» INSIDE!

JACL Holds a Historic
All-Virtual 51st
Annual Confab.
JACL PROMOTES FELLOW TO NEW EDUCATION AND COMMUNICATIONS COORDINATOR POSITION

By JACL National

JACL is pleased to announce the promotion of Matthew Weisbly to the new education and communications coordinator position. Weisbly has served the past two years as the Daniel K. Inouye fellow. Before his time with JACL, he held staff positions and board position with on-campus departments and organizations while attending school at the University of Southern California. As a longtime JACL member, Weisbly also worked with his local chapter in Arizona, as well as the Pacific Southwest District as a whole.

“Growing up with the JACL, I never expected to one day work here, but these past two years, despite Covid, have been some of the most enriching experiences I’ve ever had,” said Weisbly. “In a weird way it’s because of Covid, though I’ve been able to continue as a fellow and now as a coordinator for JACL back in a city I love. I can’t wait to be able to go out again and work in the community, continuing all the amazing work and getting to use my background as a history major to push for more education on not only Japanese American history, but also Asian American, Native Hawaiian and Pacific Islander history as a whole.”

Weisbly will begin his new position this week remotely but will represent the JACL staff in the Pacific Southwest District at an office based in Los Angeles’ Little Tokyo alongside the Pacific Citizen staff.

Congratulations Matthew!

JACL welcomes Matthew Weisbly as its new education and communications coordinator.

LETTER TO THE EDITOR

Dear Editor,

Setting the Record Straight: JACL Hypocrisy?

In the Pacific Citizen issue No. 3390 (P.C., July 2-22, 2021, issue), JACL Executive Director David Inoue writes, “If You Support JACL, You Should Also Support Critical Race Theory,” claiming that “CRT is vitally important and core to what JACL has always done as an organization. . . .”

Inoue’s article appears to attribute the racism that resulted in 120,000 persons of Japanese ancestry being unlawfully imprisoned during World War II to “systemic prejudice.”

Inoue’s article seems to be not only a way for JACL to show support for CRT but for JACL to hide in the shadows so that it can avoid having to shed light on the whole truth and to hold leaders personally accountable for their racially motivated actions against our community. However, CRT advocates appear to use personal accountability as a core method to expose racism.

If CRT advocates want to rename schools named after Robert E. Lee so that Black school children wouldn’t feel intimidated by having to attend a school named in honor of the defender of slavery, why is JACL not advocating for the same protection for Japanese American children who have to attend a school named after President Franklin D. Roosevelt, who signed Executive Order (EO) 9066, or Earl Warren, who as California Attorney General was one of the main proponents for the forced evacuation?

If CRT advocates want to remove statues of Confederate soldiers because they are symbols of the racism against the Black community, why is JACL not advocating for close and defend the FDR Memorial in Washington, D.C., where there is no mention made of Executive Order 9066 nor Roosevelt’s unconstitutional denial of equal protection of the law for persons of Japanese ancestry?

If CRT advocates want actions taken against President Abraham Lincoln because his policies adversely affected Native Americans notwithstanding the price he paid to end slavery, why is JACL not advocating similar actions against Warren because of his support of EO 9066 notwithstanding his role to end “separate but equal” education for Black students?

If JACL supports CRT, then JACL must take actions that will honestly tell our whole and unvarnished story based on the facts and without sugar-coating the racism, rewriting history or omitting personal accountability for promoting racism.

The Commission on Wartime Re-integration and Internment of Citizens (aka “Redress Commission”) took the first step when it concluded that Executive Order 9066 was motivated by “prejudice, war hysteria and lack of political leadership.” In 2018, the U.S. Supreme Court concluded that EO 9066 was a “morally repugnant order.”

Does JACL have the needed resolve and leadership to take the next step by holding personally accountable those who used war hysteria as a subterfuge to advance racism against persons of Japanese ancestry?

JACL must support actions that hold leaders like Roosevelt and Warren accountable for their actions and shed light on their motives. Otherwise, JACL support for CRT is only hollow, politically correct posturing amounting to hypocrisy.

Sincerely,

Gerald Yamada*, Virginia

* The views and opinions expressed in this letter are mine and do not represent the views and opinions of any organization with which I am or have been associated.

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Periodicals paid at Los Angeles, Calif. and mailing office.
It was a long time coming, nearly five hours to be exact. We knew things wouldn’t be easy conducting convention virtually, but five hours to pass Resolution 1 was probably a little more than anyone really expected. Fortunately, the rest of the afternoon went smoothly, though perhaps that was due to exhaustion from the prior debate.

While I am sure there were many sighs of relief at the conclusion of a long day of National Council meetings, which accomplished passage of two important resolutions and a biennial budget, in addition to two previous days of workshops and National Council meetings, the work is really only just beginning.

On the first day of National Council sessions, David Lin, VP of planning and development, with the staff support of Phillip Ozaki, kicked off JACL’s most ambitious fundraising campaign since the establishment of the Legacy Fund in 1990.

We hope to raise $3 million over the next three years. This will be a tremendous effort for the organization, but it will also enable us to do the work called for in our budget and in response to the two passed resolutions.

It should be noted that Central California District Council Governor Dale Ikeda is also leading a task force to examine our Legacy Fund and ensure it supports the work of the organization and our chapters as effectively as possible within the restrictions of the original donors’ intentions. These initiatives will be crucially important to making sure JACL has the resources to do our work as a civil rights organization.

What will truly define what JACL is as an organization are the two resolutions passed on July 18. These resolutions affirm our need to serve as a leader in the civil rights community as we advocate not only for our own Asian American community, but also for others who have been denied their rights for far too long.

It is instructive even this year as we recognize 40 years since the public hearings for the Commission on Wartime Relocation and Internment of Civilians (CWRC), which led to Japanese American redress. The equivalent commission to examine Black reparations for slavery and its ongoing legacy remains unpassed by Congress.

Similarly, even as we have pushed for further hate crimes legislation, nothing controversial, only the call for the government to do a better job of tracking data, we saw no progress toward passage for several years.

Yet, in the wake of the Atlanta and Indianapolis shootings of mostly Asian American victims, we were able to push through the COVID-19 Hate Crimes Act with near unanimity from Congress.

It is disappointing that where Japanese Americans achieved redress so many years ago we cannot even get a commission passed today, or that while hate crimes actually impact Muslim and Jewish communities at a much higher rate than Asians, the only way to pass broad anti-hate crimes legislation is because Asians are being targeted.

The passage of the hate crimes act was instructive as to how it came to be our turn to bring something across the line. By attaching the Jabara Hoyer NO HATE Act to the COVID-19 bill, we were able to use our moment in the spotlight to bring a victory for the wider community.

As Resolution 1 affirms, it is time for us a Japanese Americans, as the JACL, to apply our time and effort to achieving justice for the Black community. Reparations are long overdue as is achieving a truly just justice system.

While it may have been challenging for us to pass the resolution at convention — not made any easier by the virtual setting — the real work begins now. Local chapters must join in the national efforts to pass significant legislation in HR 40, the George Floyd Justice in Policing Act and the BREATHE Act.

Let’s take a moment to celebrate the statement we made in passing Resolution 1, but not too much time before we all begin the hard work of taking that statement to action. I look forward to you all joining together to work to make our statements come alive and bring about the justice and equity that we deserve and need as a nation.

David Inoue is executive director of the JACL. He is based in the organization’s Washington, D.C., office.

Commentary

NOW IT IS TIME TO ACT

By David Inoue, JACL Executive Director

LEGAL-EASE: AN ATTORNEY’S PERSPECTIVE

HOW TO BEAT THE SUMMER HEAT

By Judd Matsunaga, Esq.

S

ummer is here. Are you ready for the next heatwave? According to the Climate Science Special Report, not only have temperatures risen in the past, but they also are projected to continue to increase due to the release of greenhouse gases. In fact, heatwaves across the contiguous United States have occurred more often and lasted longer since the 1960s (source: www.climate.gov).

If you’re over 65, the risk of illness from hot weather is particularly high, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, which found that 36 percent of heat-related deaths in the U.S. were in that age category. As people age, bodies don’t adjust well to sudden changes in temperature, and prescription medications and chronic illnesses can affect a response to heat.

“As you age, you don’t notice the heat anymore,” said Dr. Charles Maddow, director of emergency geriatrics at McGovern Medical School at UTHealth in Houston.

“Older bodies are not as hydrated and don’t sweat as much — making it more difficult to cool down.”

“Heat can really be threatening to older adults,” said Dr. Christine E. Kistler, a physician in the Department of Family Medicine and the Division of Geriatric Medicine at the University of North Carolina School of Medicine. “The heat you might have been able to take in your 30s, you’re not physiologically able to cope with in your 80s.”

Existing health conditions like diabetes, a history of heart disease and high blood pressure — more common in older adults — can also make people more susceptible to heat-related illnesses, Kistler said. Plus, diuretics, sedatives, beta blockers and other heart and high blood pressure medications may make it more difficult for people to cool themselves.

According to a June 17, 2021, article by AARP, “How to Stay Healthy as Summer Temps Rise,” seniors should check with their doctor about whether medications taken could contribute to overheating. In the article, there are other strategies to avoid heatstroke and other illnesses on sweltering days:

(1) Heatstroke and heat exhaustion top the list and can be quite dangerous, Kistler says. If you start to feel sluggish, light-headed, nauseated or dizzy after being outside, listen to your body. Get into the shade or seek out air-conditioned areas. A cool shower or pouring cold water over wrists, ankles and the back of the neck can also help get the body temperature down, Kistler said.

If you’re wearing a mask because of the coronavirus pandemic, make sure to take it off so you can breathe freely. If you still feel unwell after cooling down and hydrating, seek medical attention.

(2) Dehydration is a serious problem for older people. It’s very important to keep up fluid intake in hot weather, says Krystal Culler, founder of Virtual Brain Health Center in Poland, Ohio, and a behavioral health expert who has worked with community-based senior programs and adult day programs.

Culler said behavioral strategies such as drinking a full cup of water with vitamins or medication, instead of a sip, can encourage people to drink more fluids. “Adding it into something that is already a part of your daily routine helps,” she said.

The CDC’s guide for protecting older adults in the heat notes that people shouldn’t wait until they feel thirsty to start drinking fluids. The National Academy of Medicine suggests men drink 15.5 cups of fluid per day and women drink about 11.5 cups daily.

Culler says she has found that older people tend to drink more if they use small cups, which are refilled often, rather than giant “gulp”-style containers, which can look overwhelming. Also, avoid alcohol and caffeine, as they can be dehydrating.

(3) Avoiding sunburn goes beyond making sure you aren’t pink and peeling to the point of discomfort, says Kistler. Older people have an increased risk of skin cancer, so wear sunscreen with broad spectrum protection, find a shade, wear thin layers of light-colored clothing that can easily be shed. If you’re outside, set a timer for 15 minutes to remind you to seek out a shady or air-conditioned spot after being in the sun, he says.

(4) Heat rash, that prickly, itchy skin condition, can develop if you’re out in the sun. Wear light-colored, loose clothing made of breathable fabrics can help keep you cool and prevent rashes.

(5) Stay inside on the hottest days. Seek out air-conditioned areas. If you don’t have air conditioning at home, some communities offer cooling during heat. There are also low-income energy assistance programs if you’re having trouble paying your electric bill. Contact the nearest office for the Low-Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP) for more information.

(6) Take a dip. That could mean going swimming in a backyard pool or lake, but it can also mean taking a cool shower or running through a backyard sprinkler (with the kids on not).

(7) Seek out shade. Take a walk in the woods instead of on a path in full sun or do some gardening under a tree. If you need to go out, shift your timing to early morning or evening when the sun isn’t as strong and more shade is available.

(8) Get more water. Get in the habit of sipping regularly. As people age, the ability to sense thirst wanes, so drink liquids often in hot weather, Maddow says. Flavoring water with fruits and even vegetables like cucumber can make it more inviting. Culler says, and some reusable water bottles come with a core to load with lemons, apples or strawberries. Some fruits have a high water content, so choose watermelon or grapes for snacking.

Judd Matsunaga is the founding attorney of Elder Law Services of Texas, which specializes in Medi-Cal Planning, Estate Planning and Probate. He can be contacted at (310) 348-2995 or judd@elderlawcalifornia.com. The opinions expressed in this article are the author’s own and do not necessarily reflect the views of the Pacific Citizen or constitute legal or tax advice and should not be treated as such.
A MOTHER’S TAKE

JACL CONVENTION — OKAERI WAS THERE!

By Marsha Aizumi

As Okaeri continues to expand its reach, David Inoue, executive director of the JACL, encouraged Okaeri to present a workshop at the 2021 JACL convention, which took place virtually July 15-18. The workshop, called “Connecting Nikkei LGBTQ+ Individuals, Parents and Allies,” featured a panel of leaders in Okaeri, and I was asked to be the moderator. As part of the JACL convention’s solidarity track, David felt uplifting the work of Okaeri in the Japanese and Japanese American LGBTQ+ community was important.

That seemed very fitting, since at the 2019 JACL convention, Okaeri had organized a panel around the topic of LGBTQ+ support, and this would be continuing that discussion.

Actually, during the Q & A in 2019, one of the attendees asked, “Where can Nikkei get support when they don’t live in an area that has an abundance of resources and places to go for help?”

At the time, we did not have a lot of answers. However, inspired by this question, one year later in the middle of the pandemic, Okaeri began three support groups: one for English-speaking LGBTQ+ individuals, their parents and allies; one for Japanese-speaking LGBTQ+ individuals; and one for Japanese-speaking parents and allies. Okaeri Connects!

During the past year, Okaeri Connects! has provided a monthly Japanese and/or English support group that our Nikkei queer, trans, parents or allies can attend. Although the groups were started to reach out to our families in the United States, individuals in Japan have found their way to Okaeri Connects! to be part of a community, share their stories and find resources as well.

Things in Japan are still so closed. Japanese-speaking individuals have attended our English-speaking group, so that family members in the next room cannot understand what their children are saying in English through thin rice-paper walls.

The study revealed that adults can also benefit from learning more about the impact lifestyle changes have on the risk for cognitive decline and dementia. At least three-quarters of health care providers agreed that adopting brain-healthy behaviors can help with the symptoms of dementia.

“Risks for cognitive decline are much lower than most adults think, and there are many things you can do now to lower those risks as you age,” said Lock. “People should feel empowered to take control of their brain health by making lifestyle changes like being social, eating healthy foods, managing stress, exercising, getting better sleep and engaging their brains.”

Other key findings support the need to increase awareness about brain health as people age:

• Half of adults believe it is likely they will get dementia — far more than will ever develop it and a majority think they’ll experience cognitive decline as they age.

• More Hispanic/Latino and Asian American and Pacific Islander adults, compared to African American and white adults, are worried their mental sharpness has already declined.

• African American/Black adults and adults 70 and older perceive a lower level of stigma compared to white and Hispanic/Latino adults and younger adults.

• Nearly half of adults 40 and older say they do not know if there are treatments available for dementia and just four in 10 adults are aware there is no cure for dementia.

The research was conducted in part to help inform the work of the Milken Institute Alliance to Improve Dementia Care, of which AARP is a member. The Alliance aims to transform and improve the complex health, community-based and long-term-care systems that people at risk for and living with dementia must navigate.

The Alliance and its members will work to address stigma within their spheres of influence. The research will be discussed at a Milken Institute Future of Health Summit panel titled “Dementia: Addressing the Stigma of America’s Most Feared Diagnosis.”

“Dementia is a highly stigmatized condition, which often hinders physicians and patients from communicating openly about memory concerns,” said Nora Super, executive director of the Milken Institute Alliance to Improve Dementia Care. “Our Alliance, which includes 70-plus leading organizations, will share these results broadly with the goal of using this research to raise awareness and educate consumers, employers, health care providers and policymakers.”

Additional resources are available at aarp.org/brainhealth.

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

REPORT SHOWS DISCONNECT BETWEEN PATIENT, HEALTH CARE PROVIDER VIEWS OF DEMENTIA

By Ron Mori

While dementia remains highly stigmatized, a new AARP report shows that health care providers overestimate the worry that adults 40 and older would feel if they had dementia.

One in five adults say they would feel ashamed or embarrassed if they had dementia, while seven in ten health care providers think their patients would feel this way — a 50-percentage-point difference, according to the research.

“arsh stigma dementia carries can overshadow the facts that a diagnosis is just part of a longer story and that people can continue to live meaningful lives for years to come,” said Sarah Lenz Lock, AARP senior vp for policy and Global Council on Brain Health executive director. “We found that most adults look to their health care providers for straightforward information on dementia, showing a great opportunity for improved lines of communication when it comes to brain health.”

The study revealed that adults can also benefit from learning more about the impact lifestyle changes have on the risk for cognitive decline and dementia. At least three-quarters of health care providers agreed that adopting brain-healthy behaviors can help with the symptoms of dementia.

“Risks for cognitive decline are much lower than most adults think, and there are many things you can do now to lower those risks as you age,” said Lock. “People should feel empowered to take control of their brain health by making lifestyle changes like being social, eating healthy foods, managing stress, exercising, getting better sleep and engaging their brains.”

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COMMUNITIES FORGED UNDER FIRE

Not even a virtual National Convention could hold back JACL’s jam-packed civil rights advocacy agenda.

By PC Staff

Although the 51st annual JACL National Convention was strictly a virtual event this year due to the still-rampant Covid-19 pandemic, that didn’t stop the organization itself from providing a jam-packed schedule that included National Council sessions, plenaries and workshops and a Sayonara gala that recognized the ever-present need to remain as active as ever on the civil rights scene.

“Communities Forged Under Fire” brought together the JACL National Board and its chapters from across the nation July 15-18 in a convention that also included programming with OCA and support from its convention partners AARP, AT&T, Comcast, Google, JACL Credit Union, MGM, Motion Picture Assn., National Parks Service, State Farm, Tsuru for Solidarity and Verizon.

National President Jeffrey Moy reflected upon the JACL’s very unique year.

“It would be so easy for many of us to lament this difficult time and focus on what’s missing and worrying about the future, but as crazy as it might seem, I’m more optimistic about JACL than I ever have been,” said Moy. “If the last year and a half has taught me anything, it’s that we are more resilient as ever and not just resilient but continuing to grow and blossom in even the harshest conditions.

“...it clearly shows that our members are willing to pull together and continue to learn so that we can continue to support each other as a community. ...I challenge all of you to dream about what you want JACL to be and then take those dreams and make them reality.”

JACL Executive Director David Inoue then reported on the work JACL has accomplished in the past year, a highlight being passage of the COVID-19 Hate Crimes Act with strong bipartisan support in both the House and Senate, as well as continuing to make education a key focus of its advocacy work.

Inoue stated, “With the idea of education being key to the long-term reduction in hate incidents, we continue to throw our full support behind programs such as the Japanese American Confinement Sites grant program.

The recently released president’s budget includes a modest surplus budgeted for general operations, budgeted expenditures are in line with prior years.

In all, Farrells reported that there is a modest surplus budgeted for both 2021 and 2022, with more emphasis on revenue-generating activities, including additional staff resources that will help expand the organization’s overall capacity.

JACL is also well on its way to achieving its fundraising goal in 2021 of $402,000, as roughly $325,000 has been raised in revenue to date. With the launch of the CEF, hopes are high for the foreseeable future.

However, questions from chapters were raised regarding contingency plans should numbers not reach their expected targets.

“We do have a contingency plan,” Farrells said. “David, without speaking for him, I can say he is very cautiously adding to the staff, but without that position being filled as it’s incremental to next year, that gives us a lot of flexibility if we don’t see revenue projections hitting the mark. We would not pursue the additional head count.”

Farrells also added, “There is a separate reserve. We have adequate cash reserves from this point of the year, and we haven’t additional funds from the endowment. Our reserves have grown, and that’s another contingency if we’re in a position where we would have to utilize it. However, we don’t need to rely on it or forecast the need to rely on it.”

Additionally, convention coverage will be included in the Pacific Citizen’s Aug. 6-19 issue.

Regarding national programs, there is less revenue associated with this year’s conventions due to its virtual event status; an increase in 2022 has been allotted to account for a planned in-person event. More resources have also been set aside for fund development and annual giving programs. For the Pacific Citizen, reallocation of P.C. staff hours to other JACL programs has resulted in a 2021-22 budget that will be lower than previous years, and for general operations, budgeted expenditures are

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IN HONOR OF 2021 DAY OF REMEMBRANCE
PRESERVE OUR STORY FOR GENERATIONS TO COME

IN THE COMINGS YEARS, WE HOPE TO FURTHER EXPAND THE STAFF TO ENABLE JACL TO LEAD MORE EFFECTIVELY IN THE JAPANESE AMERICAN AND BROADER CIVIL RIGHTS COMMUNITY PROMOTING OUR JAPANESE AMERICAN STORY BOTH FOR ITS UNIQUE-NESS, BUT ALSO ITS PLACE AS A PART OF BROADER AMERICAN HISTORY AND CULTURE,” INOUE STATED.

TURNING TO MEMBERSHIP, SAKI MORI, VP FOR 1000 CLUB, MEMBERSHIP AND SERVICES, UPDATED CHAPTERS WITH JACL’S LATEST MEMBERSHIP FIGURES.

FOR Q2, MORI REPORTED 7,869 ACTIVE JACL MEMBERS, UP FROM 7,542 IN Q1. FOR 2021, THE ORGANIZATION ADDED NINE NEW OR UPDATED MILLENNIUM CLUB MEMBERS AND FIVE NEW LIFE MEMBERS.

“SINCE 2010, WE HAVE HAD A STEADY INCREASE IN NEW MEMBERS,” MORI SAID. “LAST YEAR, JACL RECORDED ITS HIGHEST NUMBER OF NEW MEMBERS IN A 10-YEAR TIME SPAN WITH 636 NEW MEMBERS. FOR THE NEW MEMBERS, THE DEMOGRAPHICS SHOW THAT NEW MEMBERS ARE MALE AND ARE UNDER 25 YEARS OLD, YET A THIRD OF NEW MEMBERS ARE 40 YEARS OLD AND OLDER.”

ALSO ON A POSITIVE NOTE, THE GROWTH IN NATIONAL PROGRAMS HAS RESULTED IN A 2021-22 BUDGET THAT WILL BE LOWER THAN PREVIOUS YEARS, AND FOR GENERAL OPERATIONS, BUDGETED EXPENDITURES ARE

“IN THE COMINGS YEARS, WE HOPE TO FURTHER EXPAND THE STAFF TO ENABLE JACL TO LEAD MORE EFFECTIVELY IN THE JAPANESE AMERICAN AND BROADER CIVIL RIGHTS COMMUNITY PROMOTING OUR JAPANESE AMERICAN STORY BOTH FOR ITS UNIQUE-NESS, BUT ALSO ITS PLACE AS A PART OF BROADER AMERICAN HISTORY AND CULTURE,” INOUE STATED.
**JACL NATIONAL COUNCIL OKS TWO RESOLUTIONS**

Support for BLM, anti-Asian hate proposals both pass.

*By P.C. Staff*

When the JACL’s National Council convenes to vote on proposed resolutions, it can be a time-consuming process even under the best of circumstances. Changes to wording, challenges to the intended — and unintended — consequences are debated, extensions to the allotted time and required breaks all can make for a long day of JACL business.

The added wrinkle of conducting those necessary negotiations remotely for the first time made the resolution process take even longer than usual.

But under the guidance of Resolutions Committee Chair and Chicago JACL Chapter President Lisa Doi, the members of the National Council, plus JACL’s officers and staff put their perseverance on display and completed voting on the two resolutions that were proposed on July 18.

The first resolution was co-sponsored by the Berkeley, Twin Cities, Florin, Seattle, Hoosier, Omaha, St. Louis, SELANOCO and Seattle JACL Chapters and the NV/SC.

The steps R2 called for to achieve this goal included having JACL advocate for mandatory ethnic studies for K-12 students and having the National JACL and JACL chapters to call on local and national media outlets, elected officials and community leaders to denounce racial discrimination, white supremacy and xenophobia. It passed with 68 yes votes, 2-1/2 no votes and a 1/2 abstention.

In a statement released by JACL National, President Jeffrey Moy noted, “Central to both resolutions was the need to accomplish this work in collaboration and coalition with our partner communities. These two resolutions highlight how our communities truly have been ‘Forged Under Fire,’ as was the theme of our convention. Now begins the difficult work of promoting public education to ensure that all Americans understand and appreciate the rich diversity of our country and challenge structures and systems that prevent this country from living up to its full potential.”

Early in the proceedings, Doi thanked Resolution Committee members Haruka Roubesh (NCWNP), Seia Watanabe (NV/SC), Eileen Yamada Lamphere (PNW), Hiro Nishikawa (EDC), Larry Grant (IDC), Kacie Ann Massoudi (CCDC) and Andrew Gruhn (PSW), as well as Patty Wada for providing JACL staff support.

The final wording for R1 can be found at tinyurl.com/p97yjkhf, and the final wording for R2 can be found at tinyurl.com/nvr28h.

(Clockwise from top left) JACL National President Jeffrey Moy, JACL Executive Director David Inoue, Parliamentarian Paul Uyehara and Resolutions Committee Chair Lisa Doi conduct the resolutions portion of the JACL National Council meeting on July 18.

**JACL ANNOUNCES THE LAUNCH OF THE CENTENNIAL EDUCATION FUND CAMPAIGN**

The CEF aims to raise $3 million in three years to raise the resources to ensure that the organization meets its mission to promote education about the Japanese American experience.

*By JACL National*

At JACL’s 51st National Convention last week, the JACL Centennial Education Fund was officially launched to raise $3 million in three years to fulfill JACL’s mission as an educational institution.

As the oldest and largest Asian American civil rights organization, JACL is uniquely positioned to tell the tragic story of the Japanese American incarceration experience during World War II, the injustice for all those who were affected, the valor of those Japanese Americans who served in 442nd Regimental Combat Team, 100th Infantry Battalion and Military Intelligence Services, etc., and, most importantly, the lessons to be shared and learned not only by Japanese Americans but also all Americans.

More recently, with more than 5,000 anti-Asian hate crimes and incidents committed against innocent Asian Americans around the country during the Covid-19 pandemic, it has become even more urgent and imperative that JACL ramps up its efforts in educating the American people about the painful lessons we learned as a community during WWII.

It is with this objective in mind that the JACL is launching this fundraising campaign to shore up JACL’s position as fulfilling its mission by providing critically important educational programs, tools and resources managed or supported by the National JACL such as Teacher Training Workshops, curriculum guides, the “Power of Words II,” “Our League of Dreams” documentary film and much more.

In announcing the campaign, JACL National President Jeffrey Moy stated, “This ambitious campaign is critically important for the JACL to redouble our efforts in providing educational opportunities and materials so that the United States of America can become a more perfect union for all Americans, regardless of their race, gender, ethnicity, religion and sexual orientation.”

Added JACL Executive Director David Inoue: “I am very excited, having watched this fundraising campaign from its inception to the launch today. We have a talented and committed staff and board of directors whose hard work and dedication will ensure a successful campaign to carry JACL into our next century as a nationally leading civil rights organization.”

In support of this fundraising campaign, former U.S. Commerce and Transportation Secretary Norman Y. Mineta and Deni Mineta have agreed to serve as the chairs of the Honorary Committee.

At the organization’s Sayonara Gala during its National Convention on July 17, Sec. Mineta made the following remarks:

“We have all been through so much this past year, but as Japanese Americans, we have been through much worse. Though I was only a boy, the pain was real. Memories of leaving behind Skipp, our family dog, and then to have my baseball bat taken by the soldiers are stories I have shared with you all before. But my own parents lost much more, as did so many other families. That experience truly forged our community for years after. Today, we still seek to heal from the wounds of that experience. . . . The Centennial Education Fund campaign will raise the resources to ensure that JACL meets its mission to promote education about the Japanese American experience as a civil rights story important to key issues today.

“We will achieve this by funding three core areas.

“First, we will expand the staff. The JACL staff right now is but a third of the size of the staff we had years ago. Already following this convention, we will be adding a new communications and education staff role.

“To help raise the profile of JACL nationally, we will develop a new video, ‘Our League of Dreams,’ which will help to tell the story of JACL’s past, present and future.

“With the support of new staff and the education committee led by Carol Kawamoto, we will recommit the focus of the organization to its core educational mission, including promoting the instruction of Japanese American history in schools with curriculum support and, most importantly, a robust teacher training program. And we will do this by building on the Greg Marutani Education Fund. . . .

“I hope you are as excited as I am with the prospect of forging a stronger JACL as it moves forward.”

» See CEF on page 11
THIS SAYONARA CELEBRATION SAYS HELLO TO VIRTUAL

The annual banquet becomes a gala as the pandemic upends convention custom.

By P.C. Staff

It came at the end of the Sayonara Gala, but it no doubt summed up the view of all involved when JACL Executive Director David Inoue said, “We all hope that this is the first and last time that we conduct our convention virtually.”

Of all the dozens of National JACL Conventions held over the decades of JACL’s existence, the July 15-18 confab was the only one to take place not in a physical space but in cyberspace, due to the still-present global pandemic that caused the cancelation of last year’s convention.

Although a modern miracle in many ways, the technology that allowed the convention to take place virtually and let participants attend without leaving home was imperfect, as anyone who has taken a class or worked remotely over the past 16 months could attest.

“We apologize for some of the technical challenges we’ve been facing over the last few days, but there is a silver lining,” Inoue said. “Because of some of the challenges we’ve been having, we are actually doing our Sayonara Gala a little bit differently. We were originally going to stream it through the Cadence platform, but because we are going to do it through a Zoom meeting, this will give the opportunity to see each other as you watch the Sayonara Gala proceedings.”

Following the presentation of the colors and the National Anthem, sung by JACLer Michelle Heckert, Inoue introduced Mieko Kuramoto, chair of the Commission on Wartime Relocation and Internment of Civilians hearings from four decades ago still reverberate in the form of the current push to address reparations for descendants of enslaved African Americans, countering the rise in hate incidents toward Muslims, Jews and Asians, acceptance of transgendered people and fall out from the family separation policies for undocumented immigrants interdicted at the nation’s southern border. It all fit under the umbrella of the convention’s theme, “Communities Forged Under Fire.”

“Tonight, we celebrate that while we face these challenges, these fires, we face them together,” Inoue added.

Up next, JACL National President Jeffrey Moy thanked the conventiongoers for their participation and those volunteers and staffs who helped produce the event. “I also want to thank all of our wonderful sponsors,” Moy said, singling out Diamond Sponsors AT&T and State Farm “for their incredible support that has allowed us to hold this convention.”

Interpersed during the Gala’s proceedings were video greetings from State Farm’s David Chikahisa and AT&T’s Jason Chan. Other convention sponsors included Comcast Universal, MGM Resorts International, Verizon, Motion Picture Association, AARP, Google and National JACL Credit Union.

On the topic of finances, Moy also talked up a new fundraising initiative announced a day earlier at the convention and tied-in to the upcoming 100th anniversary of the founding of JACL: The JACL Centennial Education Fund.

“We’ve launched an ambitious fundraising effort, the Centennial Education Fund, to fund our important work. We will continue to add to that capacity as fast as we can to keep up with the new opportunities that are presenting themselves to us,” Moy said. (For more information, see CEF article in this issue and visit jacl.org/centennial.)

Following an informational video about JACL’s activities, JACL National Youth/Student Council National Youth Chair Justin Kawaguchi and JACL NY/SC Youth Representative Mieko Kuramoto announced that the 2021 Vision Award winner was Tsuru for Solidarity.

Calling the decision to honor the group known for its origami crane activism a “no-brainer,” the duo lauded the movement, which began in 2019, for leading writing campaigns and countering anti-Black racism and anti-Asian violence.

Accepting the Vision Award was Tsuru for Solidarity’s Lisa Doi, who is also the Chicago JACL chapter president. “We appreciate the ongoing support and collaboration of the NY/SC, JACL National and many JACL chapters across the country,” Doi said after noting how earlier that day, Tsuru for Solidarity had joined other immigrants’ rights organizations in Texas to demand the shutdown of Fort Bliss, “where over 2,000 immigrant children are being detained.”

“Fort Bliss was also a site where 91 Japanese Americans were held during WWII, so we are back in Texas to demand that we stop using detention sites,” Doi added.

Following the presentation of the Vision Award was a video featuring rap performances by G Yamakawa. Also interspersed within the gala were two music videos, “To Fly” by Portland Taiko and “Take 15” by the Mark H Taiko Connection, as well as a comedic interlude by comedienne Atsuko Okatsuka.

Next was the presentation of the Japanese American of the Biennial Award. With “normal” altered by the Covid-19 pandemic, Moy had to explain why 2021’s JA of the Biennium was different. “Given that we didn’t have a Sayonara Banquet last year, we wanted to make time this year for a more formal presentation,” he said. “So tonight, it is my pleasure to present the JA of the Biennium Award to two deserving recipients.”

They were Orange County (California) Supervisor Lisa Bartlett, two-term member of the county’s Board of Supervisors, winner of the award for 2020, and Seattle-based telejournalist Lori Matsu- kawa, who retired in 2019 after a 40-year career marked by several Emmy Award wins and the co-founding of the Seattle Chapter of the Asian American Journalists Assn. She won JA of the Biennium for 2020 but was denied the chance to receive her award because of the pandemic.

Next in the program was the Hon. Norman Mineta, whose storied political career included serving as mayor of San Jose, U.S. congressman and presidential cabinet member (Secretary of Commerce and Secretary of Transportation). In his remarks, Inoue, too, noted how present-
WHAT CAME AFTER THE WAR:
‘EXILED TO MOTOWN’ AND MAKING COMMUNITY IN THE MOTOR CITY

A new exhibit at the Detroit Historical Museum pays homage to the stories making up the ever-evolving fabric of Japanese American life in Detroit and beyond.

By Mika Kennedy, JACL Detroit Chapter

Exiled to Motown,” JACL Detroit’s exhibit of Japanese American community in metro Detroit, opened on July 16 at the Detroit Historical Museum. We’ve been calling it an exhibit of “community” for years, and it’s even in the museum’s Community Gallery — a space that allows community organizations to develop their own exhibits about elements of Detroit’s multifarious history that have not been well examined by the museum’s professional collections.

In an interview conducted more than a decade ago, however, Mary Ishino stated, “We don’t have any Japanese American community here.” She and Soh Suzuki were both members of the JACL Detroit chapter, and she was giving her story to a collection of oral histories that would eventually be published in a 2015 book titled “Exiled to Motown” — the precursor to the 2021 Community Gallery exhibit.

The phrase “exiled to Motown” is an homage to the first large wave of Japanese migration to Detroit, which was spurred by the War Relocation Authority’s resettlement program. As early as 1943, incarcerated Japanese Americans who had been forcibly removed from their homes in the West were permitted to leave camp for cities in the Midwest and on the East Coast.

One can see the imprint of this wave in the names of the JACL chapters that formed in its wake: Chicago, Cincinnati, Dayton, Detroit and more. Of course, it wasn’t the WRA’s intention to preserve Japanese American communities with this alleged gift of freedom. The resettlement was motivated by the assumption that dispersing Japanese Americans across majority-white areas would speed assimilation, shearing Japanese Americans from their culture and thereby eliminating the perceived “enemy alien” Asian threat.

In this context, the feeling that “We don’t have any Japanese American community here” haunts and harrows. If this wartime resettlement constituted the first big wave of Nikkei in Detroit, what happened? Had the community existed and then dissipated? Had it never been at all? At what point does something become a community? At what point do we admit its failure?

On one hand, these are historical questions. On the other, they are spiritual, existential and embodied ones. We don’t have a Japanese American community in Detroit; yet, we do. We exist enough to fill a book, but that doesn’t mean Ishino’s feeling wasn’t just as true. Maybe both have to be.

If anything is true about what it means to be Japanese American in Detroit, it’s that the whole idea is bound up in paradox. Our history and our present constitute innumerable trajectories and points of entry all tangled into one. These are inextricable from the histories of things one probably doesn’t associate with Japanese Americana, too: Think Ford Motor Co. Think milk cartons. Actually, never mind the tiny details — Detroit, as a whole, is not a city that people typically associate with Japanese America. But historically, neither Detroit nor Japanese Americans tend to limit themselves to the associations of others. Maybe what distinguishes a community is story — stories we tell about and for ourselves and stories that others come to know us by. When we tell stories, we make connections. We renew them. We take things that happened and put them into conversation with other things that happened. We link people and places, and it’s these linkages that make community.

MAKING COMMUNITY

In order to be heard, stories need to be told — over and over again. Similarly, communities are always in the process of making. There’s no finish line. So, after the “Exiled to Motown” book was published, the project couldn’t end.

The JACL Detroit chapter wanted to keep telling its story, ideally to as many new audiences as possible. In 2018, the chapter decided to apply for a JACL Legacy Grant to fund a traveling exhibit that paired the book’s oral histories with documents and photographs from the chapter’s archives.
After a successful initial run, the chapter reached out to the Detroit Historical Museum about bringing an expanded version of the exhibit to its Community Gallery. The exhibit was originally slated for June 2020. Covid-19 had an alternative proposal.

There is no upside to a pandemic that has killed more than 4 million people worldwide and is still continuing to do so.

In lieu of an upside, the chapter reached for recommitment: to tell stories because they are so easily lost. Because stories can lift you out of isolation. Because we are here, and that is never to be taken for granted. The exhibit’s opening date at the Detroit Historical Museum shifted to July 2021. The chapter had roughly 13,800 feet of gallery space (by volume) with which to tell community stories.

We knew we couldn’t tell every story in the “Exiled to Motown” book; at the same time, we also wanted to add new stories, too – stories linked to objects that made up the fabric of Japanese American life in Detroit today because history has always been dynamic, and its telling is never complete.

To highlight this idea, we open the exhibit with the reminder, “This exhibit is also about you. What is your place in this story?” The history of the Japanese American community in metro Detroit is not a series of events that happened to someone else, somewhere else: This history is still an integral part of Detroit’s Japanese American community today.

Or Mary Kamidoi, who came from Stockton, Calif., via Rohwer and ended up working at Ford’s, too — and living across the street from the rhythm and blues of Hitsville, USA. In Detroit, Japanese Americans designed wax milk cartons. In Detroit, veterans of the 42nd became beloved dental school professors. In Detroit, Vincent Chin was murdered in 1982 after being mistaken for Japanese.

In Detroit, Japanese American history is still being made. “Exiled to Motown” can’t tell every story. We don’t know them all. There are photos without captions and people who’ve passed on, who can’t be asked for one more detail. Some stories will always be private. Others are screaming to be let out but haven’t yet made it here. And if only we had enough time: We are humans living in a material world that must answer to the size of a wall, the space on a hard disk, the balance of a bank account, the limits of our own human capital. But what we can do is tell each story with intention and infuse care into every object label and design pixel, every font-point and every mitered corner. We can hope that each detail invites someone new to listen.

WHAT COMES AFTER

“Exiled to Motown” is driven by a desire to connect the stories of Japanese Americans in metro Detroit with the experiences of others living in Michigan, as well as with the rest of Japanese America beyond the Motor City. It is also driven by a desire to connect with each other — to find what exhibit contributor and Detroit-based Rising Voices Executive Director Laura Misumi calls “joyful space.”

The 2021 “Exiled to Motown” exhibit opened at the Detroit Historical Museum with a special reception the evening of July 16. A few hours before the reception was set to begin, all of Interstate 94 through Detroit and a number of other primary throughways were closed due to flooding. Coupled with the lingering shadow of the Covid-19 pandemic, we weren’t sure how many people would end up attending. Soon, however, both new and familiar faces began to arrive at the museum — exhibit contributors and longtime JACL Detoriters Mary Kamidoi and Tereny Fujishige, as well as an entire contingent of Shimouras; Asian American artists and scholars from metro Detroit; our past collaborators from the Novi Public Library; potential future collaborators from the Freeer House, eager to share addition stories of early Japanese visitors to Detroit at the turn of the century; and even Detroit’s new Consul General of Japan, Yusuke Shindo, who had arrived in the United States only a week prior.

I think the exhibit becomes a joyful space when the conversations start happening — when viewers move slowly through the panels, behold treasures family items, engage in conversations with one another and fold paper cranes to give to the exhibit. It becomes a joyful space when the stories start multiplying: Stories of having performed traditional Japanese dance at Detroit’s Far Eastern Festivals in the 1970s, or a father and son who’d driven cabs in Detroit (though the teller’s family had since left Detroit for Hawaii). Stories from Shin Nikkei expressing surprise that they could see themselves, even in the stories of Japanese Americans whose lives and communities often felt so separate. Stories from people in Japan, whose family had hosted Tadae Shimoura during a trip across the Pacific.

Personally, I feel joyful because these stories remind me that community is always in the making. Our histories are dynamic, and stories beget stories. In fact, Detroit’s city motto is speramus meliora, resurgam cineribus, which means, “It will rise from the ashes. We hope for better things.”

We share this hope through our stories and make community with every telling. Who will you share this one with?

Exiled to Motown will be at the Detroit Historical Museum thru Oct. 3. To learn more about the exhibit, plan a visit or order a copy of the “Exiled to Motown” book, visit exiledtomotown.org.

*Note: Like the “Exiled to Motown” exhibit, this article uses “Japanese American” to describe anyone who is part of a family of Japanese descent and has chosen to live in the United States, regardless of citizenship status or blood quantum.
PLENARY LOOKS BACK AT JACL’S PAST

The Young Professionals Caucus also previews the future.

By P.C. Staff

With every passing year, the JACL moves farther from its 1929 genesis and closer to its centennial. For the organization, that means the elders who actually experienced the Japanese American incarceration — no doubt the largest collective experience that tested both the community and the JA CL — have become fewer, with the future leadership of the organization transitioning to a newer generation different from, though still connected to, the JA CL’s traditional Nisei and Sansei cohorts, different not only in composition but in perspective.

It was therefore fitting that one of JA CL’s newer groups, the Young Professionals Caucus, hosted a plenary at the 2021 JA CL National Convention titled “Looking Back & Moving Forward: JA CL’s History.”

Officially founded at the 2018 National Convention, the YPC is an affinity group within JA CL for young professionals interested in advocacy and education to navigate adulthood together.

Following a short introduction, which included a glossary of terms, by Mile High JA CL Chapter President and IDC YPC Representative Dylan Mori, Elizabeth Fujikawa, also of Mile High, took over as the moderator of the session.

The discussion was divided into subsections that gave an overview of the different eras of Japanese American and JA CL history: JA CL’s founding, incarceration, postwar expansion, the Japanese American redress movement, organizational shift and the post-2021 future. Following that, the session was opened to audience discussion.

Fujikawa noted that in the early era of JA CL’s founding, “JA CL was only open to American citizens for membership, so this means that the Issei could not join or participate in the vast majority of JA CL events.”

The incarceration period of 1941-46 might have been the section most fraught with potential landmines for the audience, but Fujikawa started off on a hearty note that “we know that is the most important thing if we were going to pass any kind of legislation and he suggested a federal commission. None of us wanted to do that,” Tateishi recalled. “We knew that was what he had in mind. . . . When Dan Inouye says you establish a federal commission, you pretty much don’t have a choice. . . . It was to serve as an education vehicle because its position would be to investigate what was happening and provide information to the public about it.”

Establishing the CWRIC wasn’t easy, but it turned out to be the perfect opportunity for the Nisei to finally talk aloud about their wartime experiences.

“‘That’s what changed everything,’” Tateishi said. “These stories would be aired every night on the national news — there would be something aired about the commission hearings. It gave us the support from the public, and it made it possible to run a legislative campaign.”

It ultimately proved to be the strategy that won Japanese Americans redress, when President Ronald Reagan signed the Civil Liberties Act of 1988.

Inouye then spoke about HR 40, introduced by the late-Rep. John Conyers (D-MI) in 1989 and then reintroduced in 2017, now referred to as the “Reparations Remedy Bill,” which seeks to address the intergenerational harms caused by enslavement and structural racism on African Americans.

Heath went on to speak about the many iterations of HR 40 and how now might finally be the time to see a commission established to examine Black reparations.

“The power of this study in particular is that we have never had even a federal apology for slavery by the federal government. So, to have a comprehensive report that documents the range of federal and systemic wrongs that have been committed to Black people in this country is absolutely crucial to healing our community,” Heath said.

She also spoke about the many complex discussions about what reparations should look like.

“There wasn’t just economic damage. We’re also talking about psychological damage. These are all the remnants that continue to impact Black people today,” Heath said. “Reparations should come in many different forms to address the ills of systemic racism in this country.”

All agreed that education within the community is still as important today as it was 40 years ago.

“I always felt like you change the minds of one person at a time. You know there’s anger out there and you talk rationally about what this all means and why it’s so important for the country, and surprisingly, people start to listen,” Tateishi said. “You have to educate people however way you can.”

“It’s been just incredible to work and collaborate with you all,” said Heath. “Keep up those efforts. . . . I’ve seen Asian and Black solidarity as one of the historic connectors. . . . Using your experience in your fight for what is right and what it has meant for you and your community [can] change the trajectory of this country.”
CEF > continued from page 6

In sharing the specifics of this campaign with the National Council during its convention, David Lin, JACL vp for planning and development and the lead for this campaign, announced that the entire National Board is supportive of the CEF by having either donated or pledged to the new drive. Additionally, several past JACL national presidents have made generous donations as well. In total, those donations/pledges have already surpassed $40,000.

“Is my distinct honor and privilege to lead the JACL Centennial Education Fund campaign,” said Lin. “We will raise the much-needed funds to sustain the JACL in furthering its mission to educate Americans about the tragic lessons of Japanese American incarceration during WWII and in envisioning the next 100 years of civil rights in America so that future generations of Americans will be able to live in a more inclusive and more accepting society.”

And Carol Kawamoto, chair of the JACL National Education Committee, stated, “As an educator myself, I know the power of education in broadening people’s perspective every single day. I applaud and wholeheartedly support this fundraising campaign. We need to do more to educate the American public on the lessons we learned as a community.”

For any questions regarding the CEF campaign, please contact David Lin, JACL vp for planning and development, at dlin@jacl.org or Phillip Ozaki, JACL development and membership director, at pozaki@jacl.org. For full details, visit the campaign’s website at www.jacl.org/centennial.

JACL’s leadership formed the historic WWII Nisei units. On June 3, the organization celebrated the issuance of a new commemorative “GO FOR BROKE” forever stamp.

CELEBRATION > continued from page 7

Maia Shibutani Alex Shibutani

Those stories now include a child’s book series by the pair, “Kudo Kids.” Alex Shibutani said, “Moving forward, we will continue to strive to represent you well, use our voices and make the path better for the generations that follow.”

Wakaguchi and Kuramoto returned to recap the winners of the first Digital Storytelling Contest, with the theme, “How Does the Past Influence Your Present” (see P.C., Oct. 9-22, 2020, issue https://www.pacificcitizen.org/ny-sc-announces-digital-storytelling-contest-winners/). The categories were journalistic-style essay, visual art, video presentation, poetry or creative writing and the winners were poet Sam Hamashima for his collection of six poems titled “Family Heirlooms” and Jessica Bukowski and Kristin Sato for their stop-motion animation film “Enryo.”

Presenting the George Inagaki Chapter Citizenship Awards was the Venice-West L.A. JACL chapter, represented by President John Saito Jr. and board members Carol Sebata Young, Carole Yamaokoshi and Shannon Tsunakawa. The winner — for the fourth consecutive time — was the Seattle JACL.

“When you’re looking for a model JACL chapter, they check all the boxes,” said Young. Accepting the Inagaki prize was 2020 Seattle JACL chapter President Sarah Baker, who said, “When I was putting together the application for this award, the thing that really struck me was not how much programming we’ve done over the past couple of years, but by the content and relationships that we’ve built in the process.”

As the gala glanced toward its conclusion, the keynote speaker was Wade Henderson, interim president and CEO of the Leadership Conference of Civil and Human Rights, who spoke of the decades-long relationship between that organization and JACL. He lauded the success of 1988’s Civil Liberties Act, which authorized an apology and a $20,000 redempt payment to still-living Japanese Americans who were affected by Executive Order 9066.

“You successfully moved this bill through from start to finish passage. It was a break-through for civil rights legislation,” Henderson said. He added that “being part of that collective effort is one of the prouder moments of my professional career.”

Regarding the long-percolating movement on reparations for descendants of African slaves in America, Henderson said, “JACL has always led on demanding reparations for African Americans. Speaking personally, I’m using the lessons I learned from my experience working on the Civil Liberties Act to secure reparations for descendants of formerly enslaved people today and to support a commission on truth, racial healing and transformation. I’m so pleased that JACL and organizations across the AAPI community are supporting these efforts as well.”

Closing the gala, Inouye noted that the next JACL National Convention is slated for Aug. 3-8, 2022, in Las Vegas.
‘HEART MOUNTAIN, WYOMING, AND THE JAPANESE AMERICAN INCARCERATION’

Heart Mountain hosts 72 educators in the first NEH-sponsored workshops.

By Ray Locker, Contributor

Seventy-two teachers from Alaska to Florida participated in two weeklong workshops for educators conducted by the Heart Mountain Wyoming Foundation in June and July that were backed by a grant from the National Endowment for the Humanities.

“Heart Mountain, Wyoming, and the Japanese American Incarceration” tracked the Japanese experience in the U.S. from the first immigrants in the 1800s through the incarceration and redress.

It wove that experience with those of the Native American nations that lived on the land that became the Heart Mountain camp and the white settlers, such as Buffalo Bill Cody, who brought the irrigation projects that made Heart Mountain possible.

The foundation attracted a faculty that included some of the leading experts on the incarceration from around the country, as well as local Wyoming educators from the Buffalo Bill Center of the West, Northwest College and the University of Wyoming.

Tyson Emborg, a master teacher from Mountain Vista High School in Highlands Ranch, Colo., developed the workshop curriculum. Emborg first became interested in Heart Mountain 20 years ago after watching the documentary by Frank Abe, another member of the workshop faculty, about the Heart Mountain draft resisters.

At a time of rising racism and increased hate incidents against Asian Americans, it’s important to reach educators, Emborg said.

“There’s an exponential impact you have when you reach the educators who will then take this to their students,” he said. “You will have students who learn this history and see it with the modern relevance.

“Those aren’t isolated incidents,” Emborg continued. “They’re part of a pattern.”

The workshops are part of a larger strategy by the foundation to develop more curricula about the incarceration, said Shirley Ann Higuchi, the foundation’s chair.

“There’s the constant question about why this isn’t being taught in schools,” Higuchi said. “We have to educate people about what happened in 1942 to a group of American citizens because of their race. It’s one of the critical issues of our time.”

POSITIVE REACTIONS

Participants in the first session, which ran from June 21-25, reacted enthusiastically in surveys.

Some teachers said they would share the lessons learned with other faculty members at their schools and push for the Japanese American incarceration to be included in their curricula.

“This is something other educators MUST KNOW,” one response said.

Others said they learned many details of the incarceration for the first time, and they thanked Heart Mountain for providing them access to former incarcerees, such as Takashi Hoshizaki, Sam Mihara, Naomi Oshita and Bacon Sakatani.

One of the issues that separates this workshop from others is that no other combines the different elements of Heart Mountain and the Big Horn Basin of Wyoming – the Native American nations that lived here, the Caucasian settlers, the irrigation developers like Buffalo Bill Cody and the Japanese Americans forced to live at Heart Mountain for 39 months.

Heart Mountain received 370 applications for the 72 workshop spots.

BOARD MEMBERS AND ADVISERS

The faculty included Heart Mountain board members, such as Mihara and Hoshizaki, as well as longtime advisory board members and participants in previous foundation events.

Hanako Wakatsuki, a former board member who is now the superintendent of the Honolulu National Historic Site in Hawaii, conducted three classes over two days.

Eri Aoyama, the granddaughter of former Heart Mountain incarceree, led classes on the relocation of Japanese Americans during the war. She is finishing her Ph.D. work at Brown University.

Hana Maruyama presented a class on the relationship between the Native American nations and the land. She is the granddaughter of former incarcerees and was an assistant to Higuchi before she attended the University of Minnesota to earn her Ph.D. in American Studies. She is joining the faculty of the University of Connecticut this fall.

Writer and documentarian Frank Abe led a class in the Heart Mountain draft resistance, a topic that many of the participating educators knew little about. He used his new graphic novel, “We Hereby Refuse,” for his session on the draft resisters in the camps.

MULTIGENERATIONAL TRAUMA

Essential to the workshops were sessions about the multigenerational trauma that affected the incarcerees and their families. Donna Nagata, a clinical psychologist at the University of Michigan, told the participants about her experience as the daughter of two incarcerees and her research about the effects of the incarceration on the Sansei and Yonsei generations.

The husband-and-wife team of Gordon Nagayama Hall and Jeanne Nagayama Hall of the University of Oregon discussed the corrosive effect of the Model Minority myth on Japanese Americans, which was a legacy of both the incarceration and the continuing racism against Asian Americans.

Karen Korematsu, the founder and executive director of the Fred T. Korematsu Institute, said she only learned about her father’s resistance against the incarceration while she was a student in high school. That’s when a fellow student gave a presentation that mentioned her father’s experience, something she had never been told at home.

BUILDING FOR THE FUTURE

Higuchi and other foundation leaders decided to seek a grant from the NEH in late 2018 after the board voted to create what is now the Mineta-Simpson Institute. The plan is to develop curricula, media and other programming to take the lessons of Heart Mountain and the incarceration beyond the borders of the site in Wyoming.

The foundation has applied for a second NEH grant to conduct the workshops next year. Foundation leaders said they hope these sessions will be conducted in person.
The TLC is asking the community at large to make their voices heard in support of Tule Lake when the open comment period begins this fall.

By Tule Lake Committee

The Tule Lake committee recently issued an update on its efforts to preserve the history and integrity of the Tule Lake concentration camp site, including its opposition to an obtrusive airfield fence.

The TLC has been waiting for the Federal Aviation Authority and Modoc County to complete mandatory reviews of the proposed fence project, a process that includes public comment on the draft environmental reports.

It has been informed that these studies will be completed in another three or four months and is asking for public support and comments be voiced and submitted in an effort to stop the fence from being constructed that would harm efforts to preserve the only War Relocation Authority concentration camp converted into a maximum-security facility used to punish and deport protesters.

Background on the Stop the Fence Campaign

After a token 37-acre portion of the 1,110-acre concentration camp was designated as a National Historic Landmark in 2006 and added to the Valor in the Pacific National Monument in 2008, the TLC saw the threat to the site’s preservation due to FAA and Modoc County plans to enlarge the footprint of the Tulelake airfield with an improved runway and hangers, as well as the airfield fence.

Significance of the concentration camp site was underscored by Congressional action in 2019 when Tule Lake was designated as a stand-alone National Park site and renamed as the Tule Lake National Monument. Yet, the FAA and Modoc County continue to press forward on “improvement” plans, refusing to explore the alternative of moving the rural airfield, given the impossibility of moving a historic site.

It’s been eight years since more than 38,000 organizations and individuals protested the FAA and Modoc County’s plan to build a massive three-mile-long, 8-foot-high fence, an intimidating warning to visitors that would destroy the setting, feeling and association aroused by this rare civil and human rights site.

In response to the nationwide outrage, the FAA and Modoc County were compelled to undertake mandatory environmental review to study fence impacts.

The two studies, a draft Environmental Impact Report and an Environmental Assessment, are nearing completion. The TLC awaits the public comment period for these documents, the time to oppose any destructive, incompatible uses of the concentration camp site.

The TLC is asking the community at large to send a clear and strong message: “Protect Tule Lake, don’t destroy it.”

Litigation Settlement Talks Over the Tulelake Airfield

In other news, the TLC is discussing settlement of pending lawsuits in Federal Appeals Court and Modoc County Superior Court over the City of Tulelake’s 2018 sale of the Tulelake airfield. The TLC is encouraged and hopeful that the parties can agree on appropriate uses and activities for a site where 331 Japanese Americans died and where thousands more lives were destroyed.

Since 2014, the TLC has filed five lawsuits addressing two issues: seeking comprehensive environmental review over the proposed fence on the concentration camp site and lack of due process in the city of Tulelake’s July 2018 giveaway of the Tulelake airfield.

The TLC’s most recent lawsuits, Tule Lake Committee v. FAA, et. al., and Tule Lake Committee v. Bill Folliet, et. al., seek to void transfer of the Tulelake airfield to a party that promised to expand aviation-related activity on the Tule Lake concentration camp site.

Both cares are temporarily stayed as parties work toward settling issues of access and protecting an irreplaceable civil rights site from incompatible, destructive activity.

The TLC is encouraged in the search for resolution of these issues and grateful to the team of attorneys who have generously donated their time to prevent bulldozers from destroying the fabric of a rare social justice site.

The TLC appreciates and looks forward to your vigilance and support to preserve Tule Lake.
Tule Lake Pilgrimage
July 9; Virtual Event
Price: Free
In keeping with this year’s theme, “In- carceration — Injustice — Protest — Re- sistance: Then and Now,” the event will explore Tule Lake’s unique status as the only one of the 10 WRA concentration camps that was converted into a maxi- mum-security Segregation Center. More than 12,000 Japanese American activists were punished with segregation, with thousands striped of U.S. citizenship to enable their deportation, all because they spoke out against the injustice of their incarceration. The pilgrimage will also include a memorial tribute to Tule Lake’s best poet laureate Hiroshi Kashigawa. More details and information about the event will follow.

NCNWNP
47th Annual Nihonmachi Street Fair San Francisco, CA
Aug. 7-8; 11 a.m.-6 p.m.
San Francisco Japantown (Post Street From Webster to Laguna will be closed for this event)
Price: Free
The Nihonmachi Street Fair is back after being forced to cancel last year due to the pandemic. All performances this year will be held in the Peace Plaza Stage. For the safety of all participants and attend- ees, masks are mandatory if you have NOT received a Covid vaccination. The event will feature AAJI nonprofit organi- zations, Asian artisans, children’s arts & crafts as well as live music. On Aug. 8, in partnership with NBC11 Bay Area, a special Olympics Closing Ceremony event will be held featuring Japanese group dancing at Noon and 3 p.m. led by the San Francisco Buddhist Church.

Mochi Magic — Matcha Madness: Virtual Cooking Class With Chef Kaori Becker
San Francisco, CA
Aug. 7; 10 a.m.-11 a.m. PDT
Virtual Zoom Class
Price: $15 Center Members; $20 General Public
This new quarterly cooking class will feature mochi instructor and author of the cookbook “Mochi Magic” Kaori Becker. She will teach participants how to make three receipts from her book featuring the classic Japanese mochi tea flavor. Workshop Zoom login infor- mation, recipes, ingredients/supplies lists will be provided upon registration. The workshop menu includes mochi donuts with matcha glaze, matcha mochi cupcakes and matcha mochi pancakes.
TRIBUTE

Asai, Kikuji, 102, Los Angeles, CA, Feb. 22; he was predeceased by his wife, Kiyoko; he is survived by his children, Nobuo Asai, Noriko (Paul) Thomas, Keiko Blanchard and Emiko (Skip Purper) Asai; gc and ggc.

Endow, Reynold Keiji, 77, Sacramento, CA, June 22.

Hori, Robert, 91, Gardena, CA, Jan. 25; Army veteran, Korean War; past president, Gardena Evening Optimist Club and Gardena Valley Japanese Cultural Institute; during WWII, his family and he were incarcerated at the Gila River WRA Center in AZ; he is survived by his wife, Mary; sons, Dwayne (Galena) Hori and Brian (Thea) Hori; siblings, Louise Kawamoto, Harry Hori; gc: 4.

Kobayashi, Robert Jiro, 91, Rancho Palos Verdes, CA, June 22; Army veteran; he is survived by his children, Hope (William) LaSalle, Mark (Susan) Kobayashi and Brad Kobayashi; he is also survived by many nieces, nephews, other family members and friends.

Nakamura, Nobuyo, 95, Honolulu, HI, April 18; she was predeceased by her husband, William; she is survived by her children, Gwen (Steven) and Don; sister, Hisae; gc: 3; ggc: 4.

Ogimori, Ruth Mitsuko, 102, Gardena, CA, Dec. 14, 2020; she was predeceased by her husband, David Uchi Ogimori; brother, Jack Satoru Shimizu; sons-in-law, John Tengan and Ron Yamamoto; she is survived by her children, Diane Robertson Ogimori; sister, Susan Yamamoto and Howard (Sharon) Ogimori; gc: 6; ggc: 3.

Tagashira, Dennis Shoichi, 74, Martinez, CA, March 9; Vietnam War veteran, USMC, 2 tours; he was predeceased by his wife, Barbara Diane Robertson Tagashira; sisters, Gail S. Tagashira and Joan H. Wylie.

Tagawa, George Satoru, 91, Monterey Park, CA, Jan. 27; he is survived by his wife, Jane Hatsue Tagawa; nieces and a nephew; he is also survived by many other relatives.

Utsumi, Kathleen Mariko, 87, Redondo Beach, CA, Jan. 27; she was predeceased by her husband, Donald Noboru Utsumi; siblings, Shinya Honda and Michiko Tanaka; and brother-in-law, Robert; she is survived by her daughters, Beverly (Stanley) Sugimoto, Lori (Warren) Louie and Donna (Glenn) Gehbardt; sister, Yasuko; she is also survived by many nieces, nephews and friends; gc: 6; ggc: 2.

Watanabe, Glenn Norito, 72, Kahului, HI, April 9; he is survived by his wife, Victoria Juan Watanabe; sister, Louise Wandasan; sons, Brody (Leslie) Watanabe and Taylor Watanabe; gc: 2.

Watanabe, Amy Emiko, 76, Salem, OR, June 22; she is predeceased by her sister, Irene Fujimori; she is survived by her husband, Charles; children, Blake and Denae; siblings, Judith Kawamura and Clyde Masaki; gc: 3.

Watanabe, Allan Toshihiko, 77, Oxnard, CA, Jan. 2; born at the Manzanar WRA Center; Vietnam veteran, Army; he was predeceased by his siblings, Shirley Yamaguchi and Ronald Watanabe; he is survived by his sister-in-law, Pat Watanabe; 2 nephews; 2 grandnieces; 1 grand-nephew and large extended family.

Yakura, John, 88, Visalia, CA, March 13; during WWII, his family and he were incarcerated at the Tule Lake WRA Center in CA; he was predeceased by his siblings, Rutsu, Sumiko, Mitsuko and James; he is survived by his wife, Chiz; children, Stephanie (Tom) Kaku and Brian (Kathleen) Yakura; sister, Keiko (Paul) Sumida; in-laws, Sumiye Yakura, Tak and Hisaye Okamoto and Kyomi Fukushima; gc: 2.

Yamamoto, Sueko ‘Sue’, 90, Las Vegas, NV, March 14; she was predeceased by her husband, Milton Yukio Yamamoto, and son, Milton Yukio Yamamoto Jr.; she is survived by her children, Lani Donnelly, Ron Kato and Randy Yamamoto; gc: 8; ggc: 6.

Yamamoto, Yoneko, 101, Lihue, HI, Dec. 6, 2020; she was predeceased by her husband, Tony Yamamoto, three brothers and two sisters; she is survived by her daughter, Merle (Franklin) Oaski; gc: 3; ggc: 6; and gggc: 3.

Yamamoto, Yoshiko, 97, Arlington Heights, IL, Feb. 23; during WWII, she was incarcerated at the Gila River WRA Center in AZ; she was predeceased by her husband, Tadashi “Todd” Yamamoto; she is survived by her children, Diane (Bob) Lippold, Sharon (Tony) White, Pat (Rick) Walters and Craig (Jan “From”) Yamamoto; she is also survived by many nieces and nephews; gc: 8; ggc: 10.

TRIBUTE

Margie Mayumi (Yoshimura) Naka, 75, passed away on June 11, 2021, peacefully at home with her family by her side. She is survived by her husband, Frank, daughters, Kathy (Brian) and Allison (Brian), and her grandchildren, Justin, Jessica and Bryce. 

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