

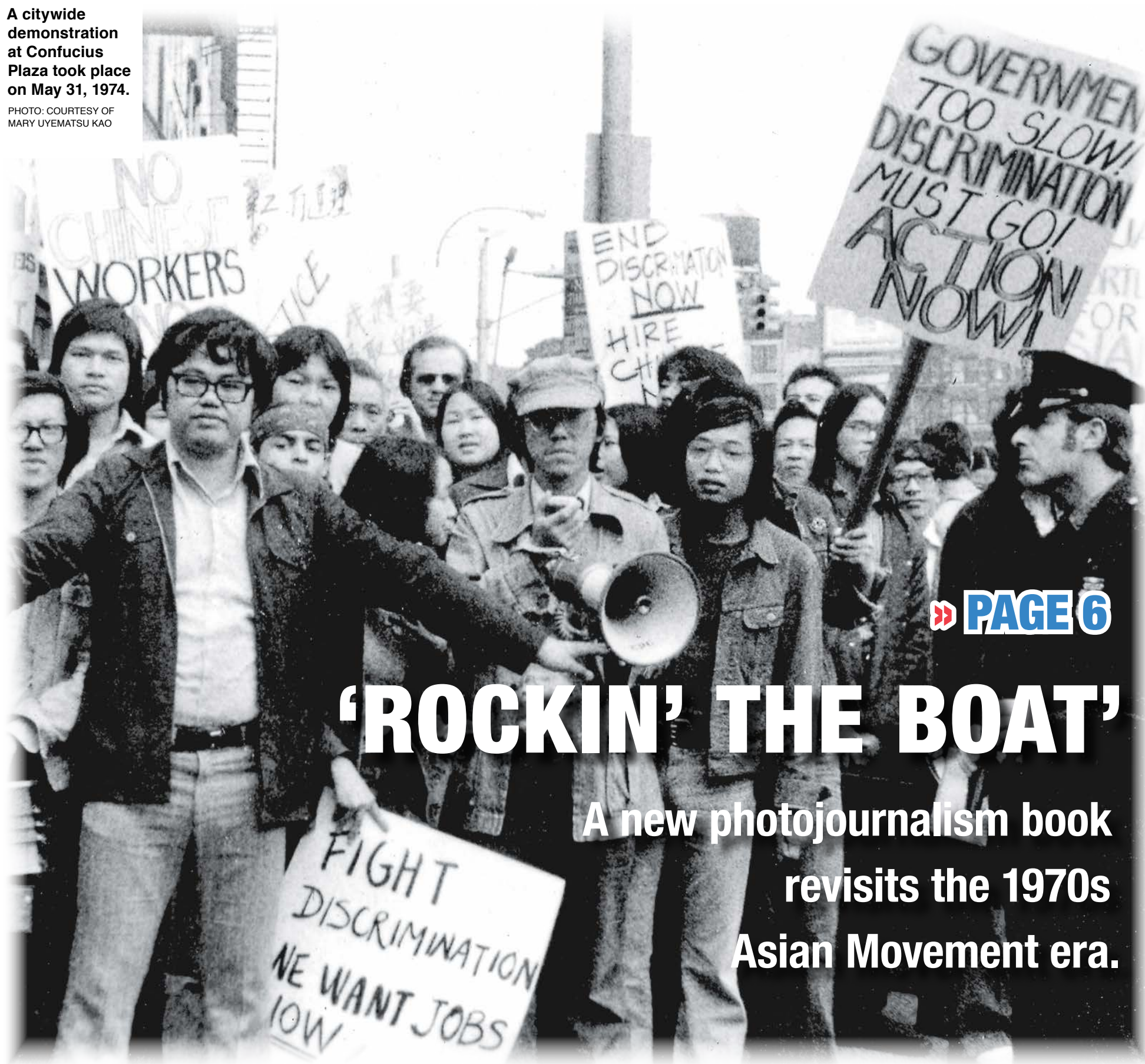


PACIFIC CITIZEN

CELEBRATING 91 YEARS

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

PHOTO: COURTESY OF MARY UYEMATSU KAO



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‘ROCKIN’ THE BOAT’

A new photojournalism book revisits the 1970s Asian Movement era.

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

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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. (P.C., July 17, 2020; see tinyurl.com/y5jt9go2)



A screen capture photo of Lena Hernandez

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 months of economically crippling pandemic restrictions, including a 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 the plan could 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 one problem is that the tests

'In a perfect world, we wouldn't reopen until we had a vaccine.'

— John De Fries, president and CEO of the Hawaii Tourism Authority

are 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.

Hawaii has lived under quarantine laws for months, but hundreds — at times thousands — of people have arrived daily since the pandemic

started. Some have flouted safety measures, leading to arrests and fines for the scofflaws.

Before the pandemic, the state received about 30,000 visitors a day.

If the islands face another coronavirus surge because of a hasty return to tourism, another lockdown could spell economic disaster, Wakai said.

But others view the pretravel testing plan as the best way to add a layer of protection while kick-starting the economy. Hawaii has had one the nation's highest unemployment rates since the start of the pandemic, which ground to a halt nearly all vacation-related activity.

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.

"It's important that people know we welcome them as long as they've gotten their test," 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 at Hawaii's airports don't take into account capacity or cost. Even if the state could test all visitors, people wouldn't get their results right away, he added.

"If we were to test everybody that came, we would have to have 8,000 tests per day," Green said, estimating the number of visitors he thinks will travel to Hawaii at the program's start. The state currently has about 4,000 tests available each day for

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The *Pacific Citizen* newspaper (ISSN: 0030-8579) is published semi-monthly (except once in December and January) by the Japanese American Citizens League, *Pacific Citizen*, 123 Ellison S. Onizuka St., Suite 313 Los Angeles, CA 90012 Periodical postage paid at L.A., CA
POSTMASTER: Send address changes to National JACL, 1765 Sutter St., San Francisco, CA 94115

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'I'm glad to see the Pacific Citizen growing and evolving with its website, and especially LOVE the much easier-to-navigate digital archives. It's a treasure trove for JAs to learn about our community's history, and for scholars and journalists looking to connect the past with the present. Thanks for the improvements, P.C.!'

— Gil Asakawa

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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 administration.

Just as I learned then, our country this year has learned the true value of the field of public health and the potential and need for a strong government agency. Unfortunately, now everyone thinks they are a biostatistician figuring out if COVID-19 really is dangerous or not based on mortality and morbidity numbers.

Is contact tracing necessary to stem

the spread of the pandemic, or is it better to not know who is infected because that makes the numbers look better? Unfortunately, those who disregard the utility of public health methodology are the ones in charge, and it has been ruinous for our country.

This has been especially laid bare by the epidemic sweeping through the White House. Thirty-five staff in the West Wing, including the president, have contracted COVID-19, demonstrating how the conscious decisions to not wear masks nor practice social distancing can facilitate the spread of this disease.

It might have been somewhat reassuring if the impact of the incompetency were limited to the White House, but instead, we have seen deaths due to COVID-19 rise above 210,000 with no end in sight. Yes, America is first, but for all the wrong reasons.

But this is not just a case of incompetence. It is also the result of a deliberate effort by this administration to decimate the federal government. Vital programs in the Department of Health and Human Services

and throughout all branches of the administration have been scaled back and targeted for zeroing out in every presidential budget. Now we see the fruits of those efforts with a Centers for Disease Control that has been unable to respond adequately to the pandemic.

When the Trump administration came in, they said they were going to drain the swamp. For them, this meant driving out career employees who had served faithfully and honorably through multiple Democratic and Republican administrations.

I, myself, am proud to have served during the George Bush administration in the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services. I might not have agreed with all the policies of the administration at the time, but that did not affect my dedication to carry out my duties and serve with full effort, and I continue to hold Dr. Mark McClellan, then-CMS administrator, in the highest regard.

We are now seeing the effects of the loss of so many dedicated government employees. A hollowed-out government is unable to fully

respond to the pandemic, but even if they could, it is likely this administration would not allow them to respond in full.

The more cases of COVID-19 that we know about, the more poorly it reflects upon the administration. This, of course, ignores the fact that with that data, we could likely reduce the number of infections.

They want the American people to believe that government is not necessary and have nearly made that a self-fulfilling prophecy by creating a government that is intentionally unable to perform its necessary functions to serve its citizens.

We must demand a competent government. It doesn't need to be big, but it does need to work — and work for the average American.

The COVID-19 pandemic is a huge challenge — it would be regardless of who is in charge — but their intentional efforts to prevent a full response and the handicaps placed throughout the government in the preceding three years are entirely the fault of the current leadership. They must be held accountable. We deserve better from our government.

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.



By Marsha Aizumi

A MOTHER'S TAKE MAKING MY VOICE COUNT

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 think 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



Marsha Aizumi's message:

Vote on Nov. 3!

PHOTO: CRAIG ISHII

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 jas4biden.com and check it out.



PHOTO:
MARSHA
AIZUMI

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 (50 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

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 to it their 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 sushi 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 grandpa, 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



NY/SC Storyteller Contest Winners Sam Hamashima (left) and Jessica Bukowski and Kristin Sato

PHOTOS: COURTESY OF NY/SC



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 weave 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 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 traumas 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. ■



HAWAII » continued from page 2

residents and visitors.

As part of the plan, Hawaii is partnering with several U.S. mainland pharmacies and airlines for testing. Travelers will load their information onto a state website and mobile app that officials will use to

track incoming passengers.

Dr. Anthony Fauci, who spoke with Green in a livestream video call Oct. 7, said no matter what, some COVID positive vacationers will get into the state.

“The reality is, no matter what

you do, there are going to be infected people who slip through the cracks. It's inevitable,” Fauci said.

Fauci said that adding some kind of secondary screening would help.

“You're not going to get everybody, but statistically, you're going to dramatically diminish the likelihood that an infected person

enters,” he said.

The blow to tourism has taken a toll on Hawaii residents who depend on the sector to survive. Many businesses have closed. Hotels have shuttered or operate under limited capacity. Bars remain closed and restaurants struggle with take-out only or a cap on the

number of guests they can serve. The October measure could bring back paychecks for many workers.

“In a perfect world, we wouldn't reopen until we had a vaccine,” said John De Fries, president and CEO of the Hawaii Tourism Authority. However, waiting that long, he said, “would take us out.” ■

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

Armed 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.

Right out of UCLA, she worked for California state Sen. Diane Watson and California Assemblyman Tom Hayden.

"I got exposure to a lot of issues, a lot of people, public policy and the political process when I worked for both of them," Murakawa told the *Pacific Citizen*.

Later, Murakawa did public affairs for L.A. Metro, after which she launched her own firm, Murakawa Communications, and soon thereafter served on four commissions in Redondo Beach: the Traffic and Transportation Commission, the Public Works Commission, the Harbor Commission and the Budget and Finance Commission.



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

PHOTO: FACEBOOK

"Because of my experience there," she said, "I learned a lot about public policy in a municipal setting."

Over the years, Murakawa served on several nonprofit boards, including mental health agency Pacific Asian Counseling Services, the Japanese American Citizens League, American Civil Liberties Union (regionally and nationally), Little Tokyo Service Center, American Lung Association of California, UCLA Alumni Assn., Women's Transportation Seminar and State Bar Examiners Committee.

"It shows 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 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 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.



Trisha Murakawa, a former JACL National board member, is running for a seat on the El Camino College Board of Trustees.

PHOTOS: COURTESY OF TRISHA MURAKAWA

'ROCKIN' THE BOAT' FOCUSES ON ASIAN MOVEMENT ERA

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 compile her photos into a book.

"I was working on a film at the time. All the photographs that I took were supposed to be for this film, which didn't get very far," Kao laughed.

Fortunately, this desire to document the times and Kao's peers via photography is a gift to younger generations for whom taking a photo is as easy as whipping out a smartphone and sharing it via social media.

Back then, though, desire wasn't enough. One needed a decent camera, film and access to a darkroom. Fortunately for posterity, a young and yet-unmarried Mary Uyematsu had all three: a Mamiya-Sekor 500 TL 35 mm

camera, rolls of Kodak Pan-X black-and-white film and the darkroom at *Gidra*, the L.A.-based unofficial official newspaper 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. "A lot of it was just trial and error and just the love of doing those things. I messed up so many pictures doing my own darkroom work."

But the modern digital technology that allows anyone with a smartphone to take a photo also proved beneficial to Kao. "I had this box

full of negatives that I had been dragging around," she said.

With a grant in the early aughts from the Institute of American Cultures, she was able to have more than 300 of those negatives, saved in manila envelopes with dates and places written on them, professionally scanned at a high resolution and converted into digital files.

It would take until after her retirement — and yet another grant, plus the cooperation of the

Asian American Studies Center to be the co-publisher — for Kao to get going on turning those digitized images into a book. Even with those favorable circumstances, however, it wasn't easy for her.

"It was really hard getting started. It was like this massive block. It was a writer's block because I was approaching it as, 'I need to write first,'" said Kao. "With no progress on that, I realized, 'This is a photo book. The main reason I'm doing this is because I want to show the photos that I took from that time.' 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,

HOW TO PURCHASE 'ROCKIN' THE BOAT'

'ROCKIN' THE BOAT:
FLASHBACKS OF THE 1970S ASIAN MOVEMENT'

ISBN 978-0-934052-55-9

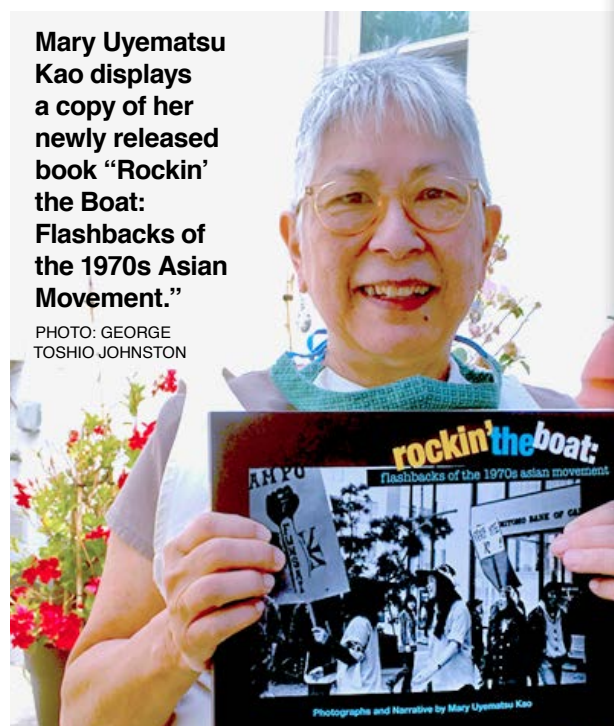
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UCLA Asian American Studies Center

3230 Campbell Hall, Box 951546

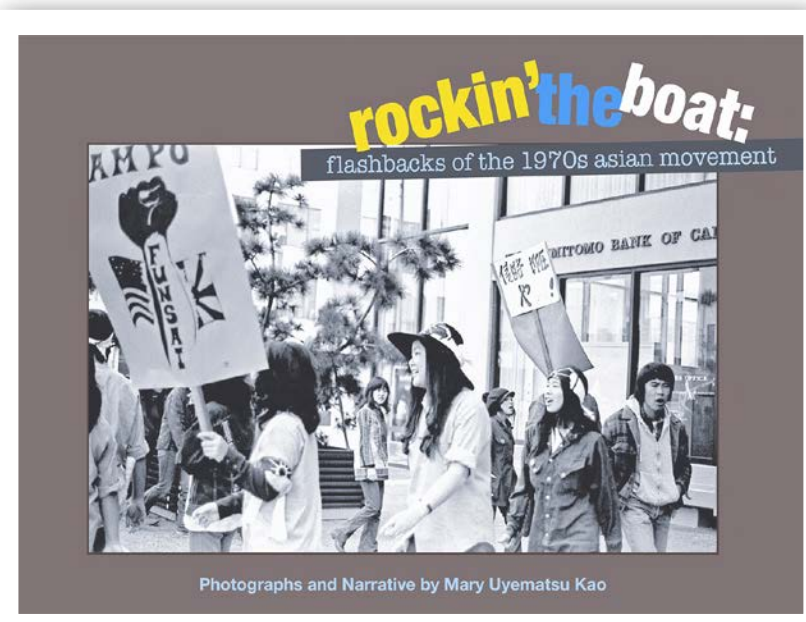
Los Angeles, CA 90095-1546

EMAIL: aascpress@ucla.edu or write to Mary Uyematsu Kao at mugao@ucla.edu.



Mary Uyematsu Kao displays a copy of her newly released book "Rockin' the Boat: Flashbacks of the 1970s Asian Movement."

PHOTO: GEORGE TOSHIO JOHNSTON



(Above) "Rockin' the Boat" cover, featuring a 1972 demonstration in L.A.'s Little Tokyo protesting the U.S.-Japan Security Treaty

PHOTO: MARY UYEMATSU KAO



Mary Uyematsu Kao poses for a self-portrait.

PHOTOS: MARY UYEMATSU KAO



Pickers at Confucius Plaza in New York's Chinatown from 1974, protesting the construction contractor's lack of compliance in hiring construction workers of Chinese ancestry.

"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 kugi wa utareru*, 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 times.

The Sansei were part of America's Baby Boom generation, which clashed with their parents on anything and everything: politics, music, hairstyles, gender roles, patriotism, drugs — and Japanese American boomers and their second-generation parents were not immune to the "generation gap."

Kao, however, bristles at the memory of how Asian Americans were mistreated by the white members of the Anti-War movement, despite the common goals of ending the Vietnam War.

"They had no sensitivity toward Asians or Asian Americans or even the Vietnamese," she said. "They couldn't have cared less."

"The attitude was, 'Bring our boys home,' whereas the Asian contingent was telling them, 'Look what you're doing to the (Vietnamese) people over there. Do you even consider them people?'"

Kao also remembers hearing from Asian American veterans returning from Vietnam.

"The guys that came back, they were telling us that they were stood up in [basic] training as 'this is what a gook looks like,' and out in the field, not sure if they were going to get shot by either side," she said.

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 con-

tinued, "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. ■

Members of the Yellow Brotherhood in Los Angeles give a Yellow Power salute, circa 1973.



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 Dianne 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 shar-



The newly released curriculum examines the life of Sec. Norman Y. Mineta and delves into important topics that deal with the American experience.

ing 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 WWII and parallels to contemporary issues.
- **Civic 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. 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.



Rep. Mark Takano (D-Calif.)

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 is the leading researcher and trainer on citizen engagement, educating thousands of individuals and facilitating better relationships with Congress.

For more information, please visit www.congressfoundation.org.

JUDGE VINCENT OKAMOTO DIES AT AGE 76

The highly decorated Vietnam veteran was also an Army Ranger.

By P.C. 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 JAVA 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



Okamoto was instrumental in establishing the Japanese American National War Memorial Court, located adjacent to the Japanese American Cultural and Community Center in Los Angeles' Little Tokyo.

PHOTO: COURTESY OF JACCC

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 Keiro, 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



Judge Vincent Okamoto (far right) died at age 76. This photo was taken at his home in 2017. Pictured with Okamoto are (from left) Joe Anello, Ken Hayashi, Hershey Miyamura and Steve Mick.

PHOTO: GEORGE TOSHIO JOHNSTON

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 2008, Okamoto published "Wolfhound Samurai," a novel based upon his experiences going through Army Ranger training and as an infantryman in Vietnam. He also wrote a book titled "Forged in Fire: The Story of Hershey and Joe," about the Korean War experiences of Medal of Honor recipient Hiroshi "Hershey" Miyamura and his friendship with a fellow soldier, Joe Anello.

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.



Vincent Okamoto in 1979

A NATIONAL GUIDE TO NOTABLE COMMUNITY EVENTS

CALENDAR

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 JANM and brought to you by the JACSC.

Info: To register, visit <https://bit.ly/3h1TpWK>.

'Broken Promises' Virtual Exhibit
Burnaby, Canada
Ongoing
Nikkei National Museum & Culture Centre
Virtual event
Price: Free

The new traveling exhibit "Broken Promises," co-curated by the Nikkei National Museum with the Royal British Columbia Museum and the Landscapes of Injustice research collective, explores the dispossession of Japanese Canadians in the 1940s. It illuminates the loss of home and the struggle for justice of one

racially marginalized community. You'll learn about life for Japanese Canadians in Canada before World War II, the administration of their lives during and after the war ended and how the legacies of dispossession continues to this day.

Info: For more information about the exhibit, visit <https://centre.nikkeiplace.org/exhibits/broken-promises/>.

NCWNP

Picnic at the Plaza
San Francisco, CA
Saturday and Sundays Thru Nov. 1;
11:30 a.m.-8 p.m.

Japantown'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 Japantown businesses. This program is brought to you by the Center in cooperation with the S.F. Recreation and Parks Department and the Japantown Merchants Assn. Funded by the Henri and Tomoye Takahashi Charitable Foundation.
Info: Visit jccnc.org.

Community Kitchen Virtual Potluck: Sweets, Treats and Japanese Desserts
San Francisco, CA
Virtual Event
Oct. 22; 6-8 p.m.
Price: Free; Advance Registration Required
Join the Japanese Cultural and Community Center Northern California at its virtual potluck featuring the best dessert recipes for this month's Community Kitchen virtual potluck! Connect via Zoom and show your best desserts and treats. No potluck is complete without the best desserts!
Info: Visit jccnc.org for Zoom de-

tails. Meeting ID and password will be issued upon registration.

PSW

36th Annual Los Angeles Asian Pacific Film Festival
Los Angeles, CA
Thru Oct. 31
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 Ito Courage Award. The event will be emceed by ABC7's David Ono.

Info: For more information and to register, visit <https://www.advancingjustice-la.org>.

Keiro Symposium: 'Designing Your Future'
Los Angeles, CA
Oct. 24; 10 a.m.-Noon
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 Spisso and William Dunne from UCLA Health, financial adviser Ric Edelman and KTLA-TV's tech reporter Rich DeMuro.

Info: Registration closes on Oct. 22. To preregister, visit <https://keiro.org/symposium>. For questions, email programs@keiro.org or call (213) 873-5792.

GFBNEC's 'An Evening of Aloha'
Los Angeles, CA
Nov. 14, 4-5 p.m. PST
Virtual event

Join the Go For Broke National Education Center as it streams live for the first time 'An Evening of Aloha' celebration gala honoring our brave Nisei veterans.

Info: Visit goforbroke.org.

JANM Online Museum Collection
Los Angeles, CA
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 Hoshida Collection" and "Hideo Date Collection," "Estelle Ishigo Collection," among others. Although the museum is temporarily closed, viewers can still experience its inside treasures.
Info: www.janm.org.

PNW

Wing Luke Museum Online Digital Content
Seattle, WA
Wing Luke Museum

Although the museum's doors are temporarily closed, there is still a plethora of curated stories, digital content and neighborhood resources available to access and view. Viewers can check out Education, YouthCAN, Collections and Community Art all online!

Info: www.digitalwingluke.org.

MDC

'Quilts Uncovering: Women's Stories'
Indianapolis, IN

Thru 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 study and understand Western art, history and cultures. One quilt on display contains blocks made by students who were incarcerated at Poston War Relocation Center during WWII.
Info: Visit www.eiteljorg.org.

'Vibrant Line': Works on Paper by Tanaka, Shinoda and Tawara
Idaville, IN

Thru Nov 29

Indianapolis Museum of Art
4000 N. Michigan Road

Price: See Museum's Website

Three very different modern Japanese artists stay inside the lines to express what's possible with ink on paper — from photorealistic etchings of old rural Japan to calligraphy influenced by abstract expressionism, see the artworks of master etcher Ryohei Tanaka, painter Tawara Yusaku and calligrapher Toko Shinoda in this exhibit that incorporates abstract interpretations of natural phenomena.
Info: Visit <https://www.mutualart.com/Organization/Indianapolis-Museum-of-Art--Newfields/3CB126D19FEF393C>.

EDC

Japan Society of Boston Free Online Resources

Boston, MA

Virtual classes and information

Price: Free

The Japan Society of Boston is offering free online resources featuring Japanese language learning tools, cooking, origami, arts and lectures and much more.

Info: Visit <https://japansocietyboston.wildapricot.org>.



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FOR MORE INFO:
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(213) 620-1767

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: 9; ggc: 1.

Awakuni, Teruko, 90, 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, Steven (Sharon) Awakuni, Ken Awakuni and Donna Awakuni; several siblings; gc: 2.



Davis, Linda Lee (Yamada), 72, Lodi, CA, Sept. 17; a career educator, she is survived by her husband, Scott; daughter, Lindsay Mora (Luis); brothers, Gerald Yamada (Nancy) and Kenny Yamada (Millie); sisters-in-law, Sally Skelton (Larry), Jenny Vasquez and Jill Mann (Steve); brother-in-law, Mark Davis; mother-in-law, Merna Davis; she is also survived by many nieces, nephews and friends; gc: 3.

Higashi, Blake Shiro, 63, Kahului, HI, Jan. 22; he is survived by his mother, Joan Higashi; brother, Harvey (Winona) Higashi; children, Brandon (Lauren) Higashi and Amy (Lenn) Nakama; partner, Debbi Amado; gc: 3.

Honda, Tomie, 96, Captain Cook, HI, Feb. 29; she is survived by her children, Carol Honda, Ruth Honda, Harry Honda Jr.; siblings, Satsue Tanaka, Toyoko Urada and Akikazu (Suemi) Matsumoto; she is also survived by many numerous nieces, nephews and cousins.



Hoshino, Kazuko, Los Angeles, CA, April; she is survived by her husband, William Hefner; son, Koji; mother, Michiko; sisters, Yoshimi Umezawa and Sachiko Kobayashi.

Ikeda, Hisako, 97, Keaau, HI, Feb.

22; she is survived by her daughter, Shirley (Calvin) 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, Tristan and Courtney; gc: 3.

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



Kawaguchi, Miyoko, 83, Seattle, WA, Jan. 14; she was predeceased by her husband, Dr. Toshiyuki Paul Kawaguchi, and brother, Teruo; she is survived by her sons, 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, Kapaau, 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; daughters, Pamela Murakami and Patti (Randy) Endo; son, Kevin (Mike) Murakami; gc: 2.

Murakami, Janet Kinue, 91, Honokaa, HI, April 11; she is survived by her husband, Kiyoshi Murakami; children, Wesley (Debbie) Murakami

and Wendy (John "Beau" Schneider) Murakami; gc: 4; ggc: 5.

Nakagiri, Tomiye, 90, Culver City, CA, April 18; she is survived by her daughters, Lynn (Tim Mochizuki) Nakagiri and Laurie (Mike) Amano; siblings, Frank (Hideko), Hiroshi (Sumako), Tadashi and Isamu Tsushima and May (Keigo) Obata; siblings-in-law, Shigemi Nakagiri and June Akioka; gc: 3.



Nakamichi, Kusu, 92, Seattle, WA, May 8.



Nakanishi, Hiroshi Ray, 96, Seattle, WA, March 27; an Army veteran (WWII), he is survived by his wife, Chiyo; children, Roger, David and Ellen Nakanishi; brother, Ted Nakanishi; gc: 4; ggc: 2.

Okamoto, Jean, 88, Los Angeles, CA, Feb. 15.

Ono, Dorothy Yayoi, 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, Toshiko 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 Kiyoshi Sakai; she is survived by her children, Richard Sakai Jr., Daniel (Lily) Sakai and Sheril Sakai; siblings, Ken Iwata, Jiroh (Lorna) Iwata and Emmy Iwata; gc: 2.

Sakamoto, Waka, 68, Lancaster, CA, April 17; she is survived by her husband, Glenn; daughter, Shirley (Tim Chung) Sakamoto; Shintaro Odaira, Yoko Kaneshiro, Teruko Kawana, Ikko Nageshima, Hachiro Odaira and Mutsuko Sato.

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



Shiroma, Gerald, 59, Los Angeles, April 8; COVID-19 related.



Tanada, Edna Noriko, 99, Oakland, CA, March 17; she was predeceased by her husband, Yoshinori "Joe" Tanada; she is survived by her daughters, Karen (David) and Ruth (Leo); sister, Betty Togikawa; sister-in-law, Alice Esperas; gc: 1.

Tanaka, Mitsuko, 86, Camarillo, CA, April 27; she is survived by her husband, Yoneo; children, John (Sue) Tanaka, Nancy (David) Nishimori and Andrew (Karen) Tanaka; gc: 9; ggc: 2.

Teramoto, Masami, 94, Los

Angeles, CA, April 13; she was predeceased by her husband, Takeo; she is survived by her children, Takeshi (Betty) Teramoto and Machiko Urquidi; 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.

Yamakawa, Satoshi, 87, San Francisco, CA, April 20.



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 Hifumi; gc: 5.

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REIMAGINE EVERYTHING

AARP COLLABORATES TO ADDRESS POLL WORKER SHORTAGES FOR 2020 ELECTIONS

By Ron Mori

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 engagement 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.

In past articles, I wrote about our "Protect Voters 50+," a comprehensive voter engagement campaign to support and protect Americans 50-plus as they vote in the 2020 elections. The campaign will help Americans over 50 vote safely, whether at home or in person.

The "Protect Voters 50+" campaign will also provide people with the information they need about this year's elections, including video voters' guides, issue briefings, direct mail, text messaging, social media and paid media.

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



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

PHOTO: AARP

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