A citywide demonstration at Confucius Plaza took place on May 31, 1974.

PHOTO: COURTESY OF MARY UYEMATSU KAO

‘ROCKIN’ THE BOAT’


PAGE 4
JACL’s NY/SC Announces Its Digital Storytelling Contest Winners

PAGE 9
Decorated Vietnam War Veteran and Superior Court Judge Vincent Okamoto Passes Away.
Hernandez Headed to Jail for 2019 Assault

No charges for racist threats in two June 2020 incidents at Torrance, Calif., park.

The woman who was recorded on video verbally attacking and threatening two different Asian visitors to a public park in 2020 is headed to jail for an assault that occurred in 2019.

According to published reports, Lena Hernandez of Long Beach, Calif., pleaded no contest on Oct. 6 for a battery charge related to an incident that took place at the Del Amo Fashion Center in October 2019 in Torrance, Calif. The assault victim in that incident was also Asian.

The plea deal will have Hernandez, 54, serve 45 days in jail, be on probation for three years and take anger management classes. Hernandez was not charged for the two June 2020 incidents that also took place in Torrance where she was recorded racially haranguing and threatening an Asian woman who was exercising at Wilson Park, followed by a similar incident that involved an Asian man and his son.

Hawaii Pushes Forward with Tourism Despite Safety Concerns

By Associated Press

HONOLULU — Despite increasing coronavirus cases across the U.S., Hawaii officials hope to reboot tourism next week by loosening restrictions and easing the mandatory 14-day quarantine for all arriving travelers.

The plan, which was postponed after the virus surged in the summer, will allow Hawaii-bound travelers who provide negative virus test results within 72 hours of arrival to sidestep two weeks of quarantine.

But the Oct. 15 launch of the pre-travel testing program is causing concern for some who say gaps in a plan to further endanger a community still reeling from summer infection rates that spiked to 10 percent after local restrictions eased.

State Sen. Glenn Wakai, chair of the Committee on Economic Development, Tourism and Technology, said a mandatory 14-day quarantine for travelers is not mandatory for all. Travelers can still choose to not get tested and instead quarantine for two weeks upon arrival, which means those with a negative test could get infected on the plane.

“They’re going to come here with this false sense of belief that, ‘Hey, I got tested, Hawaii, I’m clean. Here’s my paperwork. Let me enjoy my Hawaiian vacation,’ not knowing that the person in seat B on a five-hour flight gave them the coronavirus,” Wakai said.

According to published reports, Lena Hernandez of Long Beach, Calif., pleaded no contest on Oct. 6 for a battery charge related to an incident that took place at the Del Amo Fashion Center in October 2019 in Torrance, Calif. The assault victim in that incident was also Asian.

The plea deal will have Hernandez, 54, serve 45 days in jail, be on probation for three years and take anger management classes. Hernandez was not charged for the two June 2020 incidents that also took place in Torrance where she was recorded racially haranguing and threatening an Asian woman who was exercising at Wilson Park, followed by a similar incident that involved an Asian man and his son.

Hawaii Lt. Gov. Josh Green, who has spearheaded the testing program, acknowledged the risks but said the plan will give the islands a much-needed chance for economic recovery.

“Through this, I think we need to realize we want to reopen,” Green said, adding that wearing a mask in public is still Hawaii law.

Green, an emergency room doctor who recently recovered from COVID-19, said calls for testing have slowed as Hawaii’s July and August tourism highs declined. Travel to Hawaii at the program’s start. The state currently has about 4,000 tests available each day for travelers who want to sidestep quarantine.

A screen capture photo of Lena Hernandez.
A MOTHER’S TAKE
MAKING MY VOICE COUNT

By Marsha Aizumi

For the past two months, I have been in writer’s hibernation as I updated my book “Two Spirits, One Heart” into a second edition. It has been a tearful reunion that has made me realize how much I have grown and how much I have changed. As I reviewed the first edition of “Two Spirits, One Heart,” I cried in parts and smiled at others.

But I could see that I was getting stronger, more resilient and more confident in who I was. I thought I lived in a rose-colored bubble before Aiden came out to me as transgender. I didn’t want to use my voice because I was afraid of people judging me. Today, I believe that my voice matters, and so I am more brave to enter spaces where previously I would just sit back and hope that things would materialize in the direction that I wanted them to.

In the next months, I feel we are entering a most critical time for our families and our country. I am working with Japanese Americans for Biden/Harris, and this is the first time I have ever gotten involved in any kind of political campaign. But I believe that our country is going in a direction that I am afraid of for my son, our Nikkei, our LGBTQ+ and all marginalized communities. I can’t sit back and do nothing.

Four years ago during our last presidential election, I did not get involved. I didn’t believe that the country could elect a person who had no experience in government and exhibited behavior that was not exemplary of the office of the president of the United States. Although I voted and encouraged people in my family to vote, I did nothing else. When I woke up the next morning and saw the results of the election, I felt sick to my stomach. I vowed that this would not be the case in the next election.

There are many ways to get involved during the days leading up to Nov. 3. You can write letters and postcards, and you can also donate or help with a phone bank, where you can encourage others to register and vote. If marginalized communities come together, I believe we can see different results in 2020.

Japanese Americans for Biden/Harris now has a website with a lot of wonderful information and opportunities to get involved. Please go to japbeiten.com and check it out.

Marsha Aizumi’s message: Vote on Nov. 3!

PHOTO: CHING EH

There is information about voting, registering to vote and so much more. You can also find ways to join the campaign.

I hope you will get involved if you are looking for a way to make sure our country returns to the world stage respected and trusted again. Your vote counts . . . and your voice matters!

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.”

FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR
PUBLIC HEALTH SHOULD BRING PUBLIC WEALTH

By David Inoue, JACL Executive Director

Growing up, I always wanted to be a doctor. I had no idea what public health was. When I finally made it to med school, I soon realized that the goals I had to become a practicing physician were much too narrow. Addressing the problems I wanted to as a doctor would be more effectively met through population-based health policy. After dropping out of med school, I enrolled in the school of public health to pursue a dual masters of public health and health policy. After dropping out of med school, I enrolled in the school of public health to pursue a dual masters of public health and health policy. After dropping out of med school, I enrolled in the school of public health to pursue a dual masters of public health and health policy. After dropping out of med school, I enrolled in the school of public health to pursue a dual masters of public health and health policy.

In the next months, I feel we are entering a most critical time for our families and our country. I am working with Japanese Americans for Biden/Harris, and this is the first time I have ever gotten involved in any kind of political campaign. But I believe that our country is going in a direction that I am afraid of for my son, our Nikkei, our LGBT+ and all marginalized communities. I can’t sit back and do nothing.

Four years ago during our last presidential election, I did not get involved. I didn’t believe that the country could elect a person who had no experience in government and exhibited behavior that was not exemplary of the office of the president of the United States. Although I voted and encouraged people in my family to vote, I did nothing else. When I woke up the next morning and saw the results of the election, I felt sick to my stomach. I vowed that this would not be the case in the next election.

There are many ways to get involved during the days leading up to Nov. 3. You can write letters and postcards, and you can also donate or help with a phone bank, where you can encourage others to register and vote. If marginalized communities come together, I believe we can see different results in 2020.

Japanese Americans for Biden/Harris now has a website with a lot of wonderful information and opportunities to get involved. Please go to japbeiten.com and check it out.

There is information about voting, registering to vote and so much more. You can also find ways to join the campaign.

I hope you will get involved if you are looking for a way to make sure our country returns to the world stage respected and trusted again. Your vote counts . . . and your voice matters!

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.”

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

• Total Cases: 7,475,262 *
• Total Deaths: 210,232 (as of Oct. 7)
• Jurisdictions Reporting Cases: 55 (30 states, District of Columbia, Puerto Rico, Guam, the Northern Mariana Islands and the U.S. Virgin Islands)
• Data includes both confirmed and presumptive positive cases of COVID-19 reported to the CDC or tested at the CDC since Jan. 21, with the exception of testing results for persons repatriated to the U.S. from Wuhan, China, and Japan, State and local public health departments are now testing and publicly reporting their cases. In the event of a discrepancy between CDC cases and cases reported by state and local public health officials, data reported by states should be considered the most up to date.

Source: CDC

PHOTO: MARSHA AZUMI

In the meantime, take a moment to offer your thanks to the public health workers at the CDC who, in spite of an obstructive administration, work to keep us safe. Thank the career foreign service officers who maintain positive relations with our allies, even when our country is viewed in such negative light by others. Thank you to the lawyers at the Department of Justice who continue to work for the integrity of our legal system, even as the attorney general directs resources toward purely political activities.

Our country can and will recover, and it will be because of the dedicated government employees who continue to serve under the current administration and will continue to serve under future administrations without consideration of party, but only of country.

Only with a fundamentally strong and competent government can we be a strong nation.

David Inoue is executive director of the JACL. He is based in the organization’s Washington, D.C., office.
NY/SC ANNOUNCES DIGITAL STORYTELLING CONTEST WINNERS

Cousins Kristin Sato and Jessica Bukowski and Sam Hamashima are recognized for their award-winning entries.

By Sheera Tamura and Mieko Kuramoto, JACL NY/SC

This year has been unusual, to say the least. Without the chance for youth across the country to convene, meet new people and see old friends, as well as participate in the usual four-day marathon of an event that is the JACL National Convention, the National Youth/Student Council was faced with some serious questions: What is an NY/SC summer without convention? How are we going to meet new youth members? And, of course, how can we possibly foster a sense of community if we can’t see one another in person?

From these questions sprang the idea of a Digital Storytelling Contest. Using one of five mediums — journalistic-style essay, visual art, video presentation, poetry or creative writing — the NY/SC asked youth participants to send in their stories, all focusing on the theme of “How Does the Past Influence Your Present?”

Although it was only our first year holding the competition, the NY/SC was amazed by the entries received. It was difficult to only choose two, as each artist responded to the prompt in a unique way and brought it to its own identities. The following artists, though, stood out.

Entrants submitted pieces that were high quality not only in their respective mediums, but also infused with passion, warmth and a creativity that made them stand out in the field. The NY/SC is thrilled to announce the winners: cousin team Kristin Sato and Jessica Bukowski of Mill Valley, Calif., with their short film “Enryo,” and Sam Hamashima of North Carolina with his series of poems entitled “Family Heirlooms.”

Sato and Bukowski worked as a team to create their animated stop-motion short film “Enryo,” a narrative about their grandfather’s grit in surviving the Great Depression and World War II incarceration. Sato and Bukowski captured the lesson that was passed down to them by their ancestors through the word enryo, literally translated as “to hold back.” To them, however, it means something different. “It means to take others’ needs into consideration before your own, to act selflessly and with empathy,” Sato narrates the short as the hand-cut stop-motion characters share sushis from a platter. “I ‘enryo’ because there is greater joy in seeing someone savor the last piece of sushi than if I were to eat it myself.” Throughout the short film, Bukowski made the characters of their grandparents and themselves come alive by layering actual recordings of their voices over colorful paper cutouts painstakingly created and animated by hand.

They were inspired to create the film as a way for their family to remain connected during their time of separation as a result of the current pandemic. The stop-motion style was inspired by Bukowski’s school-assigned documentary, when the shelter-in-place orders prohibited recording interviews in person. Not only did the project offer an additional way to connect with each other and their grandparents, Ken Sato, it also prompted them to document his stories, which otherwise would have been forgotten. Sato and Bukowski also mentioned the importance of rice to their family in the film. “Rice has always been a staple within our family for many generations, and therefore, we decided to create a piece that elaborates about its significance within our family,” they said.

“While growing up during the Great Depression, having enough rice to eat was something that was of great importance to our grandpa,” said Sato.

Added Bukowski, “Through our piece, we want to continue spreading diversity and educating people about our Japanese culture and heritage. We aspire for the youth of the JACL to pay attention to the culture and customs passed down from those who experienced these significant events, as we will never have that time again.”

Their incorporation of a number of materials, beautifully storyboarded narrative and the use of their grandfather’s actual voice as he tells his story combine to create a heartfelt testament to lessons learned through the gaman of their family.

The contest’s second winner, Sam Hamashima, blew the NY/SC away with his collection of six poems, which delicately weaves together his own experience of being a Japanese American with those of his father and grandparents.

Over the course of his collection, Hamashima brings the reader to sit in the past, a seventh-grade Japanese class, pages through an old book of Japanese folktales and offers glimpses into conversations with his father. Hamashima was raised in North Carolina but returned home from New York City prior to the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic. He is a member of the JACL Seabrook chapter, as his dad reminded him of the importance of joining and getting involved within the JACL. Among his written works are “American Spies and Other Homegrown Fables,” “BANANA” and “Supposed Home.” He holds a BFA in musical theater from the University of Michigan.

Hamashima stated that the digital story competition gave him a purpose to write, as he wanted to engage in many conversations surrounding race, identity and history. His piece entitled “Family Heirlooms” was a way to express his intergenerational trauma as he was able to reflect upon his family and their history.

For the people that will view his piece, Hamashima hopes that his writings will start conversations. “As a queer individual, I was often searching for who I was, but I realized that as my grandparents continue passing, it is my responsibility to complete their work,” he said. “When an older generation passes, a new generation is born.”

Hamashima also wanted to remind the youth of the JACL to “explore new ways to get engaged with the material presented to you. Don’t just listen. In order to have a meaningful conversation, you need to respond.”

The NY/SC knows that storytelling has always been important, particularly for Japanese and Asian Americans. Much of our community history is recorded orally or passed down through personal archives, and in the present moment, it is especially important that we take note of our experiences, memories, thoughts and feelings. This competition was designed to uplift young JACL voices and use our stories, whether they be present or historical, to build connections with one another in times of physical distance.
MURAKAWA EYES SEAT ON EL CAMINO COLLEGE BOARD OF TRUSTEES

The former JACL National board member makes her first run for elected office.

By P.C. Staff

A rmed with a slew of high-profile endorsements and more free time now that her daughter and son are off to college, small-business owner and higher education advocate Trisha Murakawa has set her sights on a new challenge: winning a seat on the El Camino Community College District’s board of trustees.

This year, there are three board positions up for grabs, and incumbents for two of those seats are not running. Should she get the necessary votes come Nov. 3, Murakawa would serve a four-year term, taking over the seat being vacated by William J. “Bill” Beverly, who holds the chair for Trustee Area 3, which includes El Segundo, Manhattan Beach, Hermosa Beach and North Redondo Beach, and is one of the incumbents who has opted out.

A 29-year resident of Redondo Beach, this is Murakawa’s first time running for public office, and it’s an opportunity to add to her notable record of civic and public sector engagement.


Later, Murakawa did public affairs for L.A. Metro, after which she launched her own firm, Murakawa Communications, and is one of the incumbents who has opted out.

“Anybody can go to community college,” Murakawa emphasized. “Community college is the only higher education institution that is not elitist and not exclusive,” Murakawa emphasized. “Anybody can go to community college.”

Specific to El Camino College, she wants to help high school students interested in dual enrollment or taking classes at El Camino, “. . . so that when they apply to college, they can go in with college credits.”

If she wins, Murakawa said she also wants to bolster the relationships among high schools, the public and private sectors and El Camino.

“There are lots of public agencies that are near and around El Camino, as well as the private sector, like aerospace, which is located all throughout El Segundo and Manhattan Beach and Hermosa Beach, and Space X, which is located in Hawthorne,” she said. “I want to create a formalized relationship and programs between the high schools, El Camino, public and private sectors and the unions, so that we could create a preapprenticeship program for the high schools. You could take a certain curriculum and get to El Camino and you take a certain curriculum and you get connected with the labor unions in the construction trades so you can go through their apprenticeship programs and get certified for a construction career.”

In addition, Murakawa wants to create a program to help formerly incarcerated people get the career, academic and counseling services necessary to re-enter society.

Vying against Murakawa on the ballot for the seat are Siannah Collado Boutte and Peter Elhamey Aziz, the latter of whom Murakawa said missed the withdrawal deadline by three minutes and has since endorsed Murakawa. As noted, she boasts a bevy of high-profile endorsements, which can be viewed on her website (trishamurakawa.com/endorsements-1).

Her biggest endorsements, however, were closer to home.

“The most important endorsement that I received is from my husband (Warren Wong) and my children (Bailey Wong and Hunter Wong), and they are going to vote for me,” Murakawa said.

Murakawa with her family, pictured (from left) husband Warren Wong, son Hunter and daughter Bailey.

PHOTOS: COURTESY OF TRISHA MURAKAWA

If elected, Murakawa wants to bolster opportunities for students at El Camino Community College (pictured).

PHOTO: FACEBOOK

“I learned a lot about public policy in a municipal setting,” Murakawa said. “Because of my experience here, I have a proven record of leadership and the kind of experience necessary for this board of trustees,” said Murakawa of her background.

If elected, Murakawa has some specific objectives and priorities, and one is helping decide who will replace El Camino College President Dena Maloney, who in July announced her imminent retirement at the end of the current 2020–21 academic year.

In addition, Murakawa wants to improve the on-the-four things she says make community colleges such a valuable educational resource: transferring to four-year universities, career certifications for those who do not attend a four-year university, job retraining and lifelong learning for those seeking educational enrichment.

“Community college is the only higher educational institution that is not elitist and not exclusive,” Murakawa emphasized. “Anybody can go to community college.”

Specific to El Camino College, she wants to bolster the relationships among high schools, the public and private sectors and the unions, so that when they apply to college, they can go in with college credits.”

In addition, Murakawa wants to create a program to help formerly incarcerated people get the career, academic and counseling services necessary to re-enter society.

Vying against Murakawa on the ballot for the seat are Siannah Collado Boutte and Peter Elhamey Aziz, the latter of whom Murakawa said missed the withdrawal deadline by three minutes and has since endorsed Murakawa. As noted, she boasts a bevy of high-profile endorsements, which can be viewed on her website (trishamurakawa.com/endorsements-1).

Her biggest endorsements, however, were closer to home.

“The most important endorsement that I received is from my husband (Warren Wong) and my children (Bailey Wong and Hunter Wong), and they are going to vote for me,” Murakawa said.
The new photojournalism book revisits the roots of 1970s activism.

By George Toshio Johnston, Senior Editor, Digital & Social Media

If you love black-and-white photojournalism, then Mary Uyematsu Kao’s new “Rockin’ the Boat: Flashbacks of the 1970s Asian Movement” just might be the book for you.

As described on its cover, “Rockin’ the Boat,” which officially launched this month, is a 276-page collection of “photographs and narrative” covering 1969-74, when the consciousness-raising “Asian movement,” as it was then called, sprang to life following the Civil Rights, Anti-War, Environmental and Feminist movements of the 1960s.

According to Kao (pronounced “Gao,” with a hard “g”), who retired in 2018 after 30 years at the UCLA Asian American Studies Center, there was no master plan circa 1969 to someday publish a photo book revisits the roots of the Asian American empowerment movement.

Inspired by a photography class at the University of California, Los Angeles, Kao trained her eye on her friends, who were caught up in, according to the book’s introduction, “the most exciting, uplifting and dramatic experience of our young Cold War lives. We were part of the changes that were sweeping the country and the world. It was truly a great time to be alive!”

Despite the beautifully rendered book that resulted, Kao, 70, downplayed her own abilities. “I never got real good technically,” she said. “I organized everything by chapters with the photographs and then I filled in the writing — that really helped my process quite a lot because then I realized, ‘I don’t have to write that much,’” she continued. “So then things started moving along.

“I organized everything by chapters with the photographs and then I filled in the writing — that really helped my process quite a lot because then I realized, ‘I don’t have to write that much,’” she continued.

“You want the writing to complement the photographs, too, so it was important to get those photographs down first because that was really the inspiration for me,” Kao said. “That pretty much solved the problem, and I moved forward from there.”

With her book nearly done, there arose another obstacle: a disagreement between UCLA’s Asian American Studies Center and Kao.

“I was asked to change the epilogue, and I refused,” she said. “They wanted the stuff about (President Donald) Trump taken out.”

She explained that the center’s viewpoint was any references to the current resident of the White House stamped today’s political zeitgeist on an otherwise timeless book.

Kao, however, stood her ground and got her way. But, oddly enough, she laughed,
“I rarely get my way! Actually, it’s taken me a long time to learn to stand my ground. Being an Asian woman, especially from the era, the Cold War, you’re not taught to stand up for yourself. That’s the last thing they want you to do.”

As for the book’s title, Sandy Maeshiro, a fellow traveler and peer of Kao’s, could relate.

“My mother used to say that. ‘Don’t rock the boat.’ It was kind of a Nisei thing,” said Maeshiro. “Whenever I would protest about something, she would say, ‘Don’t rock the boat.’”

In other words, don’t disrupt the status quo, don’t bring attention to yourself, keep a low profile — all variations of the Japanese saying deru kagi wa utaeru, or “the nail that sticks up gets hammered down.”

Coming from Maeshiro’s parent’s generation, that mindset made sense, after the collective experience of being rounded up and incarcerated in American concentration camps during World War II, guilty of the “crime” of having ethnic and cultural ties to a country with which the U.S. was at war, American citizenship notwithstanding.

For the Sansei involved in “the movement,” however, being American as well as Asian meant calling out injustice, racism, unfairness and hypocrisy. Kao’s book, then, is a paean to those idealistic down.

For Vietnam War vet Nick Nagatani, one of his reactions to seeing the book was a bit more lighthearted. “Damn, we were young!” he exclaimed. That was bolstered by Maeshiro.

“Right, right! That was probably the first thing,” she added.

According to Kao, the reaction to the book by those who received early copies were similar, ranging from “nostalgia to people getting energized by seeing and reading — it’s like Facebook, when you go through peoples’ Facebook pages and it’s like, ‘Oh, there’s so and so. ‘There’s a lot of that.”

Waxing more seriously, Nagatani, who earned a law degree after his service, became a stalwart member of L.A.’s Yellow Brotherhood movement and authored the novel “Buddhahead Trilogy,” said of Kao’s book: “It’s historical and it’s academic, and if they say a picture is worth a thousand words, then you’ve got millions of words in here, even without the narratives, which add so much life to the pictures.

“When I think about this book,” Nagatani continued, “I think about Mary because she lived it, so when you talk about the ’70s or the ’80s, she has a wealth of information. I remember back in the day, seeing Mary walking around the streets or a demonstration or a wedding or at a pancake breakfast, whatever it might be, with a camera and just like, taking pictures and communicating with people and just being a part of it, but also capturing the moment.”

“We’re still fighting the same fight,” Maeshiro said. “We’re still fighting the racism, the poverty, the oppressive nature of the government, we’re still fighting these wars against people that are just for profit, we’re still fighting a system that’s driven by profit over people. So, a lot of those slogans of those days are just as relevant today.”

Kao’s feelings were similar, but she added that she did not see her book “as a call to action.” Rather, she said, “I want people to think about why they are doing what they are doing, like for present-day activists.

“What do they really want? Yeah, you want to end police brutality but what does that entail? It entails a lot more than just fighting police brutality,” she said. “We’re talking about a whole system here, and police brutality is protecting that whole system.”

Although she says she has enough photos to fill two more books, that is not what Kao has in mind to work on next.

“I would really like to clean out my garage and make it a studio space. I really want to paint. That’s kind of where I started out at UCLA as an undergrad — painting,” Kao said.

“It’s just that with painting, I can’t communicate things I can with photography, and photography really fit in at the moment with the movement and as an artist, what could I do to promote what was going on in the movement,” she said. “So, that’s why I ended up doing photography. But inside, there’s this painter. The painter hasn’t emerged.”

If Kao’s accomplishment with this book is any indication, though, should that painter within Kao ever emerge, whatever is produced will likely rock the boat in its own way.
WHAT DOES IT MEAN TO BE AN AMERICAN?

A new curriculum with lesson plans from the Mineta Legacy Project and SPICE features powerful imagery, engaging videos and diverse voices.

LOS ANGELES — It is a question for our time: What Does It Mean to Be an American? That is the name of a new interactive and free curriculum for high school and college students, designed to engage future leaders by sparking conversations about American identity and history.

Launched in September, the curriculum was developed by the Mineta Legacy Project and the Stanford Program on International and Cross-Cultural Education.

Packed with strong imagery and thought-provoking videos, including interviews with former U.S. Presidents George W. Bush and Bill Clinton, “What Does It Mean to Be an American?” presents engaging lessons on six key issues: immigration, civil liberties and equity, civic engagement, justice and reconciliation, leadership and U.S.-Japan relations, according to Rylan Sekiguchi, curriculum designer for SPICE at Stanford University.

“Our six, standards-aligned lessons provide for powerful 21st-century learning that connects to students’ lives and showcases a diverse range of American voices — from young adults to our former presidents,” Sekiguchi said.

“The powerful learning tool we provide will help students and teachers tackle challenging questions and thoughtfully examine the American experience through historical and modern-day lenses,” said Diane Fukami of the Mineta Legacy Project.

The curriculum features compelling video dialogues from young Americans discussing their experiences growing up in America, including African American men discussing what it means to be a young black male in America and young Muslim Americans sharing their experiences growing up in America, young Muslim Americans sharing what they want people to know about their community.

“These lessons reflect America’s diversity and challenge students and teachers to start a dialogue around identity and history,” Sekiguchi said. “We go beyond the four walls of the classroom to teach meaningful ideas that are relevant to our lives today.”

Inspired by the life and career of Sec. Norman Y. Mineta, the curriculum examines key themes including his imprisonment during World War II with other Japanese Americans at Heart Mountain Relocation Center in Wyoming. Fukami said. Following his incarceration, Mineta would become 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. A bipartisan visionary who championed political civility, Mineta served in the Clinton and Bush cabinets.

“In many ways, Sec. Mineta’s life is a living lesson in American history and American identity,” Fukami said. “Even as we look at the issues facing our nation today, especially around issues of race, equity and civil liberties, we can look at the experience of Sec. Mineta both as a former incarcerated and as a leader who broke barriers to rise to power.”

With separate modules for students and teachers, “What Does It Mean to Be an American?” is broken out into six lessons to encourage class discussion and critical thought. Lesson plans emphasize deeper thinking with interactive activities that reinforce learning. Areas for study and discussion include:

- **Immigration** — Explore the history of immigration to the U.S., challenges and opportunities immigrants encounter and how immigration has contributed to the evolution of our nation.

- **Civil Liberties and Equity** — What is the meaning and value of civil liberties? What is the meaning of civil rights? Examine the incarceration of Japanese Americans during WW II and parallels to contemporary issues.

- **Civil Engagement** — Examine the rights and responsibilities of citizens in a democracy and why community empowerment and civic engagement are important.

- **Justice and Reconciliation** — Examine the meaning of justice, the roles that justice and reconciliation play in society and the various historical and current-day movements for social justice.

- **Leadership** — Through self-reflection and discussion, explore and refine ideas about effective leadership and how to foster these qualities.

- **U.S.-Japan Relations** — Investigate the history between the U.S. and Japan and probe key issues in contemporary U.S.-Japan relations.

“This curriculum launches at a critical moment as young people are reflecting on the power structure in our country, as well as on our nation’s diversity and future,” said Mineta.

The curriculum is available online at [www.whatdoesitmeantobeanamerican.com](http://www.whatdoesitmeantobeanamerican.com). It is designed for mobile, tablet and desktop applications and can be easily shared and downloaded.

**REP. TAKANO WINS DEMOCRACY AWARD FOR EXEMPLARY PUBLIC SERVICE**

The Congressional Management Foundation recognizes the lawmaker for outstanding achievement in innovation and modernization.

WASHINGTON — Rep. Mark Takano (D-Calif.) received a Democracy Award, the Congressional Management Foundation’s distinctive honors program recognizing non-legislative achievement in operations and constituent service by congressional offices and members of Congress on Oct. 7.

Rep. Takano has been selected for his outstanding accomplishments in Innovation and Modernization, a category that recognizes offices employing unique or innovative methods in their constituent interactions, communications or office operations.

“Since being elected to Congress in 2012, it’s been an adventure to have implemented policies and practices in my office that have encouraged creativity, pushed for innovation and modernized traditional approaches to governing,” said Takano. “It’s a joy to support so many projects and practices — both internally and externally — that allow me to serve my constituents much more effectively and help to change the institution of Congress for the better. I’m thankful for this award and hope to continue to push the envelope to move our country forward and create a better democracy for all.”

“As a Democracy Award winner, Rep. Takano’s office is clearly one of the best in Congress,” said Bradford Fitch, president and CEO of the Congressional Management Foundation. “This designation demonstrates that Rep. Takano has made a significant commitment to being the best public servant for his constituents in California. Rep. Takano and his staff are to be congratulated for not only being a model for his colleagues in Congress, but for helping to restore trust and faith that our democratic institutions can work.”

Award categories include Constituent Service, Innovation and Modernization, Transparency and Accountability and the Life in Congress Award for Workplace Environment.

CMF developed categories and criteria for the Democracy Awards over the past five years with input from members of Congress, current and former congressional staff and the Maxwell School for Public Policy and Citizenship at Syracuse University.

The Founding Partner for the Democracy Awards is the Bridge Alliance, which provided a generous grant to launch the program. Bridge Alliance is a diverse coalition of more than 100 organizations committed to revitalizing democratic practice in America.

The CMF is a 501(c)(3) nonpartisan nonprofit whose mission is to build trust and effectiveness in Congress. Since 1977, CMF has worked internally with member, committee, leadership and institutional offices in the House and Senate to identify and disseminate best practices for management, workplace environment, communications, and constituent services. CMF also leads the research and trainer on citizen engagement, educating thousands of individuals and facilitating better relationships with Congress.

For more information, please visit [www.congressfoundation.org](http://www.congressfoundation.org).
The highly decorated Vietnam veteran was also an Army Ranger.

By PC Staff

Vincent H. Okamoto, a Vietnam War veteran who was awarded the Distinguished Service Cross and became a Los Angeles County Superior Court judge, died on Sept. 27. He was 76.

Among Okamoto’s associations and accomplishments were serving as a co-founder of the Japanese American Bar Assn., helping establish the Japanese American National War Memorial Court located adjacent to the Japanese American Cultural and Community Center in Little Tokyo, authoring two books and appearing in Ken Burns’ acclaimed 2017 documentary “The Vietnam War” and the Japanese American National Museum’s documentary film “Looking Like the Enemy.”

Okamoto was also inducted into the Army’s Ranger Hall of Fame in 2007.

In 2002, California Gov. Gray Davis appointed Okamoto, a former prosecutor, to the Los Angeles Superior Court.

Norman Mineta, a former U.S. congressman and Transportation Department secretary who currently serves as chairman the Japanese American National Museum’s Board of Trustees, in a statement said, “It is with sadness and much respect that I note the passing of Judge Vincent H. Okamoto. . . . His heroism, leadership and public service ensures his place in our country’s history.”

Noting the military service of Vincent Okamoto and that of his six brothers, Japanese American Veterans Assn. President Gerald Yamada in a statement lauded Okamoto for “…having the vision, planning and fundraising to build the Japanese American Vietnam War Veterans Memorial, which was dedicated in 1995 in Los Angeles. He was a JABA member and will be missed.”

Ken Hayashi, a longtime friend of Okamoto’s, told the Pacific Citizen, “The JA community and the country have lost an inspirational leader and role model.”

Hayashi also lauded Okamoto’s dedicated efforts toward establishing the Japanese American National War Memorial Court.

“I believe that he considered it to be his most important project,” said Hayashi. “The war affected him deeply, and he cared very much for those who gave their lives, their families and all who served in that war.”

“Vince was the driving force behind the dedication of the JA Vietnam Veterans Wall, which was the beginning of the Japanese American National War Memorial Court as we know it today,” Hayashi continued.

“After several emotional visits to the Vietnam Veterans Memorial in Washington, D.C., Vince decided that we should have a similar memorial to the Japanese Americans who gave their lives in Vietnam. He gathered a group of Vietnam veterans together to seek their support in honoring our fallen brothers. The Japanese American Vietnam Veteran Memorial Committee was formed to raise funds and build the memorial.”

With the help of Edwin Hiroto and the board of Keizo, a successful fundraising dinner was held in 1988, and the search for a home began. Vince approached politicians, businessmen and community leaders, all of whom did not offer a home.

The still-remaining controversy of the long and unpopular war was an obstacle none wanted to be associated with.

“Through almost five years of rejection, Vince continued to persevere. Finally, Min Tonai, then-president of the JACCC, said ‘Yes,’ and the Vietnam Veterans Memorial had a home. The Japanese American Vietnam Veterans Memorial was dedicated on Nov. 11, 1995. It fulfills his vision of honoring those Japanese Americans who made the supreme sacrifice and assures their families that their sons are not forgotten. He asked others to chair the committee, but it was his vision — he was the inspiration and leader of the project.”

Go for Broke National Education Center President and CEO Mitch Maki said in a statement, “With Vince Okamoto’s passing, we lose not only a true hero, but, more important, a friend. Many of us have our personal stories of how this man motivated, inspired and assisted his fellow human beings. From his military service to his service as a Los Angeles County Superior Court judge, he set the example of blending honor, service and compassion. We will miss him.”

Japanese American Bar Assn. President Catherine Endo Chuck in a statement told the Pacific Citizen: “The Japanese American Bar Assn. mourns the loss of founding member Judge Vincent Okamoto of the Los Angeles Superior Court. In the 1970s, as more Japanese Americans were becoming attorneys, Judge Okamoto saw the need for role models and mentors, so he became one of the founders of the Japanese American Bar Assn.

“From that point on, and throughout his career, Judge Vincent Okamoto remained committed to JABA and its ideals of equality and inclusion. In more recent years, he has served as a member of JABA’s Advisory Council. Judge Okamoto lived a life of honor and service, integrity and compassion. He serves as an inspiration to all of us,” Chuck concluded.

A Nisei, Okamoto was the 10th child and seventh son of Issei immigrants, Henry and Yone Okamoto, and was born in 1943 during World War II while his family was incarcerated at Arizona’s Poston War Relocation Authority Center. Two of his older brothers served in the 100th Battalion/442nd Regimental Combat Team during WWII and all the Okamoto sons served in the U.S. military.

After the Okamoto family left Poston, they spent a few years in Chicago and later moved to Southern California, where the Okamoto parents would operate a Japanese restaurant in Gardena.

Vince Okamoto attended the University of Southern California, where he earned a degree in international relations. He then entered the University of California Los Angeles’ ROTC program. Later, he completed the grueling Army Ranger School and was sent to Vietnam in 1968 as a second lieutenant.

For his service, he was awarded three Purple Hearts, the Bronze Star, the Silver Star and the Distinguished Service Cross, the second-highest military decoration. He left the Army with the rank of captain.

After his military service, Okamoto returned to USC, earned a law degree, became an L.A. County deputy district attorney and later a councilman for the city of Gardena.


In remembering his now-deceased friend, Hayashi told the Pacific Citizen, “I am still processing and reflecting on a friendship of over 55 years. I will say that he was the most loyal and supportive friend a man could have.”

Okamoto is survived by his wife, Mitzi, and son, Darby.
A NATIONAL GUIDE TO NOTABLE COMMUNITY EVENTS

DUE TO HEALTH AND SAFETY CONCERNS IN THE U.S. BECAUSE OF THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC, PLEASE CHECK REGARDING THE STATUS OF EVENTS LISTED IN THIS ISSUE’S CALENDAR SECTION.

CALENDAR

A NATIONAL GUIDE TO NOTABLE COMMUNITY EVENTS

DUE TO HEALTH AND SAFETY CONCERNS IN THE U.S. BECAUSE OF THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC, PLEASE CHECK REGARDING THE STATUS OF EVENTS LISTED IN THIS ISSUE’S CALENDAR SECTION.

NATIONAL

JACSC 2020 Education Conference National Event Oct. 17-18 Virtual Conference Price: Free Join the Japanese American Confinement Sites Consortium for its first education conference, held virtually for all. Founded on the idea that we are stronger together than on our own, JACSC aims to bring together practitioners in preservation, education and advocacy related to the Japanese American experience. This free opportunity includes educational sessions and inspiring conversations with a national community of thought leaders and experts. The event is hosted by JANN and brought to you by the JACSC.

NCWNP

Picnic at the Plaza San Francisco, CA Saturday and Sundays Thuvo Nov. 1; 11:30 a.m.-8 p.m. Jayapal’s Peace Plaza Price: Free Bring your take-out food and enjoy it at the Peace Plaza’s free outdoor dining space, complete with canopies, lighting, heaters, hand-washing stations, restrooms and socially distanced sanitized tables and chairs. Enjoy a meal while supporting Jayapal’s Peace Plaza.

PSW

36th Annual Los Angeles Asian Pacific Film Festival Los Angeles, CA Oct. 1-18 Online film festival Price: Ticket packages are available for purchase Established in 1983 by Visual Communications, LAAPFF is the largest film festival in Southern California dedicated to showcasing films by Asians and Pacific Islanders around the world. The festival presents approximately 200 films, as well as the C3 Conference, LT@Home series and much more! Info: Visit festival.vcmedia.org for more information.

‘United in Action’ Gala by Asian Americans Advancing Justice Los Angeles, CA Oct. 22, 5-6 p.m. PDT Virtual event Price: Free, but donations are accepted Join Asian Americans Advancing Justice at its 37th gala, held virtually this year to celebrate the community as it enters its next chapter of advancing justice. The event will also welcome new CEO Connie Chung Joe, as well as a tribute to Stewart Kwoh, president emeritus, and the presentation of the first annual Joseph Ileto Courage Award. The event will be emceed by ABC7’s David Ono.

JANM Online Museum Collection Japanese American National Museum Online JANM’s Museum Collections Online features selected highlights from the museum’s permanent collection of more than 60,000 unique artifacts, documents and photographs. Among the collections that can be viewed online are the “Stanley Hayami Diary,” “Hisako Hibi Collection,” “George Hoshi Collection” and “Hideo Date Collection.”

PNW

Wing Luke Museum Online Digital Content Seattle, WA Wing Luke Museum Virtual event Price: Free Held online for the first time, this event connects baby boomers and older adults with leading experts in the field of health care, finance/retirement planning and technology to share their insights and tools to confidently prepare for our future. The discussion will feature four experts from different fields with an interactive Q & A session, including Johnese Spizzo and William Dumme from UCLA Health, financial adviser Ric Edelman and KTLA-TV’s tech reporter Rich DeMuro.

MDC

‘Quilts Uncovering: Women’s Stories’ Indianapolis, IN Thu. Jan. 31, 2021 Eiteljorg Museum 500 W. Washington St. Price: See Museum’s Website This exhibit features 30 fascinating quilts by women artists from the early 1800s to the present day in the Western states and reveals captivating experiences and stories of women in the West and Native America. The quilts document people, places and events, and serve as visual records that help us understand and preserve Western American culture and history. One quilt on display contains blocks made by students who were incarcerated at the Poston War Relocation Center during WWII.

EDC

Japan Society of Boston Free Online Resources Boston, MA Virtual classes and information Price: Free The Japan Society of Boston offers free online resources featuring Japanese language learning tools, cooking, origami, arts and lectures and much more.

INFO: www.digitalwingluke.org.
INFO: Visit jcccnc.org.
INFO: For more information about the exhibit, visit https://centre. nikkeiplace.org/exhibits/broken-promises/.
INFO: www.janm.org.
INFO: For more information and to register, visit https://www. wingluke.org.
INFO: Visit goforbroke.org.
INFO: For more information and to register, visit https://www. advancingjustice-la.org.
INFO: Registration closes on Oct. 22. To preregister, visit https://keirow.org/symposium. For questions, email programs@keiro.org or call (213) 875-5792.
INFO: More information.
INFO: More information.
INFO: For more information and to register, visit https://www. wingluke.org.
INFO: Visit festival.vcmedia.org for more information.
INFO: For more information and to register, visit https://www. wingluke.org.
INFO: Info: For more information and to register, visit https://www.wingluke.org.
INFO: More information.
INFO: For more information and to register, visit https://www. wingluke.org.
**Obituaries**

**In Memoriam**

**Amano, Herbert Terufumi**, Hacienda Heights, CA, Feb. 21; he is survived by his wife, Hatsue Amano; daughters, Margaret, Amy, Kathy and Nancy; gc: 5; ggc: 1.

**Awakuni, Teruko**, Los Angeles, CA, April 14; active with the Gardena Valley Japanese Cultural Institute and supporter of the Okinawa Association of America, she was predeceased by her husband, Masao, and daughter, Sharon; she is survived by her children, Ruth, Steven (Sharon) Awakuni, Ken Awakuni and Donna Awakuni; several siblings; gc: 2.

**Ikeda, Hisako**, Keauk, HI, Feb. 13; she is survived by her daughter, Shirley (Galvin) Nakashima; sister, Harue (Alexander); gc: 2; ggc: 4; gggc: 4.

**Ikuta, M.D., Clyde Masayuki**, 82, Anaheim, CA, Feb. 3; he is survived by his children, Pamela, Tiantan and Courtney; gc: 3.

**Imamura, Akira**, 88, Huntington Beach, CA, Jan. 13; he is survived by his wife, Betty; daughters, Akane Imamura and Sally Barai; gc: 2.

**Kawaguchi, Miyoko**, 83, Seattle, WA, Jan. 14; she was predeceased by her husband, Dr. Toshiyuki Paul Kawaguchi, and brother, Teruo; he is survived by his children, Michael, Mark and Keith (Michelle); sisters, Taeko (Sugii), Jyuko Namiki and Mitsuko (Kanbe); gc: 2.

**Kawahira, Isamu Sam**, 90, Los Angeles, CA, Feb. 18; he is survived by his wife, Hisako Kawahira; brothers-in-law, Aurelio and Mike Ikeda; he is also survived by many nieces, nephews and other relatives.

**Kawano, Fumi**, 88, Hilo, HI, May 3; she is survived by her children, Gavin (Jean) Kawano, Kyle (Kathy Kosaka) Kawano, Joni (Anthony) Garcia and Cara Gebhard; gc: 5.

**Mayahara, Kazunobu ‘Kazu,’** 94, Kapau, HI, April 13; an Army veteran (WWII), he is survived by his sister-in-law, Thelma Uyama; 3 nieces, 1 grandniece, 2 grandnephews and many cousins.

**Murakami, Grace Hiroko**, 85, Wailuku, HI, March 16; she is survived by her husband, Ralph M. Murakami; sister, Betsy (Arthur) Ishida; daugh-

ters, Pamela Murakami and Patti (Randy) Endo; son, Kevin (Mike) Murakami; gc: 2.

**Murakami, Janet Kinue**, 91, Honolulu, HI, April 11; she is survived by her husband, Kyoshi Murakami; children, Wesley (Debbie) Murakami and Wendy (John “Beau” Schneider) Murakami; gc: 4; ggc: 5.

**Nakagiri, Tomiyo**, 90, Culver City, CA, April 18; she was predeceased by her daughters, Lynn (Jim Mochizuki) Nakagiri and Laurie (Mike) Amano; siblings, Frank (Hideo), Hiroshi (Sumako), Tadashi and Isamu Tsuchima and May (Keigo) Obata; siblings-in-law, Shigemi Nakagiri and June Akikoa; gc: 3.

**Ono, Dorothy Yayo**, 98, Torrance, CA, March 4; during WWII, she was incarcerated at the Gila River WRA Center in AZ; she was predeceased by her husband, Tokumi Ono; she is survived by her children, Patricia Nakasone Brown, Russell (Diana) Ono and Miles Ono; sister, Marie Maeda, sister-in-law, Yoshiko Ono; gc: 4; ggc: 1.

**Ota, Itsuko**, 94, Pasadena, CA, April 14; she is survived by her children, Nancy Toyota and Robert (Deena) Ota; son-in-law, Wade Utsunomiya; gc: 4; ggc: 1.

**Sakai, Cheri Mieko**, 85, Culver City, CA, April 1; she was predeceased by her husband, Richard Kyoishi Sakai; she is survived by her children, Richard Sakai Jr., Daniel (Lily) Sakai and Sheril Sakai; siblings, Ken Iwata, Jiro (Loma) Iwata and Emmy Iwata; gc: 2.

**Sato, Takemi**, 69, Los Angeles, CA, May 3.

**Shirio, Gerald**, 59, Los Angeles, CA, April 8; COVID-19 related.

**Teramoto, Masami**, 94, Los Angeles, CA, April 13; she was predeceased by her husband, Takeo; she is survived by her children, Takehi (Betty) Teramoto and Machiko Uritaki; gc: 4.

**Uyeda, Herbert Arata**, 90, Culver City, CA, Jan. 14; an Army veteran (Korean War), he is survived by his wife, Ellen; son, Kevin; he is also survived by many nieces, nephews and other relatives.

**Uyeda, Masayo, 94**, Whittier, CA, April 13; during WWII, her family and she were incarcerated at the Minidoka WRA Center in ID; she was predeceased by her husband, Mamoru “Mark” Uyeda; she is survived by her son, Gary (Nancy Petersen) Uyeda; she is also survived by more than 70 nieces, nephews, grand and great-grand nieces and nephews; gc: 2.

**Wakamatsu, Helen Keiko**, 87, Montebello, CA, March 27.

**Watanabe, Elsie K.,** 86, Captain Cook, HI, Feb. 25; she is survived by her husband, Albert Watanabe.


**Yamamoto, Grace**, 97, Cleveland, OH, April 1; she was predeceased by her husband, Joe, and sisters, Lillian and Patricia; she is survived by her children, Carl Yamamoto and Esther Cohen; brother, David Swanson; gc: 1.

**Yamamura, Fumiye Helen Awaya**, 89, Los Angeles, CA, April 7; she is survived by her sister, Kazuko (Hiromi) Ueda; sister-in-law, Yoko Awaya; she is also survived by many nieces, nephews and other relatives.

**Yamashita, Alice, 95**, Los Angeles, CA, Feb. 23; she was predeceased by her husband, Hiroji, son, Jim (April) and daughter, Kathy Yamashita; she is survived by her children, Gloria Yamashita, Peggy (Ivan) Pang and Judy (Scott) McClinton, siblings, Ruby Nishio and Fred Hitumio; gc: 5.

**Yamashita, William H.,** 86, Montebello, CA, March 27.

---

**Place a Tribute**

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

**Contact:**

Editorial@pacificcitizen.org or call (213) 620-1767 ext. 104
AARP has announced a new initiative to enlist poll workers of all ages this November, working in collaboration with the Association of Young Americans, Power the Polls and New Leaders Council. The groups aim to enlist more poll workers to ensure that in-person voting is still an accessible and safe option this fall. And, I do stress volunteer poll workers of all ages.

“There is an urgent need for more poll workers this election, including people 50-plus and younger voters. We need to ensure that in-person voting is still an accessible and safe option,” said Nancy LeaMond, executive vp and chief advocacy and policy officer at AARP. “We will encourage all AARP members to communicate with their younger family and friends around the importance of voting and how to participate as a poll worker.”

For more information on how to serve as a poll worker in your community, visit www.powerthepolls.org/AARP. According to a Pew Research Center analysis of government data, nearly 6-in-10 (58 percent) of poll workers were ages 61 and up in 2018 and 56 percent in 2016.

Many communities faced poll worker shortages prior to the pandemic. The 2016 U.S. Election Assistance Commission found that two-thirds of jurisdictions already had a difficult time recruiting enough poll workers on Election Day.

“The poll worker shortage is an urgent issue, and we’re on the clock,” said Scott Duncombe, co-director of Power the Polls. “This unprecedented shortage threatens our democracy, puts our older population at risk and disproportionately affects low-income communities and communities of color. This is a historic moment for first-time poll workers to sign up to protect their communities, their neighbors and their democracy. We will keep working until there are enough poll workers and volunteers to keep polling sites open, staffed, efficient and functioning. We must do everything we can to ensure this upcoming election is safe, fair and accessible.”

Said Ben Brown, founder of the Association of Young Americans: “Poll workers play a critical but often overlooked role in ensuring safe elections. The pandemic has hampered recruiting efforts for poll workers, who tend to be repeat workers, and fewer poll workers means longer lines, delays and more confusion on Election Day. We’re excited to work with AARP and Power to the Polls to encourage Americans of all ages to be poll workers and protect the election and their communities.”

“Poll workers are the essential workers of our democratic process. All voters should feel safe and welcome when they participate in the upcoming election,” said Clare Bresnahan English, president and CEO of New Leaders Council. “This intergenerational collaboration with AARP and Power the Polls allows us to recruit young poll workers whose identities reflect the community in which they serve.”

AARP will work to engage with younger audiences to work alongside 50-plus Americans to help ensure the availability of safe voting options. By partnering with Power the Polls, AYA and NLC, AARP will raise awareness about the need for additional poll workers of all ages to ensure the continued accessibility and safety of in-person voting.

The Power the Polls initiative is also working with local organizations and partners to help election officials provide the necessary personal protection equipment to keep poll workers and voters safe. For more information, reach out to your local officials through workelections.com.

AARP is working to ensure that in-person voting is still accessible and safe come Election Day in November.

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