland to be elected to Congress and the first Asian American to serve in a presidential cabinet. A documentary on his life is set to air in May on PBS.

SAN FRANCISCO — "Norman Mineta and His Legacy: An American Story," a documentary portrait of the American statesman and trailblazer, premieres on PBS on May 20 at 9 p.m. ET (check local listings).

Directed by Dianne Fukami and co-produced by Fukami and Debra Nakatomi, the film includes interviews with the two presidents under whom Mineta served as a cabinet secretary: Democrat Bill Clinton and Republican George W. Bush.

Also interviewed in the documentary is retired Republican Sen. Alan Simpson, who formed a lifelong friendship with Mineta when they met as 11-year-olds at Heart Mountain, Wyo., the U.S. concentration camp where Mineta and his family were incarcerated during World War II.

Mineta is a man of many firsts: the first Asian American mayor of a major city (San Jose, Calif.); the first Japanese American from the mainland to be elected to Congress; and the first Asian American to serve in a presidential

cabinet. But beyond these groundbreaking achievements, Mineta personifies the dreams and aspirations of many Americans.

A U.S. citizen by birth, he was imprisoned by his own country for his Japanese ancestry, yet he steadfastly remained a patriot, leading a Congressional effort for an apology from the U.S. government and redress for Japanese Americans, 120,000 of whom were imprisoned during the war. That effort finally came to fruition when the Civil Liberties Act of 1988 was signed into law by President Ronald Reagan.

During his 21 years in Congress, Mineta worked to right other wrongs. Retired Rep. Barney Frank of Massachusetts speaks in the film of the role Mineta played in endorsing same-sex marriage. A co-author of the 1991 Americans with Disabilities Act, Mineta pushed to make public facilities accessible after navigating San Jose in a wheelchair and realizing it was impossible to cross the street. Because of the ADA, streets around the country now have cutouts for wheelchair access.

When Mineta was serving as Secretary of Transportation under Bush, the president learned firsthand of Mineta's time in a concentration camp. A few months later, in the aftermath of Sept. 11, 2001, the knowledge of what his cabinet secretary went through had an impact.

"One of the important things about Norm's experience is that sometimes we lose our soul as a nation," said Bush. "The notion of 'all equal under God' sometimes disappears. And 9/11 certainly challenged that premise. So, right after 9/11, I was deeply concerned that our country would lose its way and treat people who may not worship like their neighbor as noncitizens. So, I went to a mosque. And in some ways, Norm's example inspired me. In other words, I didn't want our country to do to others what had happened to Norm."

In 2006, Sec. Mineta resigned from the Bush administration. He had served more than five years, longer than any Secretary of Transportation in American history. In his three decades as a public servant, he had served as a city councilman, a mayor,

» See MINETA on page 9



Japanese Church of Christ Red Cross volunteers are pictured in 1923.



A photo taken at the World War II memorial in Salt Lake City, date unknown

A photo taken at the Salt Lake City Buddhist Church in 1962



PHOTO: COURTESY OF SHERRIE HAYASHI

DID YOU KNOW? EVERYTHING ABOUT JA HISTORY IN UTAH

Set to host this year's JACL National Convention in July, Utah's vitally important JA heritage plays a large role in its rich history.

By Alex Hirai on behalf of the 2019 Utah JACL Convention Committee

JACL's Salt Lake, Mt. Olympus and Wasatch Front North chapters are hosting the 2019 National JACL Convention in Salt Lake City, Utah. Many may wonder why Utah has three JACL chapters in a "place like Utah." However, Utahns and Utah have a long, fascinating and prominent place in Japanese American and JACL history. We hope you will join us at this year's upcoming National Convention to learn more about who we are.

Japanese Americans are a significant part of Utah history. Those who chose to come to Utah faced racial prejudice and economic hardship. Many of the Japanese Americans who reside in the state today arrived there because they were wrongfully incarcerated in American concentration camps during World War II. It may not seem obvious, but Japanese Americans play a crucial role in understanding not only Utah's history but also the history of the United States as a whole.

Japanese immigration to Utah began in the latter parts of the 19th century. Chinese immigration was halted with the passage of the Chinese Exclusion Act of 1882, and Japanese laborers were utilized to fill the void. This act of law was made permanent in 1904 and was the predecessor to the immigration limits enacted

in 1924. Up to this point, there were not many Japanese immigrants residing in the U.S., but with the ban on Chinese immigrants in effect, many Japanese left their ancestral home in search of economic freedom and opportunity.

As a result of the Chinese Exclusion Act, there was a need for cheap, sustainable labor. In 1884, an agreement between Hawaii and Japan led to a spike in Japanese immigration. More than 83,000 Japanese immigrants (mostly sugar planters) had arrived in Hawaii by 1899, and a total of 199,134 Japanese resided in Hawaii by 1924.

Similarly, Japanese immigration on the West Coast of the mainland U.S. increased after the Chinese Exclusion Act. Between 1888 and 1924, more than 200,000 Japanese immigrants had made their homes in the Pacific states of California, Oregon and Washington.

In Utah, the first Japanese immigrants were a group of women brought as prostitutes for the Chinese and white railroad workers in 1882. After Chinese immigration was halted, Japanese laborers were brought in to continue work on the railroad. These laborers were likely the first to settle in and around the Salt Lake Valley.

By 1920, there were 2,936 Japanese people living in Utah, according to the United States census. Many of these immigrants were recruited by Japanese labor agents from the Hashimoto family. In 1902, Edward Daigoro Hashimoto founded the E.D. Hashimoto

Company, a labor agency located in Salt Lake's Japantown in the heart of the city.

Although the same employment standards that were afforded to white laborers were not offered to people of color, Japanese laborers found work wherever they could. Along with work on the railroad, Japanese people worked in coal-mines, as housemaids and as farmers. Those who worked in agriculture brought traditional farming practices from Japan, which helped to facilitate their success in the state.

The Japanese community throughout the state sought to maintain their cultural identity and traditional practices. The first Japanese-language newspaper was the *Rocky Mountain Times*, which first began publication in 1907. In 1914, the *Utah Nippo* began publication, around the same time Japanese fish markets and businesses opened their doors. The community began to thrive.

Japanese people also established Buddhist churches in Ogden and Salt Lake City in order to fully engage in religious life. By 1918, both Buddhist churches established *fujinkai* (women's clubs), which helped address the needs of women in the community. Along with these traditional forms of religious expression, in that same year, the Japanese Church of Christ in Salt Lake City was established.

Despite the many gains Japanese Americans had achieved up to this point, public perception of the Japanese community, particularly Japanese laborers (who posed a threat to white class interests), were at an all-time low.

Much like the Chinese immigrants of the past, Japanese culture was viewed as backwards and strange, thus confirming in American minds that Japanese people were not viable candidates for citizenship. Although there was never full segregation of schools in Utah, Japanese children were increasingly excluded from extracurricular activities.

The Johnson-Reed Act of 1924 set harsh immigration quotas not only for Japanese immigrants, but all of Asia, as well as most



Girls wearing traditional kimonos in front of the Japanese Church of Christ, date unknown



The Japanese Church of Christ congregation in 1963

PHOTOS: ROB BUSCHER

NOT ALL BRIDGES ARE CREATED EQUALLY

Having just returned from Japan as a chaperone for Kakehashi trip participants, the writer reflects on the Japan-U.S. relationship and making this program equal for all.

By Rob Buscher, Contributor

When I first learned that I was selected as a chaperone for the February Kakehashi trip, I was thrilled to have the opportunity to share my knowledge of Japan with fellow Japanese Americans who were likely visiting Japan for the first time.

I had the privilege of growing up with my Issei *hiobaachan* in my life until the age of 18, so my sister and I grew up with a direct link to Japan that few of our Yonsei peers have. I had always been interested in visiting Japan, but after *hiobaachan* passed away during my freshman year of college, that was the push that motivated me to study abroad.

Having never studied Japanese language prior to moving to Kyoto in the summer of 2008 at the age of 20, I spent my first six weeks in an intensive Japanese language program and living in a homestay.

After that, I moved to Tokyo, where I studied at Temple University Japan Campus for the following fall semester, an experience that changed my life and inspired me to pursue a graduate degree in Japanese studies and eventually enabled me to teach this subject in the university setting for the past eight years.

Japan, like all countries, has both its positives and negatives and to ignore that fact will only result in a very superficial understanding of the culture and its people. In all honesty, it was the negative aspects of my experience living there that encouraged me to become more involved with the study of Japan.

As a white-passing person of mixed-race

A view of Tokyo from Ikebukuro hotel



View from the scenic train in Aizu



Rob Buscher (bottom, right) with Shimoda family relatives in 2008



Group D outside the Imperial Residence

Japanese descent, I knew fully well that I would not be accepted in Japan as a Japanese person, but I did not realize how much of my upbringing had been influenced by Japanese culture either.

It took me by surprise to feel as comfortable as I did in Japan, at least during my first couple of months there that were spent in a homestay located in a suburban/rural area called Uji, located south of Kyoto by about 20 kilometers. Living with a Japanese family and taking intensive language classes five days a week helped me to acclimate to the culture quickly, and by the end of the program, I spoke passable Japanese.

By the time I began school at Temple University Japan Campus in Tokyo that fall, I felt like I had finally found the place where I belonged. As the months went by however, I began to see Japan beyond the rose-tinted glasses through which I first perceived it.

I realized that little of what I had initially believed about Japan was

true, or at least not in that hypermodern megalopolis. By the end of my stay, I was convinced that Tokyo was no different than any other major world city in which unchecked progress and mass consumerist culture have eroded the quality of life — a place where global trends had replaced local/regional culture and the things I loved most about Japan seemed to be a distant pipedream.

Whatever acceptance and belonging I had felt from the rural/suburban community in Uji was replaced by a deep sense of isolation, lost in a constant crowd of millions. Yet, as I boarded the plane back to America, I felt a profound sadness, and as the plane took off, I silently wept for the things that could have been,

the things that almost were and the things that never would be.

Despite my love-hate re-

lationship with Japan during that first stay, in the months after my return, I found myself longing for the aspects of Japanese culture that I had taken for granted while living there.

For instance, the first time I ate at a subpar restaurant after returning from Japan was a terrible surprise. In the six months I had been living there, not once had I eaten a bad meal — the thought that I could go to a restaurant and spend money for something that was not satisfying sparked a major period of introspection about what else I had grown accustomed to that was no longer part of my daily reality.

Eventually, that curiosity led me to apply to a graduate program in Japanese studies, where I was able to develop an expert knowledge in Japanese culture and history, as well as a better understanding of how Japan got to be the way it is today — both its positive and negative aspects.

Now, just over a decade later, Japan has become a major part of my daily life as I pursue a dual career in academia and nonprofit arts administration. It was a difficult path at times, but had I not experienced the heartbreak of realizing Japan was not everything I hoped it was, I most likely would not have been inspired to take that next step in my career, which completely changed my life for the better.

Ultimately, there are certain lessons you must learn from experience, and I fear that this is probably one of them. That said, I had hoped to convey some of my perspective to the Nikkei participants of the Kakehashi trip I was chaperoning, who like me, might be seeing more of themselves in the culture of Japan than they had previously thought was possible.

Therefore, if they ever decided to pursue future study or work opportunities in Japan, they would have a more complete understand-



Beautifully prepared Kaiseki dishes



Welcoming party at the Aizu-Wakamatsu station



Sunrise over the Daikura ski resort, where the group spent its first night in Aizu



Aizu-Wakamatsu Castle, where the last samurai fought against Emperor Meiji's forces

ing than I did about what they were getting themselves into.

Unfortunately, I never got that chance because in February, the Japan International Cooperation Center (JICE) (who coordinates Kakehashi on behalf of Japan's Ministry of Foreign Affairs) decided to segregate the record number of 35 non-Japanese Asian American participants into their own separate tour group.

As a chaperone of the non-Japanese group, neither myself nor any of the other student participants were able to interact with the Nikkei participants besides the first and last day of the program.

At times, the dual mission of the JACL as a multiethnic civil rights organization that advocates on the behalf of all people, and also an organization that honors and promotes the cultural legacy of our Japanese American community, are difficult to reconcile.

In this particular case of the February 2019 Kakehashi trip, I found these missions to be wholly at odds. While the Japanese government regularly conducts Kakehashi trips around the world with other groups outside of the Nikkei diaspora, the trip sections allocated to JACL were envisioned (by the government of Japan at least) to specifically cater to Japanese Americans exploring their ancestral culture of origin.

However, being that our membership encompasses a number of other Asian American youth, JACL advocated for the inclusion of our full membership, regardless of ethnicity.

In the past, there have been a dozen or less non-Japanese Asian Americans included on this trip, who have been split amongst the

sections of Nikkei participants. While this may not have always been a perfect system (particularly in cases when speakers refer to the entire group's Japanese heritage), it allowed for the non-Japanese participants to experience the trip alongside their Nikkei peers, and both groups benefited from the other's perspective while learning about Japan.

Instead by segregating our groups, the non-Japanese students felt that they were being unfairly discriminated against and a tension developed, which should be expected when one out of several historically marginalized communities is suddenly prioritized over the others. In that respect, the result was not unlike that of the model-minority myth in driving a wedge between communities of color.

Despite my initial disappointment at being selected to chaperone a segregated non-Japanese group of Asian American students, I realized that my background in Japanese Studies and experience living in Japan (in addition to my work in Pan Asian American spaces through the Philadelphia Asian American Film Festival) had uniquely qualified me to support these students through their learning experience.

In the end, I'm really grateful to have been their chaperone because the diversity of participants made for an extremely compelling dialogue throughout the trip that was equally enriching to myself as it was for the students.

Each day as we traveled by bus or train, I helped the students to unpack what they were learning, leading discussions and giving them space to explore their understanding of the trip in a group reflection setting.

By the end of the trip, our group felt that the Kakehashi Project was a positive life-changing experience for all of them, but they were also conflicted by their emotions about being segregated from their Nikkei peers.

From the Japanese government's perspective, it is easy to see how the segregation of participants might not raise concern given the lack of context in a culture that is still about

98 percent ethnically homogenous.

Unfortunately, for communities of color hailing from the U.S., the historical parallels were far too relevant to go unnoticed.

Our non-Japanese group was excluded from certain key events, including a visit to the Japanese prime minister's residence. We were also sat in the rear of the room with limited visibility during the few events that all trip participants were invited to attend, and we were also made to wait longer to enter and leave these spaces. Regardless of their intention, the non-Japanese participants felt that they were less of a priority to our Japanese hosts than the Nikkei participants.

Obviously, there are many problematic implications about a civil rights organization participating in a program that actively segregates its participants. If JACL is to remain involved in the Kakehashi Project, I believe we must help MOFA to understand that they must integrate future trips.

Based on the debrief phone call we held amongst JACL National staff and the February chaperones, everyone seems in agreement on this point. The only alternative I see to integrating the trip is to completely exclude non-Japanese applicants from JACL's Kakehashi, which would be of great detriment to all those involved.

I would also argue that there is significant potential to expand the scope of Kakehashi by having a more intentional dialogue about how we build diplomatic bridges between various Asian American ethnic communities and our respective countries of origin.

It cannot be overstated how substantial the history of Japanese military aggression remains in the memories of our more recent Asian immigrant communities in the United States.

My wife, who teaches in a bilingual Chinatown preschool, has witnessed, on several occasions, children under the age of 5 playing Chinese vs. Japanese much in the style of cowboys and Indians.

Oftentimes while I am representing the JACL at other Asian ethnic community events, members of their immigrant generation have approached me to say how meaningful it is to have someone from the Japanese American community standing with them, in light of the past conflicts in their homeland.

As multigenerational Americans, most of us are far enough removed from the context of modern Asian history that we fail to recognize the significance it plays in our ability (or lack thereof) to build coalitions amongst other AAPI communities. However, it is clear that these negative connotations do still exist amongst recent immigrants from some of the countries that Japan colonized during the Imperial era.

An integrated Kakehashi trip provides a tremendous opportunity for young Nikkei and other non-Japanese Asian Americans to build mutual admiration and respect for each other's cultural perspectives.

Although somewhat outside the scope of Kakehashi as currently conceived, I do believe that this kind of approach might even result in some successful trilateral diplomacy. Since the majority of Asian Americans in the group I chaperoned were the children of immigrants (as future applicants will presumably be also), their concept of Japan is more likely to be colored by negative stigma from the Imperial Japanese period.

The Kakehashi program has an opportunity to bridge this divide and help the immigrant parent generation understand that the Japan of today is nothing like that during the Second World War. Perhaps in the long term, this goodwill may extend to other friends and family members still living abroad in their country of origin.

From JACL's perspective, this approach would also be advantageous in helping to develop a stronger connection to the other AAPI ethnic communities who are not often represented amongst our membership. This provides an excellent recruitment opportunity for younger and more diverse members who can help expand the types of advocacy JACL is able to do, through more nuanced understanding of the lived experiences of other marginalized communities.

I want to make clear that my intent in writing this is to provide constructive feedback through which this program can improve. As I previously stated, all of my participants in the group I chaperoned left Japan feeling positive about the trip overall, particularly the relationships they were able to develop with the host families during their short home stays.

As a chaperone, I was also deeply touched by the hospitality and generosity of our local hosts in Minami-Aizu. During my time living in Japan and subsequent travels back, I have mainly stayed in Kansai and Hiroshima-ken, where my relatives reside — two areas that I consider to be the most welcoming and warmest culturally.

In our short four-day stay in the Aizu region however, I felt that same openness and comfort that initially drew me to Japan, which has ultimately kept me coming back to the regions and communities I hold dear. I will certainly make an effort to visit Minami-Aizu again on a future trip to Japan, and I now have a renewed interest in traveling to other regions throughout the country.

The Kakehashi experience far exceeded my expectations in all respects. Although I still would have preferred to spend time with the Nikkei students, it was a great pleasure to get to know a number of the young 20-something students and recent graduates who may well become future leaders within the AAPI movement.

Having witnessed the Kakehashi program from the ground level, I think that this is the most important U.S.-Japan Relations initiative of its kind.

During our homestay visit, one of the host mothers remarked that she was so fond of her three host boys that they reminded her of her own grandsons. More than a few tears were shed at the host family farewell party, and I know many of the participants have already begun exchanging letters and other digital communications with their families.

We as Japanese Americans (and Asian Americans) have much knowledge to be gained from our overseas cousins, as we continue to pursue a more meaningful relationship with the people of Japan and their culture. The government of Japan has been very generous in providing this tremendous learning experience for the Nikkei youth and other Asian American communities. I can only hope that they will be open to learning from our American perspective as well, and work with us to create a Kakehashi trip experience that is equal for all.



Joseph Nguyen and Kevin Pham show our JICE coordinators their calligraphy done with the host family.



Participants were interviewed by a local TV station.



Kevin Pham prepares okonomiyaki with his host mother.



Participants purify themselves before entering Sensoji.

UTAH » continued from page 5

There were 10 incarceration camps located in seven states; Arizona, Arkansas, Colorado, California, Idaho, Utah and Wyoming. Just more than 11,000 Japanese Americans were sent to Topaz, a camp built near Delta, Utah, where they would spend the next three years of their lives. The Utah legislature considered incarceration of Japanese in Utah, but it never passed. However, lawmakers did pass legislation prohibiting the purchase of land by immigrants.

At this time, the Japanese American Citizens League was forced to relocate to Salt Lake City. The first JACL Credit Union was established in the area in 1943 and was vitally important in securing loans and economic certainty for Japanese Americans after WWII.

Mike Masaoka, a University of Utah graduate, was the National Secretary of the JACL, and he worked tirelessly to advocate for Japanese Americans. Masaoka was one of the leading advocates for Japanese Americans being allowed to volunteer for the draft.

In 1943, the U.S. government gave Japanese Americans the opportunity to volunteer for the draft. A large number of young Japanese men — from both within and outside of the incarceration camps — volunteered for the Army, thus forming the segregated 442nd Regimental Combat Team.

Many Japanese incarcerated in Topaz fought and died for a country that had stripped them of their most basic civil liberties. The 44nd became the most-decorated unit for its size and duration in American military history and came to be known as the “Purple Heart Battalion” for the amount of Japanese American soldiers killed or wounded in the war.

For those incarcerated inside the camps, life was hard, but they managed to form a community within their harsh confines. Incarcerates formed schools and baseball leagues. Near the end of the war, many were allowed to get jobs outside of camp. However, despite this newfound community, most longed to be free and wondered when, if ever, they would be allowed to go home.

The end of World War II brought new fear to those who had been incarcerated. With only what they could carry, a train ticket and \$25 given to them by the U.S. government, many Japanese Americans faced the reality that society did not accept them as equal citizens.

Just as they had before the war, Japanese Americans faced prejudice and hate in eve-



JCC's congregation on Aug. 24, 2018

ryday life. Most families were afraid to express their cultural identity in any significant way because of the persecution they were confronted with.

Many who were incarcerated in Topaz stayed in Utah. In 1947, Japanese were again allowed to buy land in Utah with the repeal of the Alien Land Act. In 1950, there was a reported increase of 1,183 Japanese residents in Utah.

Of those who stayed in Utah, many relocated to Salt Lake's Japantown, which grew in population and size. Those who didn't find work in the city found jobs as rural laborers and became vitally important to the supply of farm labor after the war. As Japanese Americans in Utah gained full control of their own lives, they were eventually able to buy their own lands and control their economic future.

This economic upturn took a big hit in 1967 when city officials used eminent domain laws to force the Japanese community to leave the area deemed “Japantown” to make way for the proposed Salt Palace, the main event center for the city.

The only remaining structures from Japantown today are the Japanese Church of Christ and the Salt Lake Buddhist Temple. This issue is still highly important for Japanese Americans in Utah. For them, history has been a series of gains and losses. For the few Japantowns that remain throughout the country today, development in the area continues to encroach and threaten what remains of a vibrant community.

In 1988, President Ronald Reagan signed the Civil Liberties Act, which granted a formal apology and reparations of \$20,000 to each individual wrongfully incarcerated during WWII.

Although this may seem to be a substantial

Clothing and drygoods were packed in front of JCC's second building location at 135 W. 100 South to aid Tokyo's 1923 Kanto earthquake victims.



The Japanese Church of Christ and the Salt Lake Buddhist Temple (pictured at left) are the only remaining structures that still exist in Utah's Japantown today. The JCC celebrated its 100th anniversary in 2018 and was featured in the *Pacific Citizen's* Holiday Issue.



amount of money, many have criticized this action as not being equal to the suffering the Japanese American community underwent during WWII. Additionally, many have criticized the precise language used in the legislation, as it does not allow for the possibility of redress and reparations for other historically marginalized communities in the U.S.

Japanese Americans in Utah continued to fight for space in Utah politics and society after the war. In 1947, Wataru “Wat” Misaka was drafted by the New York Knicks of the National Basketball Assn., breaking the color barrier in professional basketball the same year Jackie Robinson broke the color barrier in professional baseball.

In 1958, Salt Lake City and Matsumoto City in Japan became Sister Cities, marking a turn in public perception of Japanese Americans in the state.

In the same way Misaka broke the color barrier for professional basketball, Judge Raymond Uno broke the color barrier in Utah politics, becoming the first judge of color in the Utah court system in 1974 and eventually working his way to become the first judge of color to preside over a district court in 1985, when he was elected to Utah's Third District court.

In 2005, Floyd Mori, a longtime Japanese rights advocate and Utah native, became the interim director of the National JACL after tireless work in the Mount Olympus chapter.

In present times, Japanese Americans con-

tinue to make a difference in Utah politics. Jani Iwamoto, a state senator from Salt Lake City, proposed legislation in Utah to curb the amount of gun violence in public universities in the state. Japanese American voices in Utah remain important and necessary in order for the government to remain responsive to its constituency.

Despite the many injustices forced upon Japanese Americans in Utah, the community in the state remains active and healthy. Although many of the Issei and Nisei voices from the past are gone, their legacy and sacrifices have not been forgotten.

As we move toward the future, it is vitally important to preserve our cultural heritage so our history is never forgotten. Our history does not only help us protect the Japanese American community, but it also can help us protect other oppressed groups that are in need of justice.

To learn more about JA and JACL history in Utah, please join us in Salt Lake City at the JACL National Convention on July 31-Aug. 4. This year's convention will also feature several exhibits, including Salt Lake's Japantown, sponsored by the J. Willard Marriott Library, Special Collections Dept., and the Golden Spike Railroad, sponsored by the Descendants of Chinese Railroad Workers Assn.

Attendees may also register to visit the Topaz Museum and site as well as visit the LDS Family History Library, the world's largest genealogical library to find out your own family history.

We hope to see you in Utah this summer! ■



A woman dressed in a traditional kimono in front of the JCC, early 1920s



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FRENCH CAMP RECOGNIZES 2019 SCHOLARSHIP WINNERS AND INSTALLS NEW OFFICERS

PHOTOS: COURTESY OF FRENCH CAMP JACL

On a warm Saturday afternoon, the French Camp chapter of the Japanese American Citizens League held its 70th annual Installation and New Year's Luncheon at the Calvary Presbyterian Church in Stockton, Calif., on March 16.

The JACL's French Camp chapter grew out of the Nisei Progressive Society, a group formed after World War II to help rebuild the community and were led by Bob Takahashi, who later became JACL District Governor. In attendance at the luncheon was Katy Komure, a charter member, who still attends board meetings as chapter adviser.

During the luncheon, Scholarship Committee Member Dave Furukawa introduced the two high school seniors who were recognized as recipients of the 2019 French Camp Chapter scholarship for their outstanding community service and leadership potential: Kenichi Watanabe and Samuel Liang.

Watanabe, the son of Steve and Marissa Watanabe and grandson of the late Seiichi and Sueko Watanabe, is a senior at Whitney High School in Rocklin, Calif., where he played on the soccer team and has been an active member of the California Scholarship Federation and Key Club. He has also served as an assistant coach for his local Special Olympics team and participated in broadcast media activities for his school. As a child, Watanabe attended weekend Japanese school



Alan Nishi (right) installed the 2019 French Camp JACL chapter officers on March 16. Pictured (from left) are Jeannie Matsumoto, Mary Nakamura, Karen Nakamura, Bob Asano and Dean Komure. (Not pictured is Marcy Wong.)

at the Port of Sacramento Japanese school and helped preserve the Asano-Watanabe family tradition of pounding mochi for New Year's at the family farm. This fall, he plans to study biology at Sierra College to prepare for a career in the biotechnology industry.

Liang, the son of Sam and Linda Liang and grandson of Kiyoshi and Mari Hayashi, is a senior at Middle College High School in San Pablo, Calif., where he has already

completed 24 units of college credit. He is an active member of the Key Club as well as the Politics and Dance Clubs. Outside of school, Liang enjoys karate, having attained his brown belt. Lastly, he has attended the Buddhist Church from a young age and has received many awards for perfect attendance at Sunday School and held various leadership positions such as Religious Chairperson and Recording Secretary in the Junior Youth Buddhist Assn.



Kenichi Watanabe (left) and Samuel Liang were recognized as this year's French Camp Chapter Scholarship recipients.

Next year, he plans to continue his education at San Joaquin Delta College in preparation for a career in nursing.

Former National JACL Secretary/Treasurer and French Camp member Alan Nishi installed the following slate of officers: President Dean Komure, VP Bob Asano, Treasurer Karen Nakamura, Corresponding Secretary Jeannie Matsumoto, Recording Secretary Mary Nakamura and Membership Chair Marcy Wong.

For more information on the activities of the French Camp chapter, please email FrenchCampJACL@yahoo.com.

COPANI » continued from page 4



Friends Asuka Nagase (left) and Lesli Hamamoto attended COPANI for the first time in November 2017, which took place in Lima, Peru. There, they found out that the next host city was going to be San Francisco, and upon returning home, joined forces with other attendees to form the COPANI San Francisco 2019 Organizing Committee. Nagase serves a vp, while Hamamoto serves as secretary.

The registration fee of \$325 (\$275 for youth/young adults) will go up as it gets closer to the event. Participants are advised to book accommodations at or near Hotel Kabuki or Holiday Inn Golden Gateway soon.

On a first-come, first-serve basis, a limited number of registrants will be invited to attend the Welcome Cocktail Reception at the offi-

cial residence of the Consul General of Japan.

"Youth and young adults are encouraged to attend as this event will be your chance to come together with others to help chart the future," said Oyama.

For more information and special offers, please visit copani.org and www.facebook.com/copani2019.

MINETA » continued from page 4

an 11-term congressman and a cabinet member for both a Democratic and a Republican president.

"Norm Mineta spent his life both proving by his own achievements that America was working for more and more people but also trying to give that chance to everybody else," said President Clinton. "And that's a worthy life. It should be honored, but more importantly, it should be emulated."

The broadcast of the documentary will be accompanied by free online educational curriculum being developed by the Stanford Program for International Cross-Cultural Education at Stanford University.

Featuring original content separate from the film, the curriculum includes a roundtable discussion with high school students discussing their own present-day experiences with discrimination, social activism and leadership.

The modular-based curriculum designed for high school and university educators uses Mineta's life and experiences as touch points to educate students about immigration, civic engagement, leadership, U.S.-Japan relations and justice and reconciliation.

"Norman Mineta and His Legacy: An American Story" is directed and produced by Fukami, co-produced by Fukami and Nakatomi and written by Ken Chowder. The film is narrated by

Wendy Tokuda.

Funding for "Norman Mineta and His Legacy: An American Story" was provided by the Terasaki Family Foundation, the Toshizo Watanabe Foundation, the Sachiko Kuno Foundation, AARP, the Japanese American Community Foundation and other major funders.

ABOUT THE FILMMAKERS

Dianne Fukami (director/co-producer) has produced, directed and written more than a half-dozen documentaries on the Asian American experience (mostly on Japanese American history), which were broadcast on PBS stations throughout the U.S. "Separate Lives, Broken Dreams," about the Chinese Exclusion Act, was nominated for a national Emmy Award; "Starting Over: Japanese Americans After the War" has received scholarly citations for its first-person anecdotes. Her most recent documentary, "Stories From Tohoku," was showcased at CAAMFest in 2014 (formerly the San Francisco Asian International Film Festival) and screened at film festivals in New York and Los Angeles.

Debra Nakatomi (co-producer) is the founder of a strategic communications firm, Nakatomi and Associates, that for more than 25 years has developed issue advocacy and educational campaigns on health, environmental and social issues.

The firm designs social and civic engagement campaigns utilizing the tools of media, messaging and social media. Nakatomi's documentary career began as co-producer of "Stories From Tohoku," with Fukami in 2014, a film about the survivors of the 2011 earthquake, tsunami and nuclear disaster in Japan. The film aired on PBS and screened throughout the U.S. and Japan.

PHOTO: PACIFIC CITIZEN



Norm Mineta and former Sen. Alan Simpson are pictured at Heart Mountain in 2015. The two have maintained a lifelong friendship since first meeting as 11-year-olds at Heart Mountain, Wyo.

A NATIONAL GUIDE TO NOTABLE COMMUNITY EVENTS

CALENDAR

NATIONAL

The 2019 JACL National Convention
Salt Lake City, UT
July 31-Aug. 4

Little America Hotel
500 Main St.

Save the date: Join JACL at its annual National Convention in Salt Lake City! Details regarding registration information will be forthcoming. Don't miss this opportunity to connect with JACLers from across the country as the organization continues its civil rights advocacy mission. **Info: Visit www.jacl.org.**

NCWNP

JACL NCWNP District Awards Banquet

Danville, CA

April 6; 11 a.m.-3 p.m.

Crow Canyon Country Club
711 Silver Lake Dr.

Join the NCWNP as it celebrates JACL's 90th anniversary and recognizes photographer Paul Kitagaki Jr. with the NCWNP District Award of Excellence. The banquet will also honor the unsung heroes from the local chapters whose generosity of spirit and volunteerism helps keep the district vital and relevant. In addition, featured guest speaker will be Elena DeLacy, executive director of the American River Conservancy. **Info: Visit <http://jacl-ncwnp.org>.**

'Growing Up Sansei': DOR Event

Stockton, CA

April 7; 1 p.m.

San Joaquin Delta College Campus
Delta Center for the Arts,
Warren Atherton Theater

5151 Pacific Ave.

Price: Free

The Stockton JACL chapter in partnership with the Asian Pacific Islander American Staff Assn. presents its Day of Remembrance program featuring the Grateful Crane Ensemble, who will perform "Growing Up Sansei" and a staged reading of "Garage Door Opener, a JA Dysfunctional Family Play," followed by a discussion with Satsuki Ina, an expert on Japanese American family dynamics. There will also be a candle-lighting ceremony at the end of the discussion on the main stage. **Info: Contact Steve Sue at (209) 329-0661 or email northwest.pacific@live.com.**

'Moving Mountains: 50 Years of Asian American Studies at SF State'

San Francisco, CA

April 20; 6-9 p.m.

SF State Student Life Events Center
Annex 1

1 N. State St.

Price: \$200

Celebrate the 50th anniversary of the first and largest Asian American Studies department in the nation at this event, which also honors 50 years of community-based educa-

tion and pays tribute to those who founded the department. The gala dinner will also feature a keynote speech by College of Ethnic Studies alumnus and journalist/filmmaker/immigration rights activist Jose Antonio Vargas.

Info: For tickets, visit <https://www.eventbrite.com/e/moving-mountains-50-years-of-asian-american-studies-at-sf-state-tickets-57148330194>.

'Then They Came for Me: Incarceration of Japanese Americans During WWII and the Demise of Civil Liberties' Exhibit

San Francisco, CA

Thru May 27; Wed.-Sun., 10 a.m.-

6 p.m.

The Presidio

100 Montgomery St.

Presented by the Jonathan Logan Family Foundation, this exhibit offers an expanded focus on the experiences of those returning to Northern California following the closing of the incarceration camps following the end of World War II. It also features imagery by American photographers Dorothea Lange and Ansel Adams, alongside works by incarcerated Japanese American artists Toyo Miyatake and Mine Okubo. Combined with additional artifacts made by camp survivors, historical documents, videos and a wide array of cultural, curatorial and political programs, this exhibit illuminates this historical event from several vantage points.

Info: Visit www.ThenTheyCame.org or email info@thentheycame.org.

WakamatsuFest150: The Sesquicentennial Wakamatsu Farm Festival

Placerville, CA

June 6-9; 10 a.m.-4 p.m. daily

Price: Ticket prices vary, packages available; \$5 parking (includes free shuttle); enter coupon code **goldhillsamurai2019** for \$5 discount on multiday festival passes until June 5 only.

Don't miss the world's one and only celebration of 150 years of Japanese American heritage, arts and cuisine at the site of the first Japanese colony in the U.S. This four-day festival will celebrate the arrival at Wakamatsu Farm of the first Japanese colonists on June 8, 1869 and will feature Japanese American performances, music, speakers, demonstrations, vendors, food, crafts, kids activities and much more!

Info: Visit www.ARConservancy.org/wakafest150.

PSW

Tsuruya Kokei: Modern Kabuki Prints Revised & Revisited

Pasadena, CA

Thru July 14

USC Pacific Asia Museum

46 N. Los Robles Ave.

Price: Admission free for members; \$10 General Admission; \$7 Students

and Seniors; Free for Children Under 12

This new exhibition celebrates the 30th anniversary of the contemporary artist's first solo show and features the complete collection of his actor prints from 1984-93. The exhibition also showcases actor prints by Sharaku as well as two-dozen prints by contemporary Japanese and western artists. **Info: Visit pacificasiamuseum.usc.edu or call (626) 449-2742.**

Keiro Caregiver Conference

Pasadena, CA

March 30; 9 a.m.-3 p.m.

Pasadena Buddhist Temple

1993 Glen Ave.

Price: Free, but registration is required.

This free one-day conference continues Keiro's work to support and equip informal caregivers with practical knowledge to enhance the quality of care that our community's older seniors receive. This year will feature two keynote speakers: Patty Watson-Swan, RN, BSN, from Huntington Hospital Senior Care Network and a moderated panel will be held to discuss the challenges of caregiving resulting from complex family dynamics.

Info: To register, visit www.keiro.org/caregiver-conference or call (213) 873-5708.

'Behind Barbed Wire' Book Signing and Reception With Paul Kitagaki Jr.

Los Angeles, CA

April 20; 3-5 p.m.

JANM

100 N. Central Ave.

Price: Event is included with museum admission, but space is limited.

To commemorate the release of his new book "Behind Barbed Wire" and in celebration of his highly regarded exhibition "Gambatte! Legacy of an Enduring Spirit," join photographer Paul Kitagaki Jr. for a special reception that will feature several of the exhibition's subjects. Kitagaki will also be signing copies of his book, which will be available for purchase in the JANM Store. **Info: RSVP by April 13 to <https://9644p.blackbaudhosting.com/9644p/tickets?tab=2&txobjid=1c5e0008-9b6a-46c2-9208-19d1a4c7e1fd> or call (213) 625-0414 or email publicprogram@janm.org.**

Los Angeles Asian Pacific Film Festival

Los Angeles, CA

May 2-10

Film Screening Locations Vary; check website for full details.

Produced by Visual Communications, the nation's premier Asian Pacific American media arts center, the 35th LAAPFF will screen films at select cinemas in the Los Angeles area. The festival continues to be the largest of its kind in Southern California and is the premier showcase for the best and brightest of Asian Pacific American and international cinema. This year's opening-night film is "Yellow Rose," written and directed by Filipina American Diane Paragas about a headstrong Filipina American fighting to pursue her country music dreams while facing the threat of deportation. **Info: Visit <https://vcmedia.org/festival>.**

PNW

Cherry Blossom Bazaar

Portland, OR

March 30-31; 10 a.m.-4 p.m.

139 N.W. Second Ave.

Price: Free

The Oregon Nikkei Endowment is proud to present the seventh annual Cherry Blossom Bazaar, a unique sale of Japanese collectibles, objects and furniture, including clothing and accessories, tableware and pottery to children's toys. All proceeds from the sale will benefit the Oregon Nikkei Endowment and its programs. **Info: Call (503) 224-1458 or email info@oregonnikkei.org.**

IDC

Holly Yasui and Peggy Nagae Present 'Never Give Up! Minoru Yasui and the Right for Justice' and Reception

Boise, ID

March 30; 4:30-8:30 p.m.

Zions Bank Building, 17th Floor

800 W. Main St. #100

Price: \$25 Single seats for reception and dinner (4:30-6 p.m.) and free film screening following

Don't miss the opportunity to attend this event that will feature a screening of the documentary film portraying the life and times of civil rights activist Minoru Yasui, who initiated a legal case during WWII, challenging military orders that led to the incarceration of more than 120,000 persons of Japanese ancestry.

Info: Visit <https://www.tickettailor.com/events/boisevalleyjacl/232081>.

MDC

Our Story Reception and Fundraiser

Skokie, IL

April 4; 6-9 p.m.

Maggiano's Little Italy

4999 Old Orchard Shopping Center

Price: \$125 General admission; \$75 Students w/ID

"Our Story: The Japanese American Incarceration" is a program to provide opportunities for educators, students and the public to learn about and understand the Japanese American incarceration and its impacts on individuals, the community, the Constitution and the values of democracy. There will also be a cocktail and hors d'oeuvre reception and fundraiser for the program. **Info: For tickets, visit <https://jaclchicago.org/event/our-story/>.**

'Exiled to Motown'

Ann Arbor, MI

April 2-May 12

Ann Arbor District Library

(Downtown)

343 S. Fifth Ave.

Price: Free

This exhibit tells the story of Japanese Americans in Detroit, drawing on oral histories conducted by the Detroit JACL chapter, as well as archival photographs and documents. From the Ford Motor Co. to World War II, the murder of Vincent Chin and Japanese-Arab American solidarity in the wake of 9/11,

"Exiled to Motown" sheds light on a little-known but critical piece of American History.

Info: Visit <http://exiledtomotown.org>.

'Caught'

Minneapolis, MN

May 17-June 2

Dowling Studio of the Guthrie Theater

818 S. Second St.

Price: Ticket prices vary.

Full Circle Theater presents "Caught" by Christopher Chen and directed by Rick Shiomi. This play begins with a visual art exhibition by a Chinese artist and then Lin Bo, the artist himself, appears to give an extended talk about his experience in China as a dissident artist. This play delves into issues of appropriation, racism and white privilege within the American intellectual elite.

Info: For tickets and further information, visit fullcircletheatermn.org.

EDC

Tamagawa Taiko and Dance

Chestnut Hill, MA

April 5; 6-8 p.m.

Ellsworth Theatre

Pine Manor College

400 Heath St.

Price: \$25 General admission;

\$10 Students; Children 12 and

under free with attending adult;

Nonreserved seating

The Japanese taiko group returns to Boston from its world tour. Their unique blend of music, Japanese folklore and dance has gained a growing international fan base. This event is presented by the Japan Society of Boston.

Info: Visit <http://www.japansocietyboston.org/event-3174220?CalendarViewType=1&SelectedDate=3/27/2019>.

Eaglemania: Collecting Japanese Art in Gilded Age America

Boston, MA

Thru June 2

McMullan Museum of Art, Daley

Family Gallery

Boston University

2101 Commonwealth Ave.

This exhibit features bronze, silver and ivory sculptures of birds of prey in folding screens, scroll paintings, netsuke, lacquerware, ceramics and textiles to bring to life the history of the Boston College eagle. During a recent conversation, Boston College's monumental bronze eagle was found to be a Japanese masterpiece from the Meiji period (1868-1912), which was donated to the college in the 1950s.

Info: Visit <https://www.bc.edu/sites/artmuseum/exhibitions/eaglemania/>.

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In MEMORIAM



Jimmy; she is survived by her son, Ken; brother, Roke; she is also survived by nephews and nieces.

Fujita, Osamu, 73, Fullerton, CA, Feb. 26.

Fukushima, Florence, 91, Reseda, CA, Feb. 9.



Hashimoto, William, 97, Pasadena, CA, Feb. 18; during WWII, his family and he were forcibly removed to the Merced Assembly Center in CA and later incarcerated at the Granada WRA Center (Camp Amache) CO; he was predeceased by his wife, Fuyuko; he is survived by his sons, Philip (Heather) and Lewis (Katherine); siblings, Sumiko Iwasaki, Ben and Noboru; gc: 5.



Horiuchi, Wayne Kimio, 71, Sacramento, CA, Jan. 23; working with the JACL in the 1970s in Washington, D.C., he was instrumental in the presidential appointment of an investigative commission looking into the forced relocation and incarceration of Japanese Americans during World War II and contributed to President Ford's rescission of Executive Order 9066; he was predeceased by his brother, Randy; he is survived by his wife, Catherine; daughter, Angela Yvkoff (Greg); stepson, Walt Miller

Adachi, Akio, 90, San Leandro, CA, Feb. 13; during WWII, his family and he were incarcerated at the Tule Lake WRA Center in CA; he was predeceased by his siblings, Kazuto, Tadashi, Kiyoshi, Masako and Helen; he is survived by his wife, Shin; son, Robert; he is also survived by nephews and nieces.

Carrico, Chie Nakagawa, 43, San Diego, CA, Feb. 11.



Doktor, Michiko Shimazaki, 84, Corona, CA, March 2; she is survived by her husband, Robert Doktor; sons, Pete, Ray and Steve; gc: 2.



Fujita, Michi, 101, Santa Barbara, CA, Feb. 15; during WWII, her family and she were incarcerated at the Poston WRA Center in Ariz.; she was predeceased by her husband,

(Crystal); brothers, Vincent (Kim) and Sherman; honorary Horiuchi sister, Renee Morita (Angus) and honorary Horiuchi brother, Paul Rolly (Dawn); gc: 4.



Inaba, Misao, 96, Fresno, CA, Dec. 2, 2018; during WWII, she and her husband were incarcerated at the Granada WRA Center (Camp Amache) in CO; she was predeceased by her husband, Hitoshi "Flu" Inaba; she is survived by her children, Sharon Kotabe, Leslee (G. T.) Wong, Darryl (Diane) Inaba, Harley (Judy) Inaba, Lynne (Robert) Ishikawa and Don (Kumiko) Inaba; sister, Shigeiko; and brothers-in-law, George Hirano and Akio Mochizuki; gc: 9; ggc: 8.



Katsuki, Gladys, 92, Sacramento, CA, Feb. 4; she was predeceased by her husband, Henry; she is survived by her children, Dennis (Linda) Katsuki and Cheryl (Gary) Tanaka.

Makishi, Fumiko, 82, La Puente, CA, Feb. 10.

Maruyama, Dorothy Sachiye, 79, Huntington Beach, CA, Jan. 15; she was predeceased by her husband Osami; she is survived by her daughter, Teri (Neil) Kobayashi; sister, Frances (Gary) Okura; gc: 2.



Nagata, Harry, 97, Saint Helena, CA, March 2; during WWII, his family and he were incarcerated at the Jerome WRA Center in AR, then the Gila River WRA Center in AZ; he enlisted in the Army and served 1944-46 in the Military Intelligence Service, where he was stationed in Tokyo; he was predeceased by his wife, Jean Sakiko Kumashiro; and brother George Nagata; he is survived by his children, Wesley (Annie) Nagata, Vivian (Ken) Robison and Bruce (Sherry) Nagata; siblings, Mary Tanaka, Ruth Kurihara, Sally Nagata, Dorothy Kimura and Ernest Nagata; gc: 1; step-gc: 1.

Nakamura, Kimiyo, 89, Los Angeles, CA, Feb. 22.

Nakamura, Sandra, 60, Honolulu, HI, Feb. 16.



Oda, Jack, 91, San Jose, CA, March 12; he is survived by his wife, Edith; children, Stephan Oda and Susan Law; and grandchildren.

Park, Louise Hahn, 97, Los Angeles, CA, Feb. 13; she was predeceased by her husband, Woonha Park; she is survived by her daughters, Cynthia Park, Beverly (Lei) Mukogawa and Judy (Richard) Tsuno; sisters-in-law, Gloria Yoon, Jane Hahn and Sylvia Park; gc: 4; ggc: 2.

Sato, Kyoko, 89, Costa Mesa, CA, Jan. 20; she is survived by her three children and their families.

TRIBUTE

H. JOHN YAMADA



Hideo "John" Yamada passed peacefully March 8. Born in Oakdale, Calif., on Sept. 17, 1932, to Sake Yamada and Sekino (Iwasaki) Yamada of Japan. John was one of 11 siblings. In 1942, during his early years, he was sent with family to Stockton Assembly Center, then the Rohwer War Relocation Authority Center, Ark., where he began elementary school. After camp the family returned to Oakdale where he finished Oakdale Elementary and Oakdale HS. Completing his AA at Modesto Junior College, he

met Lillia (Makita), who he married after graduating. He enjoyed 63 years of marriage, two sons and a daughter.

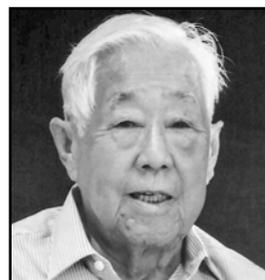
John had a long career at UC Berkeley LBL and LLL, where he worked as an electrical technician. Concurrent with his lab duties, John enjoyed his 40 years in the Naval Reserves, retiring as Chief Petty Officer.

John was active with civic organizations in the mid-1970s to 2013. He volunteered with Eden Township JACL, JACL NCWNP District, Eden Township Athletics League, Eden Township Japanese Senior Center, NCJSC Shinnenkai, Asian Americans Together of Castro Valley, Asian Law Caucus and United Methodist Church of Castro Valley.

John is survived by his wife, Lillia; sons, Wesley and James; daughter, Sherry; and son-in-law, Ron Noda. Memorial Service: United Methodist Church of Castro Valley, 19806 Wisteria St., Castro Valley, CA 94546, Sat., March 30, at 11 a.m.

TRIBUTE

MITSUO ONO



Mitsuo Ono, 87, Des Plaines, Ill., Jan. 3. During WWII, his family and he were incarcerated at the Tan-foran Racetrack in California, then the Topaz WRA Center in Utah. He is survived by his wife, Sachiye; daughters, Darlene (Mike) O'Brien, Correne (Dan) Martin, Cheryl (Tim) Spehar and Gayle (Jon Paul) Vivere; grandchildren, Stephanie, Jack, Dani (Austin), Ben, Jordan, Morgan, Jason & Justin; and siblings, Tadao (Jean) Ono and Hiroko Ono.

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REIMAGINE EVERYTHING

LISTEN UP: HEARING LOSS IS TOO IMPORTANT TO IGNORE!

By Ron Mori

Most older adults believe a person's hearing and quality of life are strongly connected, and many believe their hearing could be better. Yet, comparatively few older adults actually confront the issue, according to a new AARP survey. But it's really important that we all take action and not be passive when it comes to hearing loss.

An overwhelming majority of survey respondents (94 percent) said they consider hearing health and hearing loss to be an important concern among adults age 50 and older, and 84 percent of survey respondents said their own hearing loss was an important concern. But almost half of survey respondents (47 percent) acknowledge that their hearing could be better, but they haven't sought treatment.

The disconnect between the high value placed on hearing and what people are doing about it surfaced in responses to many survey questions. Most respondents agreed that maintaining hearing health is either extremely or very important to their quality of life, and

more than half of respondents (52 percent) worry that insufficient attention is paid to getting regular hearing check-ups.

In addition, a full 84 percent of respondents agreed that they would be likely to seek treatment for hearing loss if it improved their quality of life. But only 1 in 4 respondents said they had a hearing test in the past five years. That's lower than the number of respondents (32 percent) who had been to a dermatologist in the past five years.

While a majority of people surveyed acknowledge hearing's importance, they tend to prioritize other forms of health. More than two-thirds (68 percent) of respondents reported having no discussions about hearing health with medical professionals, including primary care doctors, audiologists or hearing instrument specialists.

Moreover, fewer than 1 in 10 respondents currently own a hearing aid (8 percent) or use other assistive technologies (2 percent) — despite 1 in 3 respondents (34 percent) saying they have difficulty hearing when there is noise in the background, and approximately 1 in 4 respondents (23 percent) reporting they have to

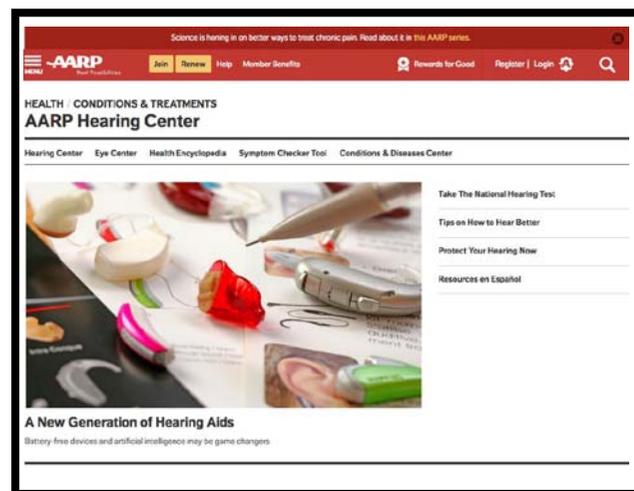
sometimes strain to understand a conversation.

Most respondents (74 percent) who knew someone with hearing loss said it's not very or not at all difficult to discuss hearing loss with that person, and more than three-quarters of respondents said they would get a hearing check-up if they thought they had an issue with their hearing health.

However, only 2 of 3 respondents felt confident knowing where to go for hearing help. The most commonly cited barriers to accessing hearing treatment included:

- Health insurance doesn't sufficiently cover treatment cost (27 percent).
- Minor hearing issues are easy enough to live with untreated (24 percent).
- Treating hearing issues would cost too much (22 percent).

Notably, 41 percent of respondents said none of the reasons the survey listed would prevent them from getting help for a hearing



The AARP Hearing Center website

issue. If they were to seek help, 2 in 3 survey respondents said finding a professional with a high level of expertise on hearing would be critical.

Take Action: If you're ready to take the first step, visit the AARP Hearing Center (www.aarp.org/hearingcenter). Our AARP Hearing Center page is a great resource of helpful information on a variety of hearing-related topics. Plus, you or your loved one can take the National Hearing Test for free, as a first step.

Don't be passive, take the steps to make sure your hearing is pitch perfect!

Ron Mori is a member of the Washington, D.C., JACL chapter and manager of community, states and national affairs — multicultural leadership for AARP.

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