



PACIFIC CITIZEN

CELEBRATING 92 YEARS

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JACL's
Educational
Impact

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INSIDE

2021 JACL
National
Scholarship
Winners



CONGRATULATIONS 2021 JACL NATIONAL SCHOLARSHIP WINNERS

By David Lin,
JACL VP for Planning
and Development

It is my distinct honor and privilege to share with you that the JACL National Scholarship Program has had another successful year in identifying a number of highly qualified student recipients for this year's scholarship awards.

In this special issue of the *Pacific Citizen*, we are delighted to announce that the JACL has awarded 32 scholarships this year totaling \$77,500. We are even more proud to support these deserving and accomplished students in their pursuit of higher education, so that they can become the next generation of leaders for the JACL and our community!

This year, student applicants were asked to write a personal statement on the following essay prompt, provided by the JACL's National Youth/Student Council: "Communities survive, despite many obstacles, because of the people who give back to it. While some donate their time, others may donate their talents or support the community financially. Especially now, as the Asian American community is facing a rise in anti-Asian hate surrounding the Covid-19 pandemic, in what ways will you support your community? What are some ways that you have already done so?"

On the following pages, you will read about each recipient along with excerpts from their personal statement. As you read them, I hope you are just as inspired by and proud of them as I am, for their thoughtfulness and their remarkable accomplishments. They are indeed the future generation of leaders of the JACL!

On behalf of National JACL, I would like to thank the two Na-

tional JACL Scholarship Committees. These two selection committees, each led by a JACL district, worked diligently and efficiently to review freshman and undergraduate, graduate, law, arts and student aid applications. This year's two selection committees are:

- The Freshman Scholarship Committee was under the Pacific Northwest District with the Seattle chapter taking the leadership role. The committee was chaired by Bill Tashima along with the following members: Karen Cunningham, Katie Cunningham, Kristen Cunningham, Kyle Kinoshita, Mika Kurose Rothman and Sylvie Shiosaki. This committee reviewed and scored the applications submitted by high school seniors. It has now completed its second year of a three-year run.
- The Nonfreshman Scholarship Committee, which reviewed and scored undergraduate, graduate, law and arts applications, was under the Midwest District Council and chaired by Betsy Sato (Cincinnati JACL), with Sharon Ishii-Jordan (Omaha JACL) and Eric Langowski (Hoosier JACL) serving as committee members. The MDC Committee has now completed its third and final year, and we thank them for their dedication and hard work. Next up in the rotation to serve as a National JACL Scholarship Committee will be the Intermountain District Council next year.

On behalf of the JACL National Board, we would like to express our sincerest thanks to these committed individuals on an excellent job. We are extremely appreciative of their diligence, hard work and long hours that went into reviewing all of the scholarship applications to select the

best and the most-qualified recipients for this year's scholarship awards.

We also would like to give a special shout out to David Kawamoto, who once led the Scholarship Program, for his critical role as the Scholarship Program mentor and his valuable guidance, unwavering leadership and continued support of this program year after year.

Lastly, as we all know, no JACL program would run successfully without a committed and dedicated staff who works together as an amazing team to deliver results on time.

On behalf of National JACL, I would like to express my deepest appreciation to the two Co-Program Managers, Regional Director Patty Wada and Education & Communications Coordinator Matthew Weisbly. Their teamwork in coordinating the two scholarship committees, com-

municating with the applicants and keeping the program running on track was simply exemplary.

I would also like to thank the *Pacific Citizen* and its entire staff, under the leadership of Executive Editor Allison Haramoto, for highlighting our young scholars in this Special Scholarship Issue each and every year.

In closing, please join me in congratulating all of our scholarship award recipients of 2021 and wishing them much success! ■





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Email: pc@pacificcitizen.org
 Online: www.pacificcitizen.org
 Tel: (213) 620-1767
 Mail: 123 Ellison S. Onizuka St., Suite 313
 Los Angeles, CA 90012

STAFF

Executive Editor
Allison Haramoto

Senior Editor
Digital & Social Media
George Johnston

Business Manager
Susan Yokoyama

Production Artist
Marie Samonte

Circulation
Eva Ting

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FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

'ANY PERSON CAN FIND INSTRUCTION IN ANY STUDY'

By David Inoue,
JACL Executive Director

We once again celebrate the accomplishments of some of JACL's top graduating high school and continuing college, graduate and professional students. JACL's scholarship program helps to defray what is becoming a prohibitively expensive venture for any student to attend institutions of higher learning.

For many of us who read the *Pacific Citizen*, we attended college years ago when four years of undergraduate studies may have been expensive, but with financial aid, was manageable. I was fortunate to leave undergradu-

ate studies with a little over \$10,000 in student loans, despite attending a college that at the time cost in excess of \$25,000 annually with cost of living included. Today, tuition at that same school alone is \$60,000, close to \$80,000 when room, board, books and other expenses are added.

Not every school is that expensive, yet the debt burden on students and their families is escalating to debilitating levels. I now hear of students graduating from four-year programs such as I did with their families carrying total debt loads of close to \$200,000. Unless one is going to work for a tech company or in investment banking, the prospect of paying back that much debt is

unimaginable.

These are outliers, but effective for their shock value. The majority of loan debt in the six figures is incurred by graduate and professional students, who if they complete their degrees and secure a job in their field, should have little problem paying back that debt.

The challenge is most acutely felt for the average student who takes on the average debt load, which is around \$36,000 now. This average student typically comes from what is still considered a middle-class family earning around \$60,000 annually, though in many urban areas, is in reality slipping from what might truly be considered middle class. Yet for students in this position, they are likely to be unable to attend without the assistance of student and family loans.

The result is that we are placing the most vulnerable students at greater risk and under greater stress. The increasing debt is inevitable to impact decisions about what classes to take and major to pursue with a thought to how they might repay the growing loans. College is no longer

about education but about finding a job and maximizing income, something for which college should not be necessary.

The reality is that most people rarely use the actual subject matter learned during their undergraduate years. I certainly never do any chemistry work in my daily work. I actually bristle if someone randomly approaches JACL for Japanese to English translations, despite my passable speaking ability.

And yet, college increasingly is focused on teaching only courses in the science, technology, engineering and math (STEM) fields, while liberal arts classes are increasingly devalued and, in some cases, even eliminated.

A recent study found an inverse correlation between increasing belief in factually incorrect conspiracy theories and decreasing ability to think critically. These are the skills we lose when we singularly focus on a few limited aspects of higher learning.

Engineers also need to comprehend reading of classical literature and engage in critical discussion of the

merits, or even now, the negative characteristics of such pieces.

There is much that needs to be reformed at the upper echelons of our academic system. College needs to be affordable for all and not limited to those whose families can afford it. Eliminating this financial pressure will also allow all students the freedom to study from a diverse educational palette. College must not be simply a means to get a job to pay back student loans.

For those who know they want to go into a technical field, they absolutely should pursue an engineering or science degree but should also be encouraged in the pursuit of elective studies in the liberal arts.

For those not interested or inclined to pursue a STEM career, use the freedom of college to explore a variety of coursework. To students entering their first year of college this year, I would urge you to follow the motto of my own alma mater that "any person [can] find instruction in any study."

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



LEGAL-EASE: AN ATTORNEY'S PERSPECTIVE

WHAT IS AN ESTATE PLAN?

By Judd Matsunaga, Esq.

Yes, you need an estate plan, even if you don't have an estate. You may hear the word "estate" and think mansions and sprawling grounds; but you don't have to be wealthy to have an estate. If you have assets, e.g., a bank account, you have an "estate" — and you need a plan for it.

An estate consists of all the property a person owns, including real estate, cars, cash and other assets.

Anyone who loves their family and wants their assets to be transferred to one or more surviving loved ones after they pass away should consider establishing a formal estate plan. This important set of legal documents will allow your family to avoid the needless cost and delay of probate court. It will also ensure that your wishes and needs are met if you ever become incapacitated and unable to speak for yourself.

Sorry, but your children cannot create an estate plan after you die or become incapacitated. After you get very sick or you die, it's too late to make an estate plan. Without a carefully designed, fully signed and witnessed documents in a complete estate plan, your wishes (which you

assumed "everyone understood") will likely carry no legal weight. You need to do this, and you need to do it now before you die or get Alzheimer's.

So, what exactly is an estate plan? An estate plan is a collection of documents that protects your assets and personal property (your "estate") and explains how you want to pass them down. It documents your wishes and may be as simple or complex as the owner's wishes and needs directs. It also specifies exactly who will guard those wishes and act on them in your absence. Guardians are often designated for minor children and beneficiaries in incapacity.

Once you have determined what your estate plan should be, you will need to memorialize it in writing. Several different documents will be required to effectuate your wishes. The essential documents explained below are: (1) Living Trust with Pour Over Will; (2) Durable Power of Attorney for Assets (DPOA); (3) Power of Attorney for Health Care; and (4) Beneficiary Designations. Additional documents may be necessary depending on the complexity of your estate and your estate planning goals.

(1) LIVING TRUST WITH A

POUR OVER WILL

These are the foundation documents of the estate plan. A simple will is not enough if you own your own home — paid for or not. A will has to be probated. A living trust avoids probate. I like to say, "A living trust has will power (i.e., gives instructions on who inherits your estate), but avoids the cost and delay of probate." If, however, you don't own your home avoidance, you may get by with a simple will. It is recommended you ask an estate planning attorney in your state.

A living trust is your primary estate planning document. However, it has a backup, companion document called a Pour Over Will. It's just a safety device. If you fail to properly fund your living trust, a Pour Over Will takes any residue of the estate and pours it over into the trust. In addition, in a will, you can designate your executor, the person you entrust to implement your wishes that are outlined in the will.

Another advantage of a living trust is to reduce or eliminate Federal Estate Taxes upon death. Although only 1 percent of American families currently must pay estate taxes since Trump has the exemption at record highs of \$11 million, Biden has proposed to lower them back to \$3.5 million.

For example, if you have a \$5 million estate and die when the exemption is \$3.5 million, your heirs will pay tax on the \$1.5 million over the exemption, close to \$750,000. However, with a living trust with A-B provisions, your heirs could pay zero — huge benefit!!!

If you own your own home, there is no reason that I know of not to set up a living trust. There's no disadvantage to you because you appoint yourself the trustee of your own trust. You stay in full control of your assets while you're alive.

Furthermore, you also name yourself the Primary Beneficiary of your own trust. If you want to spend all your money, you can. You don't need permission from anyone, not the court, not your kids — you are in full control.

(2) DURABLE POWER OF ATTORNEY (Also called a Financial Power of Attorney)

This document allows you to name a person to manage your financial affairs if you become unable to do so. Your financial power of attorney will be responsible for paying your bills and managing your investments and financial matters. These duties should be carried out by someone you consider to be trustworthy.

(3) HEALTH CARE POWER OF ATTORNEY (Also called a Health Care Proxy)

With this document, you appoint a person to make health care decisions for you if you become unable to make them for yourself. These decisions can include consenting to surgery, checking you into a nursing home or hospital, obtaining your medical records and terminating life-sustaining treatment. Your health care power of attorney will be communicating with your physician and carrying out your wishes with respect to different types of treatment.

(4) BENEFICIARY

DESIGNATIONS

Certain assets, such as retirement plans, investment accounts and life insurance proceeds pass by beneficiary designation. Wills do not automatically apply to these assets. The beneficiaries you designate have priority over those named in a will. However, you can make your will apply to these assets by the wording you use on the designation, which may be advisable in some circumstances.

You should review your current beneficiary designations with your estate planning attorney to ensure they are in alignment with your overall estate plan and your wishes and that they are worded correctly.

In conclusion, remember that estate planning is not a one-time event. Estate planning is ongoing. Once you have your initial estate plan in place, you and your estate planning attorney will need to review them periodically. Changes in the law and significant life events, e.g., marriage, divorce, remarriage or the birth of a child or grandchild may alter your goals and require changes to your estate planning documents.

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

JAVA AWARDS 2021 SCHOLARSHIPS

The organization awards \$24,500 in scholarships to continue the legacy of WWII Nisei military service and encourages future military and public service.



WASHINGTON, D.C. — The Japanese American Veterans Assn. recently announced 14 winners of the annual scholarship award program for 2021. Outstanding students from around the country applied for the scholarships that aims to continue the legacy of the WWII Nisei military service as well as encourage future military and public service.

Following are this year's recipients:

Samantha Kanekuni:

The \$3,000 memorial scholarship honoring the late U.S. Sen. Daniel K. Inouye's iconic career of military and civilian public service was awarded to Kanekuni of Baltimore, Md. The granddaughter of Isamu Kanekuni, 442nd RCT, she is working toward a J.D. degree at the University of Maryland Francis King Carey School of Law.

In her essay, Kanekuni wrote, "I was inspired to pursue a law degree to continue my passion for protecting vulnerable children and families. My vision for the future is to use my law degree to advocate for those who are most vulnerable in our population. In doing so, I hope to help create a more equitable and just society for all."

Madeleine Matsui: The \$3,000 Founder's Scholarship, named for JAVA's founder, the late Col. Phil Ishio, his wife, Constance, and their son, Douglas Ishio, was awarded to Matsui of Cambridge, Ma. The granddaughter of Victor Matsui, MIS, Matsui just completed her first year at Harvard Law School.

In her application, Matsui wrote, "... it is more critical than ever that we work together as a society to mitigate the barriers that stand in the way of human progress and freedom. The past year has exposed our society's grave shortcomings, but has also revealed the potential for change and

rethinking. I hope to use my time in law school and my legal career to lead change and benefit others, as Col. Ishio did when he founded and grew JAVA into the nationally respected organization it is today."

Jairus Iwasaki:

The Kiyoko Tsuboi Taubkin Legacy Scholarship, a \$2,000 award in honor of a longtime patron of JAVA, was awarded to Iwasaki, the grandson of Shigetoshi Iwasaki, 442nd RCT, of Hilo, Hawaii. Iwasaki is pursuing a B.A. in education at the University of Hawaii, Manoa. He made the Dean's List every semester and after he finishes his degree, his goal is to teach in rural Hawaii.

In his essay, Iwasaki shared, "When Hurricane Iselle hit the Big Island in 2014 . . . one 4-H group held a food drive, and our Hilo Youth Video 4-H club created a publicity video PSA. The drive was a success. Over 2,500 pounds of food and two truckloads of nonfood items were collected and distributed. . . . Serving our community gave us a sense of accomplishment and purpose. The outreach experience inspired me to pursue education."

In addition, JAVA Memorial Scholarships were awarded to graduating high school seniors, each in the amount of \$1,500. Following are this year's recipients.

Arisa Aloiau received a JAVA Memorial Scholarship in honor of Maj. Orville Shirey, 442nd RCT, and his wife, Maud Shirey. Aloiau is the granddaughter of Hiroshi Kato, 442nd RCT, and is from Honolulu, Hawaii. She will attend the University of Hawaii, Manoa, and plans to study marketing.



Nicholas Gima received a JAVA Memorial Scholarship in honor of Betty Shima, lifelong partner of Terry Shima, 442nd RCT and former JAVA executive director. Gima is the grandnephew of Shinye Gima, MIS, and is from Kula, Hawaii. He will attend California Polytechnic State University in San Luis Obispo, Calif., and plans to study engineering.

Cassidy Hanano received a JAVA Memorial Scholarship in honor of Sgt. Ben Kuroki, a gunner in the U.S. Army Air Corps, 505th Bombardment Group. Hanano is the grandniece of Charles Hanano, 442nd RCT, and is from Wailuku, Hawaii. She will attend Creighton University in Omaha, Neb., and is premed.

Evan Haramoto received a JAVA Memorial Scholarship in honor of Col. Virgil R. Miller, Commanding Officer of the 442nd RCT. Haramoto is the great-grandnephew of George Ryoji Yamada, 442nd RCT, and is from Whittier, Calif. He will attend the University of California, San Diego, and plans to study general biology on the premed track.

Juliana Ibaraki received a JAVA Memorial Scholarship in honor of Ranger Grant Jiro Hirabayashi, MIS. Ibaraki is the granddaughter of Thomas Ibaraki, 100th Battalion, and is from Manhattan Beach, Calif. She will attend the University of Greenwich in London and plans to study public health.

Mari Kanemoto received a JAVA Memorial Scholarship in honor of CWO4 Mitsugi Murakami Kasai, MIS. Kanemoto is the granddaughter of Harry Yoshio Ishibashi, 442 RCT/ 522nd Field Artillery, and is from Seattle, Wa. She will attend Northwest Nazarene University in Nampa, Idaho, and study nursing.

Micah Katahara received a JAVA Memorial Scholarship in honor of Victor Matsui, MIS, and his wife, Teru Matsui. Katahara is the great-grandson of Sadami Katahara, 442nd RCT, and the son of JAVA member Capt. Michael Katahara, USN (Ret). Katahara is from Great Falls, Va. He will attend the College of William and Mary in Williamsburg, Va., and plans to study economics.

Kyle Kuwahara received the Tak and Carolyn Furumoto JAVA Memorial Scholarship in honor of Tak Furumoto's late father, Sam Kiyoto Furumoto. Kuwahara is the grandson of Keso Kuwahara, 6007th ASU, and the grandnephew of Kozu Kuroda, Kenzo Kuroda and Goro Kuroda, who all served in the 442nd RCT. Kuwahara is from Berkeley, Calif. He will attend the University of California,

Berkeley, and plans to study computer science.

Malina Miura received a JAVA Memorial Scholarship in honor of Dr. Americo Bugliani and his liberator, Paul Sakamoto, 100th Battalion. Miura is the grandniece of Douglas Tanaka, 442nd RCT, and is from Culver City, Calif. She will attend the University of California, Irvine, and plans to work toward a bachelor of fine arts.

Ethan Murakami received a JAVA Memorial Scholarship in honor of past JAVA President and Korean War veteran Bob Nakamoto. Murakami is the great-grandnephew of Seichi Tsugawa, 442nd RCT, and is from Kaneohe, Hawaii. He will attend Emory University in Atlanta, Ga., and plans to study economics.

Garrett Tamura received a JAVA Memorial Scholarship in honor of Col. Jimmie Kanaya, a three-war veteran — WWII, Korea and Vietnam. Tamura is the grandson of Kunima Tamura, MIS, and is from Torrance, Calif. He will attend California State University, Long Beach, and plans to study mechanical engineering.

JAVA wishes to thank the Scholarship Committee: Chris DeRosa, chair; Dawn Eilenberger, JD, former deputy director of the Office of the Director of National Intelligence; Maj. Kay Izumihara, USAR; and Capt. (Dr.) Cynthia Macri, MC, USN (Ret).

The future of our nation is in great hands, knowing these young individuals will be at the forefront.

To learn more about JAVA scholarships, visit the organization's website at <https://java-us.org/JAVA-Memorial-Scholarship-Program>.



The Pacific Citizen congratulates our family graduates of 2020-21



Evan Haramoto
Schurr High School



Catherine Hsu
Cal. State Univ.
Los Angeles



Akari Johnston
Culver City High School



Kyndall Ting
Cal. State Poly Univ.
Pomona



Kara Yokoyama
Bravo Medical
Magnet High School

2021 JACL NATIONAL SCHOLARSHIP WINNERS

ESSAY TOPIC

This year's scholarship recipients were asked to respond to the following question, which was provided by JACL's National Youth/Student Council:

“Communities survive, despite many obstacles, because of the people who give back to it. While some donate their time, others may donate their talents or support the community financially. Especially now, as the Asian American community is facing a rise in anti-Asian hate surrounding the Covid-19 pandemic, in what ways will you support your community? What are some ways that you have already done so?”

EDITOR'S NOTE:

All student responses reflect those that were submitted to the P.C. by the respective JACL Scholarship Committees.

FRESHMAN WINNERS

DEVON AKIYAMA
JACL Chapter: Florin/Sacramento Valley
Recipient of the Mitsugi Murakami Kasai Memorial Scholarship
University of California, Berkeley



Notables

Throughout his high school career, Devon Akiyama has been deeply committed to service, within both the Japanese American and broader Sacramento communities. He has dedicated more than 350 hours serving in various leadership positions with local, state and regional Key Club groups, spent more than 275 hours with his local Boy Scout troop as a member and patrol leader and served more than 160 hours as a volunteer with the Buddhist Church of Florin. For his Boy Scout Eagle project, Akiyama organized a three-monthlong rehabilitation and rejuvenation of his Buddhist church's outdoor kitchen and enlisted fellow troop members and school club peers to assist with the project. Akiyama will attend UC Berkeley this fall. He intends to major in business and economics.

Personal Statement

“Throughout the entirety of high school in fact, I have taken an active role in predominately Asian organizations. I assumed increased responsibility at my church, served officer positions in Key Club and the National Honor Society, and

volunteered at fundraisers for the Japanese American community. Looking back on my past years has given me the opportunity to reflect on the connection that I have had with the Asian community and realize the strength that we have when working together.”

JACLYN CHIOU
JACL Chapter: Chicago
Recipient of the Henry and Chiyo Kuwahara Memorial Scholarship
University of Texas at Austin



Notables

Identity, heritage and leadership are at the center of Jaclyn Chiou's accomplishments in her high school career as a graduate of Highland Park High School in Highland Park, Ill. A highlight of her efforts to preserve Japanese American heritage was participation in the development of an educational video that highlighted the World War II incarceration experience, following the account of three families and three generations, including her own, as her grandfather was incarcerated at Rohwer and Crystal City.

Another honor was being chosen as one of five high school students in the U.S. to travel to Japan to experience aspects of culture and family life through a program sponsored by the International Friendship Assn. This experience, along with her deep exploration of her Japanese American heritage, has increased Chiou's firm belief in combating Asian stereotyping, especially in this period of increased anti-Asian racism.

A five-year active member of JACL's Chicago chapter, she has experienced Days of Remembrance as well as an annual convention. She is also a part of cultural activities of her local Buddhist church and has participated in a variety of charitable and human welfare projects.

Personal Statement

“As a Gosei whose grandparents (Kaz and Helen Ideno), great-grandparents (Harry and Haruko Tademaru, Junzo and Ayako Ideno) and great-great-grandparents (Morio and Kiku Tanimoto, Himeko Fujita) were all incarcerated in internment camps during WWII, I feel it is my duty to make sure that my peers and future generations do not forget this shameful period in American history. I have visited the Amache internment camp in Colorado and stood on the foundation of the cramped quarters where my grandma's family had been forced to live and endure the sweltering summer heat and frigid cold winters. We cannot let history repeat itself. Racism must stop.

“As one of the few token Asians in my predominantly white high school, it is important for me to tear down Asian stereotypes and educate my peers. I am a leader in almost every club that I am involved in, and I utilize these positions to help alter my schoolmates' perceptions of Asian Americans.

“I try to actively support the JA community in Chicago. Chicago does not have a Japantown, and our JA population is scattered throughout Chicago's suburbs. For me, it is important to support the Japanese American community by supporting the organizations that serve them. . . . JACL is another JA organization that I support, and I've been a member since I was in seventh grade. I also am a member of JASC. It is an honor to be able to support the JA community, and I have volunteered at the events almost every year (except during Covid).

“For me, community extends beyond my own race or my town. When I saw how



San Jose JACL Congratulates

Kohei Tsuchitani
Kelli Kosakura
Audrey Iwashita
2021 Scholars



JACL Chicago congratulates our 2021 chapter scholarship winners

Kayla Chandler, Malorie Ishii, and Jaclyn Chiou

We also congratulate Jaclyn on her JACL National scholarship!



Congratulations Devon

on receiving the 2021 CWO4 Mitsugi Murakami Kasai (Ret) Memorial Scholarship

With all our love,
 Akiyama & Mortimer Family



Devon Akiyama
 CWO4 Mitsugi Murakami Kasai (ret) Memorial Scholarship



Congratulations to our **2021 JACL National Scholarship Awardees!**

Connor Gill
 Henry & Chiyo Kuwahara Memorial Scholarship



» Covid-19 was disproportionately affecting the marginalized Black and Latino communities with food insecurity, I participated in two different initiatives during the summer. . . . I have an extensive history of volunteering for a multitude of projects, but fulfilling a basic need for food is always so heartbreaking. I think it is important to support other marginalized minority communities in whatever way we can, whether it be through our voices, our hands/feet, our wallets or our vote.”

KARA CHU

JACL Chapter: SELANOCO
Recipient of the Paul and Katherine Ohtaki Memorial Scholarship
University of California, Los Angeles



Notables

Kara Chu represents the best and brightest of upcoming community activism. When Covid-19 hit in early 2020, she never stopped asking herself how she could help others in her community. With her sister, she conceived a children’s book project, “Smiling From Ear to Ear,” to help children adjust to mask mandates in California and around the world (Chur was in charge of distribution, and her sister was in charge of illustration and book creation).

Together, they sold more than 10,000 books globally and have donated proceeds to Black Women in Visual Art, No Kid Hungry (feeding 93,000 children) and other charities. During quarantine, she also volunteered with food distribution with Tanaka Farms for Helping Farms Feed Families (helping distribute over 3,500 care packages) and became involved with Walk the Farm, which benefits American and Japanese farmers affected by natural disasters (particularly the 2011 earthquake and tsunami).

She is currently designing their new website. Her poem, “Because of You,” won first place in the 2020 Japanese American Memorial Pilgrimages National Poetry Contest. Her poem was featured in the virtual pilgrimage to over 100,000 worldwide viewers.

At school, Chu is a dedicated scholar and talented athlete. In addition to maintaining a perfect unweighted 4.0 GPA, she has played four years of varsity basketball and served as the team’s captain during her senior year. She was in ASB all four years of high school and is a recipient of the

President’s Volunteer Service Gold Award, recognizing her extensive community service, and interns with the Centerpointe for Children: Pediatric Occupational Therapy Private Practice. She plans to study Asian American Studies and Rehabilitation Sciences and knows that whatever profession she chooses, she will be helping others and working toward a better world.

Personal Statement

“By working together, focusing on what we’re good at and relying on each other through challenges, we’ve been able to support our community during these difficult times. . . . Anti-Asian hate crimes are escalating so rapidly, and we need more education and more action to counteract these acts of hate nationwide.

“I see this as one of our most critical, pressing challenges, in addition to HR 40. I’m known for speaking up for those who don’t have a voice in my community and making sure forgotten history is heard and shared. I fear it will be a long road, but I will continue to support my community in this manner.

“Experiences such as these have given me the opportunity to learn how to proactively counteract ignorance and privilege with grace, open-mindedness, kindness and conviction.”

AARON KANG

JACL Chapter: San Mateo
Recipient of the Takashi and Yuriko Moriuchi Memorial Scholarship
Harvard College



Notables

Aaron Kang is a recent graduate of Aragon High School in San Mateo, Calif., where he was an award-winning student athlete in cross-country. He explored international perspectives through participating in the Model United Nations throughout high school, winning two awards as a delegate and serving as a vp. In addition to his membership in the San Mateo JACL, he also played a leadership role in the local Japanese Culture Club and served as a life-guard and swim instructor.

Kang distinguished himself in his Advanced Placement English courses, where his teacher commended him for his skilled and inclusive leadership. He displayed a keen ability to analyze complex texts and provide original observations, and his writing spoke of the need to

overcome adversity, having learned from, among others, the experiences of his grandfather, who escaped poverty in Korea to come to the U.S. An excellent scholar, he completed his high school career with a 4.24 weighted grade point average. With his academic accomplishments and community experience, he will be attending Harvard College.

Personal Statement

“Asian Americans have always fought against this idea that one’s ancestry necessarily determines how ‘American’ someone is. Ironically, in a nation made up of immigrants, Asian Americans have been questioned time and time again about their loyalty, dedication and true belonging to America.

“Today, Asian Americans are economically, politically and academically successful but still face the struggle of being a ‘perpetual foreigner.’ This same sentiment that led the U.S. government to believe that Japanese Americans during WWII were more loyal to Japan than America persists in the current perception that one’s Asian ancestry necessarily means that they are somehow more likely or susceptible to have Covid-19.

“These vast jumps in logic are not fueled by the same blatant racism of internment and Jim Crow laws because we see that Asian Americans in places that are as progressive and diverse as California are still subject to the same harassment and xenophobia we see elsewhere.

“Rather, the problem lies in a lack of empathy and understanding for what Asian Americans are really like. Thus, I want to help my community and the entire Asian American community by making Asian Americans more visible and prominent through my own advocacy and by building up others to become advocates as well.

“. . . Every American is united by their own immigrant story, whether two generations or 10 generations ago, and I hope that we can all recognize that commonality through exploring one another’s communities. Doing so not only strengthens our own com-

munities, but others as well.

“With this empathy, we as Americans can resist the forces of xenophobia, racism and discrimination because the even greater bond as fellow immigrants holds us together. In my coming college years, I hope to spread this understanding of shared unity and build that empathy by introducing others to the Asian American communities I am a part of and exploring other communities as well. A strong Asian American community is one that is interconnected with other communities, the same way we are all interconnected as Americans.”

LANA KOBAYASHI

JACL Chapter: San Fernando Valley
Recipient of the Paul and Katherine Ohtaki Memorial Scholarship
University of California, Los Angeles



Notables

A passionate advocate for racial justice, Lana Kobayashi is dedicated to building bridges between people and has already had a huge impact on her local Japanese American community. When she saw a need in her school for intercultural understanding, she created Japan Club, which became a safe haven for exchange students and a place for all students to share their cultures and experiences.

In her larger community, she also has used her bilingual skills to assist students with special needs through the Japanese Speaking Parents Association of Children With Challenges and has served as a guide and ambassador to students from Kumamoto and Tohoku with HandsOn Tokyo.

In addition to her extensive work

with the Japanese American community, Kobayashi is an impressive scholar, athlete and leader at her school. She maintained a 4.16 weighted GPA while also playing four years of varsity tennis, with two years as team captain. She also served on student council all four years and was the vp of her school’s Science National Honors Society.

Showing her passion for justice, Kobayashi organized a Black Lives Matter protest at her school and also was vp of Falling Whistles, a club dedicated to fundraising to work toward peace for child soldiers in the Democratic Republic of the Congo.

Personal Statement

“Just because I stopped experiencing the racial microaggressions did not mean that those around me also stopped experiencing them. My goal became to diminish the racial microaggressions at my school.

“In my freshman year of high school, I created a club called Japan Club. Initially, it was created as a way to spread the Japanese culture, but it soon became a safe space for all of the foreign exchange students from Japan. . . . Soon, Japan Club had evolved into a place where American students and Japanese students interacted with one another and exchanged their cultures. It was a place of positivity and cultural pride.

“Through this positive atmosphere, I realized that this is what I wanted to do in life — create a safe bridge between America and other countries (specifically Japan) and ultimately create world peace.

“I wanted to learn more about my Japanese American roots, so I joined the Rising Stars Youth and Leadership Program. This program taught me the history of Japanese Americans and also allowed me to create new connections with people in the Japanese American community.

“Furthermore, I joined JACL to participate in seminars of Japanese American women who have created an impact on the state, national and global level. Here, I found my role models. In the future, I strive to be a Japanese Ameri-





Congratulations
to our 2021
Scholarship Recipients

San Fernando Valley
JACL
Civil Rights • Justice

Dariya Paull
will be attending
Loyola Marymount

Lana Kobayashi
will be attending
UCLA



» can woman who creates a positive impact globally and ultimately diminishes any racial injustices.”

ALEXANDER LANG
JACL Chapter: Eden Township
Recipient of the Sam and Florice
Kuwahara Memorial Scholarship
University of California, Berkeley



Notables
 Alexander Lang is a talented scholar athlete and dedicated member of the Buddhist Church of Oakland. Lang was a three-sport athlete in high school, playing soccer and tennis, as well as running cross country.

During the Covid-19 pandemic, he organized outdoor youth tennis classes at a local tennis court, providing a safe and fun opportunity for children in his community. As a member of the Buddhist Church of Oakland and president of the church's Young Buddhist Association, Lang has volunteered at bazaar, obon and mochizuki events, organized a fundraiser to provide aid to wildfire victims and held a toy drive during the holidays to donate to families in need. Lang is attending UC Berke-

ley this fall and intends to major in mechanical engineering.
Personal Statement
 “The work I have done throughout the pandemic has provided fulfillment to me as I have been able to help people in my community that are in need and see my efforts appreciated by others.

“Being a part of the youth, I feel responsible to keep giving back to my community as it has molded me into the person I am today. More specifically, I will come back and help the Asian community that I have grown up around because it has provided me with an understanding of my ancestral history and given me strength in my cultural values. These experiences have motivated me to continue being a supportive member of the community as I embark on my journey into college.”

MEIXING NAGATA-BROWN
JACL Chapter: Salt Lake City
Recipient of the Henry and Chiyo
Kuwahara Memorial Scholarship
University of Utah



Notables
 MeiXing Nagata-Brown strongly believes that with the advent of social

media, each of us has a voice and a responsibility. With the rise of anti-Asian hate, Nagata-Brown has used platforms to create awareness that combats bigotry and intolerance. She posts important information on Instagram and Twitter to get her messages out.

Her involvement in the community no doubt helped create the awareness needed to promote her advocacy for Asian Americans. As a member of the JACL for five years, she assisted in the hosting of the National Convention when it was in Salt Lake City. She has attended the Topaz Day of Remembrance and heard her grandfather speak about his incarceration experience. In addition, she volunteers at her local Nikkei Senior Center, Buddhist Temple and with Catholic Community Service.

Nagata-Brown is an accomplished scholar-athlete with four years of honor status. Her range of sports includes tennis, track and field, basketball, softball and bowling at Judge Memorial Catholic School, where she is also a peer minister.

Personal Statement

“I believe it is human nature to fear what we don't understand and try to protect what is familiar and comfortable to us. This can help us preserve our heritage and cultures but also limits our ability to learn and grow. It can also be extremely destructive to ourselves and others when it escalates to the point of depriving individuals and groups of their inalienable rights and freedoms.

“Everyone should be free to worship, gather and even protest according to their own beliefs and views as long as it does not infringe on the

rights and freedoms of others. We must not try and force our beliefs on others by lying, preying on fears or physically imposing our own will.

“In today's world, messages can reach people around the world in milliseconds. This compounds the problem of inaccurate information, prejudice and views tainted by our biases. However, it also gives us the opportunity to elevate issues and spread a positive message exponentially.

“Because of technology, our world is connected 24/7 in an unprecedented way. Our thoughts and beliefs are available to anyone who cares to look with the touch of a screen. As anti-Asian hate has risen because of inaccurate information and falsehoods during the pandemic, injustice and bigotry have reached new levels.

“I believe each of us has a responsibility to speak up and spread awareness about this injustice and bigotry through all means possible, especially as a youth through our social media channels and technology. There are people of high moral character and influence that are also speaking out, who will echo our message, amplify our voices and support our cause if we speak up. We need to persevere until the uneasiness of the color of skin or country of ancestry is allayed.

“I engage regularly on my social media platforms to help improve this situation by decrying false narratives and characterizations of Asian Americans and others. I repost important facts and information on Instagram and Twitter to give people more perspective on the constant racism and cultural appropriation that is happening daily. I post stories that people

have shared about experiences they have gone through being an Asian American and the notable amount of anti-Asian hate crimes that have been going on.

“I hope to grow my platform on social media and develop it into something bigger, then maybe someday, [it] will help reduce the occurrence and lessen the impact of institutionalized racism and challenges that my Asian American community endures.”

SAYURI PAYNE
JACL Chapter: Portland
Recipient of the Hanayagi Rokumie
Memorial Cultural Scholarship
University of Oregon's Clark Honors
College



Notables
 Sayuri Payne is a talented, resourceful graduate of Mountainside High School in Beaverton, Ore., where she graduated with a cumulative unweighted GPA of 3.98. Payne devoted herself to her school activities, including time-demanding participation in the school's Marching Band, Symphonic Band, Jazz Band and Wind Ensemble. In addition, she lettered three years in varsity tennis and varsity snowboarding. Somehow, Payne found time to tutor elementary, middle school and high school students in all levels of mathematics, from basic math to geometry, algebra and calculus.

Payne joined the Portland JACL in 2020 and has immersed herself in a wide number of activities from Get Out the Vote programs, Mochizuki, Day of Remembrance observances and JACL's anti-Asian Discrimination discussion. She published an article in the Portland JACL newsletter outlining her Japan-Oregon Cultural Exchange program.

She is also a lifelong devotee of kendo, the Japanese martial art of swordsmanship using bamboo swords. In kendo, Payne learns patience and dedication through the repetitive nature of practice. She believes the beauty of kendo is not in competitions or rankings, but in the humbleness of knowing that others are better and the enjoyment and appreciation that comes from a desire to better oneself and overcome self-doubt.

She will attend the University of Oregon's Clark Honors College and major in international business.

Personal Statement





Congratulations Alex Lang
on receiving the 2021 Sam & Florice Kuwahara Memorial Scholarship!
Best wishes for bright future!
Best regards, Eden Township JACL Chapter

Congratulations MeiMei Nagata Brown

Salt Lake City JACL congratulates MeiMei Nagata Brown on receiving the Henry & Chiyo Kuwahara Memorial Scholarship!





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» “Over the summer of 2020, after weeks of research and preparation through international Zoom calls, I founded the Japan-Oregon Cultural Exchange Program. It is an online forum that connects high school students from Oregon and Japan virtually for 45-minute conversation sessions twice a month.

“My initial scope was the three Beaverton School District high schools offering Japanese (ironically, my own high school didn’t). Schools agreed to give community service credit for students participating, but the program is independent of the school district. There is no cost to join, as the program has a staff of one . . . me. The only requirement is active participation.

“Ms. Yoko Miwa, the Japanese teacher from Beaverton HS, graciously became my adviser and helped get the word out. Between the two of us, we leveraged our contacts in Japan and signed up students from Gifu Prefecture and Tokyo.

“The week we went live, we only had two participants from each country. Within a month, however, there were 30 participants. My email inbox continued to fill with signup requests, and we added students from Portland, Lake Oswego and Tigard.

“It started out primarily as a way to make new friends, practice conversation skills and learn other cultures. By October, participants stopped talking about the weather. They were now sharing experiences about their local culture, stories from daily life and even politics. That’s when I knew I was making a difference.

“Seeing these students exchange Instagram usernames and phone numbers on their own, while continuing to attend sessions and share, is extremely gratifying for me. In January 2021, the PDX-JACL chapter even published an article I wrote in their newsletter highlighting the program.”

ALEX TOKITA

JACL Chapter: Mt. Olympus
Recipient of the Shigeki ‘Shake’ Ushio Memorial Scholarship
University of Utah



Notables

“Well rounded” is a description that will serve Alex Tokita well as he enters the University of Utah this fall to study computer science.

Tokita is a graduate of Rowland High School in Salt Lake City, where he graduated with a 4.0 GPA. In school, Alex was a varsity athlete in track and field and basketball. He also engaged in studio arts for four years, where he explored his identity and human emotion through self-portraiture, landscapes and abstract art.

As a member of the Headmaster’s Advisory Committee, Tokita provided student perspectives on concerns over health, safety, mental health, racism and student behavior. Outside of school, he worked as an intern with the ColoCare Study at the University of Utah’s Huntsman Cancer Institute.

On one hand, Tokita just recently became a member of the Mt. Olympus JACL. But on the other hand, he has attended and volunteered for JACL events and programs all his life due to his grandfather’s, Yasuo Tokita, and father’s, Robert Tokita, memberships. In addition, he is a member of the Salt Lake City Buddhist Temple and has served as an officer in its active YBA as president, secretary and treasurer.

As his college counselor stated, “Alex has perfected the academic habits for success throughout high school and across all disciplines. His academic readiness for a rigorous college education is matched by his engagement as a leader.”

Personal Statement

“Through all these forms of community engagement, I’m reminded of how fortunate I am to have this never-ending support system in my life, and I’m further encouraged to do what I can to strengthen these communities.

“In doing so, however, I also remind myself to keep other communities in mind and not confuse the strengthening of my communities with the suppression of other communities.

People in Black, Indigenous and Hispanic communities continue to face obstacles in fighting racism and xenophobia across the nation, and recent racial justice movements, along with the pandemic, have spotlighted these racial inequalities.

“And I’ve tried, over the past year, to learn about the historical, social, economic and political forces behind the various forms of racism in the United States. So, as Asian Americans face increasing hostility in the face of the Covid-19 pandemic, it’s more important than ever to find common ground with other communities who have consistently faced similar attacks.

“Ultimately, if we can’t stand up for them, then how can we expect anyone to stand up for us. Japanese Americans know what it’s like for others to stay silent in the face of atrocities and bigotry, so it’s our duty to combat hate on all fronts, not just our own.”

AMANDA TSUETAKI

JACL Chapter: Berkeley
Recipient of the Takashi and Yuriko Moriuchi Memorial Scholarship
Northwestern University



Notables

Not many high schoolers can say that they’ve produced a feature about their family and the Japanese American incarceration that was broadcast on the local public radio

station. Amanda Tsuetaki turned her experience with anti-Asian bias into a determined energy to document the story of her “Bachan,” who was incarcerated at the Tule Lake camp.

When Tsuetaki received an internship at North Carolina’s public radio station, she set to work. She had been shocked by the lack of reference in her history education to the Japanese American incarceration.

She spent hours of her summer internship putting together the account, documenting with old photos and letters, as well as interviews of her grandmother and other family members. Her almost eight-minute feature attracted the attention of state educators, local Asian American community members and a California Japanese newspaper who featured her audio piece to educate others.

Tsuetaki has a wide range of other community experiences, including volunteer work at government, cultural, science and aid organizations, including an internship at the mayor’s office of Chapel Hill, N.C. She keeps up with local Japanese traditions as well.

Her leadership résumé at her high school, Carrboro, is extensive, including memberships in a multitude of clubs and councils, as well as receipt of scholastic and other honors. A student athlete, she ran cross-country and was the captain and defensive player of the year in lacrosse. She also served a student body president

in her senior year. She hopes to major in Asian American Studies at Northwestern University.

Personal Statement

“When I received an internship from WUNC, North Carolina’s public radio station, I jumped at the chance to share [my family’s incarceration] story. I interviewed my grandmother all in one take, more conversation than interview. I added additional information about internment camps from primary sources in the Library of Congress and videos of Fred Korematsu, a Japanese American activist. I also read children’s books about the internment to understand how to explain the concept to younger listeners.

“That summer, I spent most of my days in a dimly lit room listening to sound bites. I spliced and respliced audio files, hearing my Bachan’s words ebb and swell as I dragged my finger across the mouse pad. By the end of the summer, I had an edited radio story, clocking in at 7 minutes and 42 seconds. Story link here: <https://www.wunc.org/post/how-learning-my-grandmother-s-story-taught-me-appreciate-my-heritage>.

“After it aired, I received emails from teachers in North Carolina saying they were adding my story to their curriculum, and a Japanese newspaper in California contacted me about printing it in their paper. Other members of the



Congratulations
Amanda Tsuetaki
on receiving the 2021
Takashi & Yuriko Moriuchi
Memorial Scholarship!

We are so proud of you!

Love,
Dad, Mom,
Alexander, and Bachan

Berkeley Chapter Congratulates Our 2021 National and Chapter Scholarship Recipients!

National Recipient: Freshman - Amanda Tsuetaki



B E R K E L E Y

Chapter Recipients:

UNDERGRADUATE:

- Annika Masaki
- Ellie Matsuno
- Bryce Nakahara
- Allison Nakao

FRESHMAN:

- Christy Ko
- Kyle Kuwahara
- Scott Kuwahara
- Lucille Taylor
- Amanda Tsuetaki

» Asian American community in North Carolina sent letters of support, telling me that when they listened to my story, they finally felt heard.

“The outpouring of support was inspiring, but I also knew that while Japanese American internment camps are part of the past, the intolerance they represent is not. From police brutality to white supremacy to the “Chinese Virus,” hate groups and discrimination have been on the rise in recent years. I spoke with others in the Asian American community who had faced prejudice, including students at my school.

“To help address these modern forms of discrimination, as my school’s student body president, I became a leader on my school’s newly established ‘Real Talk’ committee, facilitating discussions about bias and privilege within our diverse population of students and faculty.

“I worked on developing a simulation having students solve simple math problems but with limiting rules. Kids with blue eyes would have to wait for a minute before answering the question. Quickly, blue-eyed teens revolted and stated, ‘It’s not fair’ — which was exactly the point. We used this simulation to launch a discussion about discrimination in the school system and Chapel Hill’s education gap. ‘Real Talk’ has now become a popular biweekly discussion forum.

“My Bachan taught me that ‘wanting is different than working.’ I certainly want to see change in my community — and I’m working to make it happen, too.”

ZOE YAMAMOTO
JACL Chapter: San Diego



Recipient of the Patricia and Gail Ishimoto Memorial Scholarship
University of California, Irvine

Notables

Zoe Yamamoto is an accomplished science and technology whiz, as well as an active volunteer with her local Buddhist temple and Young Buddhist groups. She has won multiple awards at Science Olympiad competitions and held leadership positions in her school’s 3D Printing and Innovative Design clubs. As the co-president of her temple’s Young Buddhist Assn., Yamamoto organized food drives and anti-hunger fundraising, led sermons and wrote weekly articles for her temple’s website. She will attend UC Irvine this fall and intends to major in a STEM field.

Personal Statement

“After my National History Day project and the pilgrimage to Rohwer, I realized my appreciation for the struggles of my ancestors and thousands of Asian Americans like them. I am now more motivated than ever to do whatever I can to help support the Asian American community, especially since anti-Asian hate crimes have been on the rise recently.

“I plan to support my community by using social media to spread awareness and show support for my community. In the past year, I think social media has been very useful in creating change for many social justice movements, particularly the Black Lives Matter movement.

“Although I understand that posting on social media cannot directly aid the Asian American community, I think sharing resources that can help prevent hate crimes are helpful in influencing people to have the desire to help create change.

“Social media can also help show widespread support for a certain cause. I’ve seen so many hopeful and supportive messages on all social media platforms who are ready and willing to help protest the problem of anti-Asian hate crimes. I plan on being a part of this supportive social media movement and sharing the names and stories of victims of anti-Asian hate.”

UNDER-GRADUATE WINNERS

ALEXA FURUKAWA
JACL Chapter: Cleveland
Recipient of the Saburo Kido Memorial Scholarship
Ohio State University



Notables and Personal Statement

Alexa Furukawa has been a member of the Cleveland JACL chapter since 2007 and was awarded the Saburo Kido Memorial Scholarship. She attends Ohio State University, where she is majoring in biology and medical anthropology to better understand the world and help others to understand it as well.

Furukawa’s goal is to become a physician, writing, “The Covid-19 pandemic has only increased my interest in global care.” However, she begins her service to the world in her own local environment now within her own culture.

Her involvement in JACL has included dancing with the Sho-Jo-Ji Dancers beginning in 2009, attending chapter picnics and hosting a mochi-making event in January with her family. Outside of JACL, Furukawa has been a volleyball and track scholar-athlete, served on the State of Ohio Athletic Leadership Council and was part of the University Running Club. In addition, she was a research assistant at a cancer center, held leadership roles in her biology and premed student organizations and received numerous scholarships.

Because of her strong faith, Furukawa feels called to serve others. She explained that her grandfather experienced the incarceration camps for Japanese Americans, served in the military during WWII and lived with no judgment against others.

She aspires to be positive like her grandfather. Her community service has ranged from tutoring and mentoring to coaching volleyball, volunteering at the Akron Canton Food Bank and singing at nursing homes during Christmas.

Furukawa has sought connections from a young age. “I loved to make connections from history to science and from spelling to math, but I also felt a strong desire to connect to people, and that is still my main motivation to this day.”

After completing her undergraduate and ultimately medical school studies, Furukawa aspires to “join Doctors Without Borders to serve others around the world” and then bring new perspectives back to Northeast Ohio, where she hopes to work on cancer research. She believes strongly that a holistic approach to health will help patients with more than their medical needs.

CONNOR GILL
JACL Chapter: Florin/Sacramento Valley
Recipient of the Henry and Chiyo Kuwahara Memorial Scholarship
University of Southern California



Notables

Connor Gill, from the Florin/Sacramento Valley chapter, was awarded the Henry and Chiyo Kuwahara Memorial Scholarship. He is attending the University of Southern California with an interest in business administration.

Living in an area without many people of Asian descent during the pandemic when people were experiencing direct and indirect acts of hate, he started a “narrative to create a safe space for people to share their stories . . . of the bias they may face on a daily basis.”

He wanted to make it known that they were not alone and hoped it could help the community heal. Gill looks forward to supporting his community further as soon as the Covid-19 situation improves, so that he can attend protests and stand in solidarity with all people of Asian descent to show this type

of behavior does not belong in the United States of America.

Gill also has been an active member of the Boy Scouts, serving in various leadership roles through the years and achieving the rank of Eagle Scout with the completion of a project helping to build a new system of drainage and a retaining wall for the Japanese Placer Buddhist Temple.

His community service further extended to serving as co-director of business development for a local nonprofit, Financial Literacy for You. Under his leadership, the expansion of the organization, which teaches children financial skills and lifelong literacy, encompassed South Sacramento, the Bay Area, Los Angeles and Connecticut, reaching 5,000 disadvantaged youth.

He has volunteered in his JACL chapter facilitating activities and serving food during the summer picnics and the annual crab feed hosted by the chapter. He plans to become more involved with JACL when in-person activities resume after the Covid-19 pandemic diminishes.

Gill stated, “I think it is up to organizations such as JACL to not only stand up to the hate but also educate and inform their communities about staying safe, especially the elders who are the most vulnerable yet most important to the community.”

BRANDON IRIE
JACL Chapter: South Bay
Recipient of the Dr. Thomas T. Yatabe Memorial Scholarship
University of Southern California



Notables and Personal Statement

Brandon Irie is a member of the South Bay JACL chapter and was awarded the Dr. Thomas T. Yatabe Memorial Scholarship. He attends the University of Southern California with an interest in premedicine. Being raised in Southern California, he feels that he has had several Asian American role models and opportunities to interact with both Asian Pacific Americans and celebrate other racially/ethnically diverse cultures as well.

Although Irie has not had a lot of opportunity to participate in JACL activities due to the Covid-19 pandemic, he has been extensively involved with other APA organizations to maintain a connection with his culture.

San Diego JACL congratulates our 2021 scholarship recipients!

Marcus Heidger Sara Matsumoto Jenna Sasaki Zoe Yamamoto*

Shou Kitahara Chad Sasaki Izzy (Caitlyn) Wiseman

Best wishes in school and beyond!

* National scholarship recipient

» He recalls conversations with other APA students about their life experiences, which stunned him into the realization of his own privilege. Starting as a mentor and moving up to Center Coordinator at USC's Asian Pacific American Student Services, Irie mentored first-year students, a service that stemmed from his own memories of being an introvert attempting to navigate a new life experience and find friends.

As a result, he helped freshmen find Asian American mentors on campus. He later assisted in creating weekly programs focused on Asian American culture and identity, wellness, voting and election resources on candidates and ballot measures, as well as an alumni panel on career paths and life experiences.

Irie recognized the economic disparities experienced by persons of color in low-income communities, which inspired him to serve as a leader and volunteer with the Asian American Tutorial Project, tutoring students in Los Angeles' Chinatown.

During a pandemic summer, he helped to create online educational videos teaching young students new life skills and cultural topics that they would not get in their schools. In addition, he also helped to launch an online fundraiser that raised money for school supplies for a school in Chinatown.

His other experiences related to health and medicine have included being a resident assistant, an undergraduate research assistant in pharmacy and a health management intern. He stated, "From working at APAS and volunteering in AATP during the pandemic, I recognize that helping others is a passion that will drive my future career in medicine."

HANA MORITA

**JACL Chapter: Silicon Valley
Recipient of the Henry and Chiyo
Kuwahara Memorial Scholarship
University of Puget Sound**



Notables and Personal Statement

Hana Morita is a member of the Silicon Valley JACL chapter and was awarded the Henry and Chiyo Kuwahara Memorial Scholarship for 2021. She attends the University of Puget Sound with an interest in social work so that she can have hands-on community work experience.

Although only a recent member

of JACL, she has a strong interest in learning more about her cultural heritage and has been active in other Japanese American organizations, volunteering at the Japanese American Museum San Jose, participating in her university's Day of Remembrance events and joining the Tsuru for Solidarity group protesting at the Northwest Detention Center in Tacoma, Wash.

To improve her language skills and better understand her Japanese heritage, she enrolled in Japanese language classes. She is also a member of her university's Hawaii Club. As a complement to increasing her study of her cultural background, Morita believes knowledge of politics and public policy can be used to directly improve people's lives through institutional change.

Morita's passion for activism and justice in her different communities led to her participation in the Immigration in the Pacific Northwest group, learning about the Tacoma community's system of support for immigrants and people of color. To offer her own contributions in educating the public about race issues, she became active in the school newspaper *The Trail* and wrote for the features section.

She feels "my most impactful article covered issues surrounding the retention of minoritized students of color and low-income students at the University," which drew attention to the weak support systems for these students and forced conversations about the issue.

Morita's internships focused on marginalized populations: first, as a teacher assistant and art teacher in a school for low-income families, and then as a social media campaign manager for the organization Campaign for Justice: Redress NOW for Japanese Latin Americans in the ongoing fight for redress and reparations for the JLA.

When the pandemic interrupted her education, she moved home and supported her community as an artist, designing and distributing "Wear a Mask" posters in the Bay Area and creating art for the Black Lives Matter Movement. After completion of her undergraduate studies, Morita plans to pursue a master's degree in social work.

CAMILA NAKASHIMA

JACL Chapter: Seattle



Recipient of the Shigeru Nakahira Memorial Scholarship University of Washington

Notables and Personal Statement

Camila Nakashima is a member of the Seattle JACL chapter and was awarded the Shigeru Nakahira Memorial Scholarship. She attends the University of Washington with a major in geography and environmental studies and a minor in diversity.

She seeks work in the environmental justice field, specifically within climate justice for underserved communities who will be more adversely impacted by climate change.

Nakashima's involvement in JACL included serving as an intern and as a Planning Committee Member for the Seattle JACL chapter's Centennial Project. She would like to learn more about her Japanese culture and U.S./Japan relations by applying to the JACL Kakehashi Project.

Her involvement with the Japanese American community is maintained through attendance at Day of Remembrance events, participation in a Tule Lake Pilgrimage with her extended family, including those formerly incarcerated there, and in her membership in the Nikkei Student Union at her university. In work activities, Nakashima was a camp counselor at the National Japanese American Historical Society's summer camp and interned at the Community Alliance for Global Justice in Seattle.

Through the Nikkei Student Union, Nakashima has walked with other marginalized communities in a Tsuru for Solidarity protest at the Northwest Detention Center in Tacoma. She recognizes that the discrimination experienced by her grandparents in the camps continues to this day in different forms, and she seeks to support "other communities that are facing injustices through the same systems of oppression and discrimination that affect my own."

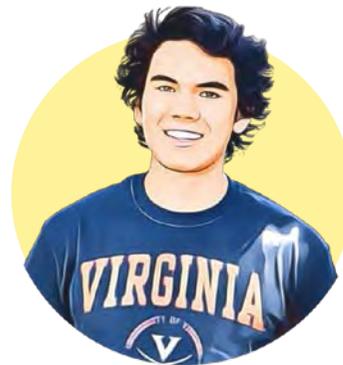
While she is not able to participate in as many activities for justice as she would like because of her full-

time studies, Nakashima utilizes education to stay informed and teach others. She also uses her network of friends and allies to both challenge and support each other in advocating for justice and equity.

Nakashima's commitment to justice is not something she should do when she feels like it, "but that it is a constant undertaking that I must do." She hopes to keep the legacy of the Japanese American incarceration during World War II as a reminder of her own family's history and as an inspiration to continue fighting injustice.

DANTE PELLEI

**JACL Chapter: Washington, D.C.
Recipient of the Alice Yuriko Endo
Memorial Scholarship
University of Virginia**



Notables and Personal Statement

Dante Pellei is a three-year member of the Washington, D.C., JACL chapter and was awarded the Alice Yuriko Endo Memorial Scholarship. He attends the University of Virginia with an interest in software development and education.

Pellei has a deep and active interest in U.S./Japan relations and has worked hard to expand his cultural heritage roots.

He was selected to be part of the Governor's Japanese Language Academy through Randolph Macon University, which enabled him to deepen his appreciation of Japanese language, history and culture. Part of the academy required collaboration

with Japanese students in Japan on projects.

In addition, he has been to Japan multiple times and completed a 160-hour internship at Nichidai Mishima University and Nichidai Mishima Junior High School, teaching English and presenting on the cultural differences between the U.S. and Japan.

Besides his strength in Japanese language and culture, Pellei is a part-time IT tech support assistant for a school, and he owns a company with a crew of four doing landscapes, handyman projects and IT support.

He is committed to his community through a number of service and volunteer activities, such as assisting in Special Olympics competitions, participating in summer work camps to construct, paint and landscape for people in financial hardship, working at the polls on election days and tutoring students who struggle in math, science and English.

He has found great satisfaction and joy in community service. In school Pellei has participated in cross-country and distance track events, as well as service projects and fundraisers for charities.

Pellei stated, "Every community is only as vibrant as the members who make it up; and only as sustainable as those members who are willing to commit the energy required to make it thrive." He believes that community service is one way to decrease discrimination and hateful rhetoric.

Pellei's goal is to better integrate technology into classrooms. In working part-time as an IT specialist in a school, he recognizes the many challenges teachers and students have with software platforms and interfaces that do not work in some rooms, as well as malfunctioning hardware.

He also plans to embed service to others into his life because "it is more important than ever that we commit ourselves to living lives of service to others in need, self-donation and support of those who tend to be marginalized."



Proudly Congratulates



Dante Pellei

**For receiving the Alice Yuriko Endo
Memorial Scholarship**

GRADUATE WINNERS

SARAH BAKER
JACL Chapter: Seattle
Recipient of the Henry and Chiyo Kuwahara Memorial Scholarship
Seattle University



Notables
 Sarah Baker, a longtime JACL leader with experience as Seattle chapter president, National Youth/Student Council PNW representative and as National VP for Public Affairs, is currently pursuing a master's in public administration at Seattle University. She is deeply involved in her community, including creating spaces for LGBTQIA+ individuals and allies and organizing mutual aid in response to the Covid-19 pandemic.

Personal Statement
 Sarah Baker wrote about her experience fighting anti-Asian hate by creating a social media page to support Seattle's Asian community in the Chinatown International District, where she created a Facebook page that "fundraised over \$16,000 to buy meals from Asian restaurants, which we then donated back to front-line health-care workers."

Reflecting back on the pandemic, she concluded, "Every day that I wake up and continue to engage and refuse to give in to bigotry and injustice is an act of resilience. What I am doing to support my fellow Asian Americans is enough because I am enough. We are surviving this together, and when we come out on the other side, we will be stronger because of what we have built together — community."

CONNIE HO
National Associate
Recipient of the Minoru Yasui Memorial Scholarship



California State University, Long Beach
Notables
 Connie Ho is pursuing a master's in public administration at California State University, Long Beach. She is a longtime contributor to the *Pacific Citizen* on wide-ranging topics from Japanese American military participation in WWII to the history of the Koda family farm. She has headed her call for public service by working for the City of Napa and Irvine Ranch Water District. In addition, she is striving in her graduate education to learn more skills that she can apply toward public service, including human resources management and government budgeting and financing. Ho wrote about her calling and how it has been shaped by the Covid-19 pandemic.

Personal Statement
 "Public service has always been a part of my life. When I first graduated college, I hit the ground running as a journalist, covering city council meetings and interviewing community members. I then transitioned to become a government communicator and a graduate student of public administration.

"Over the years, but especially in 2020 and 2021, I have made it my personal goal to connect and outreach to the Asian American community through local government initiatives, as communities can thrive and survive based on collaboration and mutual understanding."

JESS JUANICH
JACL Chapter: Seattle
Recipient of the Kenji Kajiwara Memorial Scholarship
University of Washington



Notables
 Jess Juanich is a past National Youth/Student Council Chair, PNW Youth Representative and current Seattle JACL board member who is currently pursuing a master's in public administration at the University of Washington. Juanich also was Student Government president at Seattle University. He wrote about the challenge of "accessibility within the realms of health care, government and housing" for Asian American communities.

Personal Statement
 "Anti-Asian hate not only exists overtly with the blatant attacks on the Asian American community but

through structural racism that hinders our community's way of life. The areas of health care, government and housing play a big impact on the well-being and livelihoods of the Asian American community and need to be addressed to fight against the instances of covert racism from these vulnerable systems.

"Accessibility comes in the form of language and translation services, physical accommodations and representation for community members, especially elders, to feel included within the larger dialogue. Accessibility to health care is important in that as the Asian American community becomes older, there needs to be more assistance in programs that provide access to the best and affordable treatment.

"Accessibility in government plays a vital role in maintaining civic engagement. While Asian American youth have a growing presence among actions such as voting and advocacy, adults and elders find it difficult to engage due to the lack of knowledge and inaccessibility to voting materials due to language, time, location and other factors that may present various challenges.

"The government, at all levels, should be representative of the people and provide for services within the Asian American community to feel valued and heard."

JUSTIN KAWAGUCHI
JACL Chapter: Ventura County
Recipient of the Henry and Chiyo Kuwahara Memorial Scholarship
University of Southern California



Notables
 Justin Kawaguchi is currently pursuing a master's in health administration at the University of Southern California. He has long been involved with the JACL's National Youth/Student Council, rising from PSW Youth Representative to National Youth/Student Chair.

Kawaguchi is also deeply involved in his community at USC with his work at Society 53, USC Asian Pacific American Student Assembly, Nikkei Student Union and more. In response to the Covid-19 pandemic, he wrote about his work with the Little Tokyo Community Council and the NY/SC in the "new virtual environment."

Personal Statement
 "During my time as National Youth

Chair, I have supported the community by spearheading a series of strategic initiatives. Firstly, I developed the NY/SC's first rebranding in over five years. Understanding the need to adapt to current trends and establish a strong online identity, I managed a visual overhaul of our logo, brand guidelines and social media presence. With the support of the National Board, the NY/SC has since launched the new brand identity and enjoys consistent social media engagement.

"Secondly, I collaborated with the National Youth Representative to creatively meet the challenges of a virtual environment. Without the possibility of meeting in-person to vision-set and build an internal community, I introduced and managed the first-ever NY/SC virtual retreat. We realized that in a virtual environment, we would have access to individuals across the nation in ways we never have before and looked at virtual panels, social media campaigns and digital education opportunities.

"Lastly, I continue to rethink and innovate existing organizational practices to maximize our Youth Representatives' respective skill-sets and engage youth nationwide with civil rights and social justice action.

"During my term thus far, we have restructured the NY/SC to include committees focused on specific target areas: Social Media Outreach, Programming and Website Updates. As a result, each member is able to play to their strengths and build on each others' abilities. Our goal is to engage youth members and introduce more individuals to the important work the JACL conducts in relation to social justice and civil rights."

KELLIE LEE
JACL Chapter: Sacramento
Recipient of the Dr. Kiyoshi Sonoda Memorial Scholarship
UCLA School of Dentistry



Notables
 Kellie Lee is currently pursuing a degree in dentistry from the UCLA School of Dentistry. Her passion for dentistry stems from her interest in art and health care. Lee is also very involved in the larger Japanese American community, including the UCLA Kyodo Taiko group, UCLA Nikkei Student Union and with Sacramento Buddhist Church.

In addition, Lee has been involved in numerous activities with her dental

school, including UCLA Women in Dentistry, UCLA American Student Dental Assn., UCLA Associated Student Body and Oral Cancer Research. Lee wrote about the struggles of her community to be safe in the Covid-19 pandemic.

Personal Statement
 "I never would have imagined how heartbreaking it would be to read about all of these violent stories and hate crimes against Asian Americans — especially the ones that happen so close to me such as the vandalism at the Higashi Honganji Buddhist Temple and the destruction of the cherry blossom trees in San Francisco's Japantown.

"Growing up, I had always seen and been to these places, but I never imagined they would be a place of racism and hate. However, as a grad student living in L.A., I have learned to take advantage of the local opportunities to speak up and support my Asian American heritage, whether it be directly supporting the community or making my voice heard amongst others who share the same interests as me.

"Although I do not always have the physical time to give to my community, I am always willing to find ways to support and publicize current events that are happening."

MARIKO ROOKS
JACL Chapter: Venice West L.A.
Recipient of the Rev. H. John and Asako Yamashita Memorial Scholarship
Yale School of Public Health



Notables
 Mariko Rooks is pursuing a master's in public health from the Yale School of Public Health. She is also the EDC Youth Representation on the National Youth/Student Council. Outside of JACL, Rooks works as a researcher with Professor Carolyn Roberts studying the role of medicine in the slave trade and as Research Team Lead of the USA Water Polo Racial Equity and Reform Task Force.

In addition, Rooks has also been a counselor with Kizuna for numerous years and spoke at the Los Angeles Day of Remembrance in 2021. She wrote about her work fighting the marginalization of Asian American voices with the Changing Wxman Collective and Sustainable Little Tokyo.

Personal Statement
 "Asian and Asian Ameri-



» can experiences are systematically excluded from mainstream consciousness, a form of racism that minimizes our joy, anger, oppression and nuance — in short, our humanity.

“Historically, the archive is dominated by letters, documents and testimonies produced by white bodies, while contemporary Asian stories and experiences are similarly sidelined in popular media unless they conform to the ‘model minority’ myth.

“This marginalization often intersects with other aspects of my identity as a queer, Black, gender nonconforming person to even further obscure my experiences and the stories of folks like me. As a result, the act of telling our stories is transformative and revolutionary; you cannot dismantle what you can’t see.

“For the past several years, I’ve amplified Asian American voices, including my own, to challenge injustice on many different planes. As a lover of words, I’ve focused on using both writing and public speaking as platforms for sharing community stories and increasing representation.

“For example, I’ve interviewed Asian American femme writers, authors and artists for over a year as a board member of Changing Wxman Collective, and there is no greater joy than watching our 30,000+ Instagram following engage and support their work as a result.

“In the wake of Covid-19 last year, CWC also raised \$10,000 in mutual aid for affected community businesses and organizations; we additionally developed several well-circulated sets of anti-racism resources in response to both anti-Asian and anti-Black discrimination.”

KARISSA YAMAGUCHI

JACL Chapter: Seattle
Recipient of the Dr. Newton K. Wesley (Uyesugi) Memorial Scholarship
University of Washington School of Medicine



Notables

Karissa Yamaguchi first got involved with JACL after attending the Kakehashi Project in 2017. Since moving to Seattle, she has attended multiple events, including a Day of Remembrance Event, a Tsuru for Solidarity Protest and the virtual Manzanar Pilgrimage. Yamaguchi

also worked with her grandparents to submit testimony to support HR 40 and attended a Seattle JACL workshop.

She is also a three-time United States Archery Collegiate All-American and is involved in the Japanese Baptist Church. She wrote extensively about her call to service in medicine after choosing to not train full-time at the Olympic Training Center.

Personal Statement

“After watching the Beijing Olympics, my love of archery transformed into a full pursuit. I centered my life on mastering my technique and the mental fortitude to perform under pressure. Through competing internationally, I grew and experienced the world’s diversity but also recognized its disparity.

“I realized I was privileged to pursue my dream, yet through archery, I could not directly alleviate the suffering I saw. Through this dissonance, I found my passion for medicine.

“When my childhood friend did not wake up after a brain tumor resection, I again faced this tension. I could only tangentially help her and her family by praying and delivering food and hugs. I marveled at the doctors who healed her and restored the well-being of the whole family, and my focus pivoted sharply to medicine.

“By pursuing medicine, I knew my work would not just fulfill my potential, but also help others realize their full potential. This higher calling dwarfed my prior dream, and I rejected an offer to train full-time at the Olympic Training Center to explore this new passion.”

LAW

LAURALEI SINGSANK

JACL Chapter: Portland
Recipient of the National JACL Law Scholarship
University of Chicago-Law



Notables and Personal Statement

Lauralei Singsank grew up in Hawaii, where both her parents set the example of being involved in social service. This set her on a path toward serving others both while in college and as a goal for her career.

As an undergraduate at the

University of Oregon, she worked with faculty in the Physics Department on a program to make STEM fields exciting and relevant for high school students, especially girls.

She also served as president of the campus organization Ducks for Diabetes for four years. This group educates the campus community and beyond about the challenges those with diabetes face. She also worked with underserved students to increase college access. She said that “it was rewarding work, and my day was made each time I helped a student see college as a real option.” This led to Singsank becoming an Americorps member for a group called College Possible, which works to increase access to low-income, high-achieving high schoolers.

“Community is an imperative for me. I intend to contribute to my local community by joining a clinic that does pro bono work for people in need. This may take the form of working for a local Innocence Project or a housing rights clinic. My long-term goal is to become a human rights lawyer.”

TYLER TAKEMOTO

JACL Chapter: South Bay
Recipient of the Thomas T. Hayashi Memorial Law Scholarship
University of California Berkeley School of Law



Notables and Personal Statement

Tyler Takemoto is a fan of the *Pacific Citizen* and regularly shares content with family, friends and peers. He especially finds content on intersectionality and racial justice advocacy helpful in sparking conversations about immigrants’ rights. He has also shared *P.C.* articles with friends from other communities to increase their awareness about the JA wartime incarceration once he discovered that this was not a well-known event in U.S. history.

In his life and work, he draws heavily on the concept of intersectionality — the idea that multiple axes of our identities and cultural histories matter in forming our relationships with society.

He takes the conclusion a step further: “My existence at the crossroads of different communities has given me a unique opportunity to build bridges between different worlds and thus momentum toward a

collective world that is more affirming for everyone. To build this world, we must do the difficult work of understanding: challenging our own preconceptions about those around us and extending our empathy and solidarity beyond our own community. I have come to learn that this is my greatest strength, and I hope to hone and strengthen it to benefit not only my own communities, but our collective society.”

Takemoto found a job in the SoCal office of the ACLU, where he found himself working alongside people who came from innumerable different backgrounds, identities and life experiences, but who also moved in lockstep and supported one another professionally and emotionally. He saw himself reflected in role models around him, even those with vastly different backgrounds.

“My journey into this work is living proof that we can channel our histories and identities — even those aspects of ourselves that once made us feel alienated and resentful — into the passion and inspiration to build bridges and reach outward. . . . This shared experience — of building spaces and opportunities for solidarity — is what I want to give back through my work.”



Congratulations,
Tyler B. Takemoto
on receiving the 2021
Thomas T. Hayashi Law Scholarship

We wish you all the best for your continued success.

Love,
Mom, Dad, Grandma Margaret,
and the Takemoto Family

Congratulations
Sierra Yamanaka
Recipient of JACL National
Sho Sato Law Scholarship

Arizona Chapter



HAYLEY UNO

JACL Chapter: Diablo Valley
Recipient of the Grace Andow
Memorial Law Scholarship
University of California Berkeley
School of Law

Notables and Personal Statement

Hayley Uno’s interest in social justice began early. As a child, she learned of her grandfather’s incarceration at Topaz, “his only crime being his ancestry.” Later, as one of the few Asian kids in her school, she was treated as a “foreigner.”

These experiences led Uno to become interested in working for social justice and help empower other Asian Americans. She became a student adviser for the nonprofit Chinese American Public Affairs, which promotes civic engagement and voter participation among Asian communities in the Bay Area.

She was also able to intern in then-U.S. Sen. Kamala Harris’ San Francisco office. Her grandfather’s incarceration experience along with his being denied legal representation led to Uno’s interest in law and social justice. She has also become passionate about environmental justice. Ultimately, Uno wants to examine the intersection between environmental laws and social justice.

SIERRA YAMANAKA

JACL Chapter: Arizona
Recipient of the Sho Sato Memorial
Law Scholarship
University of Arizona



Notables and Personal Statement

Growing up in Arizona, Sierra Yamanaka was not exposed to much of the Japanese American side of her family. She said, “I’ve struggled to figure out where I fit in with the broader AAPI community. I’ve often felt like I have a sort of imposter syndrome, not being Asian enough to ‘really count.’”

“What I realize now is that identity is complex, and my own internalized sentiments need to be constantly evaluated. I believe that existence is resistance, and I am learning that I should never whitewash myself, but instead take pride in my Japanese heritage and explore how I can do that more fully. . . .

“We have seen the weight that the words and actions of the president of the U.S. carries, using their platform to either spread anti-Asian sentiment or try to stop it. It is a reminder that who the president is matters. I am proud to have worked so hard to get Joe Biden elected.

“I’m also immensely grateful for the opportunities provided, especially being able to work with the AAPI team. Spending time with AAPI organizers across the country really helped me see the beautiful diversity of the community and that I belonged there as much as anyone else did.

“I can see that my most powerful tool is my organizing — to continue to ensure that AAPI voices are heard in our government and at the ballot box. I am often the only Asian in a lot of spaces, and I must do my best to advocate for the needs of the community whenever I can. . . .

“In addition to pursuing a masters in human rights practice, I am also serving my Southern Arizona community in the office of Congresswoman Ann Kirkpatrick.”

STUDENT AID

NICOLLETTE ‘JOEY’
TANINO-SPRINGSTEEN

JACL Chapter: Mile High
Recipient of the Abe and Esther
Hagiwara Student Aid Scholarship
University of Denver



Notables

Nicollette “Joey” Tanino-Springsteen is graduate of the Colorado Virtual Academy in Lakewood, Colo., where she achieved an unweighted 4.0 GPA.

As an active member of the Mile High Chapter for more than five years, Tanino-Springsteen has volunteered for many functions, including Day of Remembrance ceremonies, Tsuru for Solidarity fold-ins and other youth and civil rights programs.

Mile High Chapter President Dylan Mori highly recommended Tanino-Springsteen for this scholarship and stated that she was instrumental in revving up the chapter’s newsletter as researcher, writer and editor. Tanino-Springsteen stated the JACL has provided her with an “extraordinary sense of involvement in my Japanese community and culture.”

She also has volunteered with other JA groups in the Denver and Brighton, Colo., area. A few years ago, she joined the Tri-State Denver Buddhist Temple Minyou Kai. Minyou is a form of recreational Japanese dance. They have performed for numerous community events prior to the Covid-19 restrictions.

This fall, Tanino-Springsteen will attend the University of Denver and major in environment science.

Personal Statement

“I deeply understand the horrific and dangerous consequences that can result from anti-Asian racism and scapegoating. My grandparents, my great-aunt and my great-uncle were interned in Poston, Ariz., in effect of order 9066 during World War II. They were displaced from their homes in California, stripped of their belongings and their livelihoods were stolen. The hardships they endured were brutal and resulted in tremendous generational trauma.

“With my understanding and my morals combined, I believe it is only right to use the power I have to try to prevent such atrocities from ever occurring again, to prevent such indignations from befalling individuals just because of their race, ethnicity, gender, ability status or religion. Fortunately, there are many ways that I have been able to support and protect my Asian American community and combat the toxicity that has been directed toward it.

“One way I have been able to support my community is by taking part in social media campaigns aimed at promoting awareness of the recent acts of violence that have been perpetrated toward Asian Americans.

“By using hashtags such as #hateisavirus, #wassthehate and #racismisavirus, I am able to help mobilize movements and expand networking. When used responsibly and with good intention, social media plays an important role in providing a platform for victims of anti-Asian hate crimes to share their stories and find support systems.

“As a researcher, editor and writer for the Mile High JACL newsletter, I have been able to make available a list of organizations that readers can report to if they have experienced or witnessed an anti-Asian hate crime.

“Some of these organizations include the Asian Pacific Development Center, the Asian Avenue and the Asian Pacific Policy & Planning Council. I believe presenting these resources is incredibly important

because sometimes people are either too afraid to reach out or they simply do not know where to reach out to.”

ALEXANDER WOLFSON

JACL Chapter: South Bay
Recipient of the Dr. George Goro
and Nettie Muramoto Student Aid
Scholarship
UCLA Anderson School of
Management



Notables and Personal Statement

Alexander Wolfson’s connection with JACL began with his participation in the summer 2016 Kakehashi program. He said, “The experience was formative and transformational. Prior to Kakehashi, I understood my identity as a Japanese American primarily through food, holidays and my grandparents. After the program, I realized that my identity as a Japanese American went far beyond that, informing my interests and deepest convictions.

“Recently, I have shown support for my community by leading a discussion of anti-Asian hate at my work (staff scientist at Orion Environmental). The discussion was attended by the majority of my company and was vibrant. It led to a broader discussion of the model minority myth, which was especially eye-opening for many in attendance.

“I plan to continue my support of the Asian American community in a variety of ways.

“There are local community events that I have participated in for many years that I now plan to take a leadership role in — for example, the Obon festival at the Gardena Buddhist Church.

“In my free time before the pandemic, I was an improv comedian at a theater in Los Angeles. I plan to become a leader in the improv comedy community in Los Angeles and amplify Asian American voices, who are severely underrepresented in performing arts.

“Finally, my career goal is to become a business leader in clean energy. I believe our response to climate change will fundamentally restructure the economy.

“As a leader in the clean energy movement, I hope to one day increase diversity in the business world and also financially support Asian American communities across the country.”

CREATIVE
ARTS

CAMDEN ARCHAMBEAU

JACL Chapter: New England
Recipient of the Aiko Susanna
Tashiro Hiratsuka Performing Arts
Scholarship
Harvard College and New England
Conservatory Dual Degree



Notables

Camden Archambeau’s main link to Japanese culture came through his maternal grandmother, who was born and raised in Yokohama, Japan, before becoming a U.S. citizen in the 1960s. She was thrilled to attend his Suzuki Music school cello concert at Carnegie Hall when he was 5.

Music for Youth (MfY) has served as the linchpin for Archambeau’s development as a cellist. He started performing on the cello at a MfY benefit concert in Westport when he was 8. He also volunteered with this group in the Bridgeport Public Schools from grade school through high school. Bridgeport schools serve primarily Black and Hispanic families. Working with MfY, he helped to secure new string instruments for the music program there. He has continued to serve as a MfY board member.

Archambeau is in a dual program, majoring in history at Harvard and cello at the New England Conservatory. He looks forward to putting these two areas to work exploring domestic and international opportunities in academics and music performance.

Personal Statement

After his grandmother’s passing, Archambeau lost touch with his Asian heritage. However, “with Asian hate and racism becoming daily news events, I am becoming more aware of my Asian heritage but unaware of the culture of my ancestry. I hope to learn more about my Japanese heritage and support the causes in some way in the future . . . perhaps through the performing arts, which is what caught my attention to the JACL Performing Arts Scholarship opportunity and my study of history in college.”





ERICA FARIA

JACL Chapter: Philadelphia

Recipient of the Henry and Chiyo Kuwahara Creative Arts Scholarship
Bard Milton Avery Graduate School of the Arts



Notables and Personal Statement

Erica Faria grew up in New York City and attended many JACL events there with her mother and brother. In 2012, just after graduating from college, she was honored to attend the Congressional Medal of Honor ceremony with her great-uncle, George Mukai. Also, “as a Queer woman, I have always appreciated JACL’s longstanding policy to protect the rights of the LGBTQI community.”

“I was raised to never turn a blind eye to injustice, and no matter where I have lived or what path I have pursued, I am deeply committed to my community. This is evidenced not only in my work as an Emergency Room nurse but also as an artist with a dedicated social practice.”

She is the founder and creator of a queer artist collective, Philadelphia Packaging Company, which recently received acclaim for its 2020 “Phonebook” archive project that highlights over 140 BIPOC, immigrant and women-owned local businesses. The multilingual print publication and digital video series serves as an archive project to document and share the stories of unsung heroes in the city.

“I hope to use my experience with community-based arts and her nursing skills to bring together health and creation in an innovative way. I remain committed to creating a more just, inclusive and generous world as I pursue a masters in fine arts with a focus in painting.” ■

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AN INSIDER’S VIEW OF JACL’S EDUCATION PROGRAM

National Education Committee Chair Carol Kawamoto and Education and Communications Coordinator Matthew Weisbly on the educational impact of sharing the Japanese American story.

By Phillip Ozaki,
JACL Program Director
— Membership and Fund
Development

In honor of the recently launched JACL Centennial Education Fund campaign, which celebrates 100 years of telling JACL’s story, the following interview offers an insider’s view of the JACL Education Program from National Education Committee Chair Carol Kawamoto and Matthew Weisbly, who was recently promoted on staff to Education and Communications Coordinator.

How did you get involved with JACL?

Carol Kawamoto: I attribute Nisei mentors who thought involving young Sansei, like my husband, David (past JACL National president), and me, was important. I am a product of the DC Leadership Program in its early years and became San Diego JACL’s first female chapter president. I chaired the NEC in the 1990s and, full circle, again now.

Matthew Weisbly: I got involved because of my parents and grandparents in Arizona. I was usually the only Asian kid except at JACL events. I was mentored by Ted Namba and eventually served as the first Ted Namba Fellow before becoming JACL’s Inouye

Fellow and now in this new role.

Please Give us a high-level summary of JACL’s Education Program.

Kawamoto: The JACL Education Program’s primary goal is to tell our story about the incarceration by reaching teachers, students and communities. The program was born in the 1990s, after redress, where we started with Teacher Training Workshops and found grants to launch this work.

I remember when we started in Matt’s state of Arizona — it was Greg Marutani, Joe Allman, Ted Namba and a few others. At that time, only a few teachers knew the story. We went to Arizona every year for 10 years until the chapter established its own program. Now, we’re proud of the progress we have made, but we have a long way to go.

Weisbly: Yes, our focus is to make the materials and story as accessible as possible, whether it’s with the workshops, curriculum guides or finding innovative ways to tell the story.

Kawamoto: We’re hoping that the “Our League of Dreams” film project with Lane Nishikawa and the clips from that will allow us to create and develop relevant pieces that would impact classrooms.

Why is this an important program? Who or what does it impact?

Weisbly: This program is important because it is so often hidden. I had not heard about the incarceration until high school. It’s also important because it gives us a framework to include Muslim American post-9/11 and other groups into modern lessons. We want to impact everyone we can to share this story so that it doesn’t happen again. Collaborating with teachers lets us reach class-



rooms of students for multiple years.

Kawamoto: In the 1990s, then-National Director Herb Yamanishi envisioned the need for someone from JACL’s NEC to get appointed to the Instruction Materials Advisory Panel in California.

He asked me to apply, and I was accepted. I reviewed textbooks that were coming out for state adoption approval for three cycles of seven years each. After each adoption cycle, we would see more information on our story.

When educational standards came out, there was a framework to get our story into them. In California, it was included in the 4th- 8th-, 11th- and 12th-grade standards. In grade school, we taught about the incarceration. Then, in high school, we taught about Constitutional injustice, as well as the 442nd RCT. Now when students open their textbooks, they can see and learn more of our story.

Share a story about one person impacted by JACL’s Education Program.

Kawamoto: I always think about Greg Marutani, who chaired the NEC before me until he passed in 2019. He was not an educator by profession, but he was so driven and deeply passionate about teaching about the Japanese American experience.

He always said yes to Teacher Training Workshops. Greg always said you have to look at the climate and time of people making decisions. Now as we continue his work, Greg is shining down and saying thank you!

Weisbly: It was back in 2015 in Arizona. During my senior year of high school, my history professor attended the workshop, and it was so personal to have my own teacher want to learn about and teach my classmates about my family history. Actually, this is one of the reasons I got involved in education at JACL.

What do you envision for the Education Program?



Kawamoto: The focus of the NEC Committee is to outreach to make sure that our history, our story, is heard and that people know it, that teachers are educated on this topic. It would be nice to see more of this in the textbooks where our story and that of other groups are in there. It’s improved. We want to make the curricula relevant for the future.

Weisbly: We’ve come a long way in educating others. We want to expand on what we have — Power of Words, Curriculum Guides, Teacher Training Workshops. We just finished our first ever virtual teacher training, and it went really well with teachers from everywhere.

Using new technologies and ideas is important so that people can easily digest it. People now like things in more bite-sized talks like TikTok or Instagram. I’m also excited for virtual reality exhibits like at [the Japanese American National Museum].

Finally, who are you looking to get involved and how?

Kawamoto: We’re looking for educators to share their expertise on an advisory committee role. The NEC is currently structured as having one representative from each district. The advisory committee would allow us to expand and gain knowledge while not being too huge a time commitment.

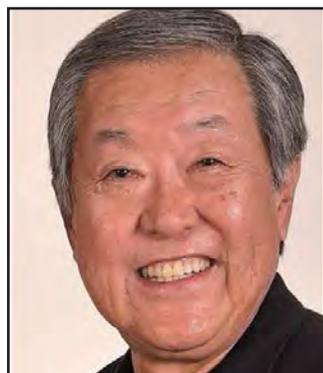
Weisbly: I would like to get more people involved, like members and those who want to help teach the history and teach these stories. Even without the committee, there’s going to be more ways to get people involved. We’re looking at making a Speaker’s Bureau so people can share their family stories with their communities in the near future.

For more information on JACL’s National Education Committee or to get involved, please contact ckawamoto@jacl.org, mweisbly@jacl.org or call the JACL National Office at (415) 921-5225.

In MEMORIAM



survived by many nieces, nephews, other relatives and friends; gc: 2.



Minami, Henry M., 79, Woodland Hills, CA, June 18; he is survived by his wife, Janet Minami; sister, Terri (John Lawton) Minami; he is also survived by many relatives.

Kumagai, Sharon Asako, 70, Torrance, CA, Aug. 24; longtime board member and chapter president of Venice-Culver JACL chapter and Venice-West Los Angeles JACL chapters; she was predeceased by her father, Minoru Kumagai; she is survived by her mother, Mae Kumagai; husband, Bill Yamane; son, Dr. Jon H. (Gail) Yamane; brother, Norman (Jung Schroeder) Kumagai; she is also



Nakagawa, Mako, 84, Seattle, WA, April 4; former president of the Seattle JACL chapter and advocate for the elimination of euphemistic language ("The Power of Words" initiative) for Japanese American incarceration; during WWII, she was incarcerated at the Minidoka WRA Center in ID; she is survived by her children, Daren, Bradly Kenji and DeeAn (Ryan Cukierman); sisters, Kazzie (Mits) Katayama, Nobie Takahashi and Midori (Don) Akagi; she is also survived by other relatives and friends.

CA, and the Topaz WRA Center, UT; she was predeceased by her husband, Don Nakashima, a 442nd vet; and siblings, Jean Urashima and Elbert Omachi; she is survived by her children, Steven Nakashima (Sophie de Caen), Carol Nakashima, Donna Wohlleb (Michael) and James Nakashima (Anna Harrison); sisters, Esther Milnes, Gertrude Hope Kawashima, Elaine Omachi, Patricia Tate and Katherine Cookson; gc: 6.

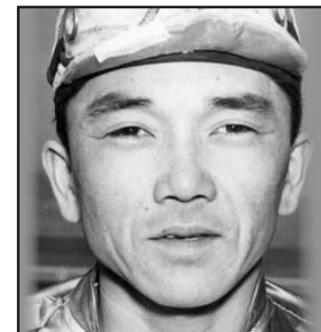


Nishino, Hiroko, 78, Agoura Hills, CA, July 9; she is survived by her husband, Kenneth; daughters, Ashley and Shelli; son-in-law, Jeffrey Fayle; gc: 3.

Nakashima, Joan Hiroko (Omachi), 91, Stockton, CA, May 24; during WWII, her family and she were forcibly moved to the Arboga Assembly Center, followed by incarceration at the Tule Lake Segregation Center,



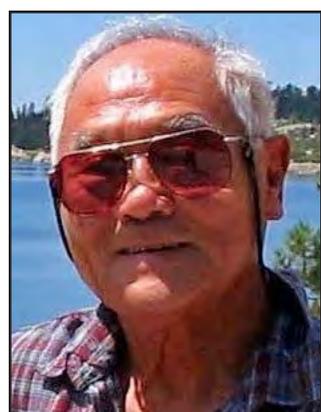
Tanaka, Tokio, 81, Sacramento, CA, Jan. 23; he was predeceased by his wife, Virginia "Ginger" Tanaka; he is survived by his children, Timothy, Christine and Catherine; siblings, Shirley, Emi, Tom, Bill and Ruby; gc: 2.



Taniguchi, George, 94, Palm Springs, CA, March 1; the first Japanese American jockey; he is survived by his son, Ryan; sisters, Mitzie Tanizawa, Chieko Whittemore and Sachi (Jun) Oyama; caregiver and niece, Donna Johnson; he is also survived by other nieces and nephews. ■

TRIBUTE

FRED HAYAO KAWASHIMA



1926-2021

Fred Kawashima passed away on Friday, Sept. 3, 2021. He had just turned 95 years old.

Fred was born to Hitoshi and Hatsune Kawashima in 1926 in Wallville, a small sawmill town in western Washington. When Fred was 5 years old, his father passed away and he and his older siblings, Frank and Aiko, were raised by their mother in Bay Center, Wash.

Shortly after he graduated high school at age 16, the government moved his family to the Tule Lake Relocation Center during WWII. He was allowed

to leave Tule Lake to begin studies at Washington State University a year later, then enlisted in the army at age 18. After the war ended, he returned to his studies at the University of Minnesota, where he completed his B.S. in electrical engineering.

In 1951, Fred married Yaeko Kosobayashi. They resided in Pasadena, Calif., until 1957 when he was hired by Lockheed Missiles and Space in Sunnyvale. They moved to Santa Clara where they raised their four children. They divorced in 1973.

Fred was a satellite systems engineer during his 31-year career at Lockheed, designing testing protocols for military satellites, including one of the first U.S. satellites to be launched into space. He was particularly proud of his work designing the final processes that allowed satellites to be tested and approved for launch.

Fred was an adventurer who loved sports and the great outdoors. He excelled in baseball and led an all-Nisei team to a city championship in the 1940s. He was an avid golfer and fisherman. He shared his passion for sports and nature with his children.

In the early 1980s, Fred met Sandra Diani, who managed the office of his dentist. In 1990, they were married and retired to Loma Rica where they transformed their 3-acre home into a park-like garden. Fred and Sandra were committed to the local community and served two terms on the Yuba County Grand Jury (1995-97). In retirement, in addition to fishing, golfing, and landscaping, Fred pursued many other interests including bonsai, ikebana, bridge and Lions Club. Fred and Sandra were great companions, spending much of their time discussing, debating, and laughing together until Sandra passed away in 2019.

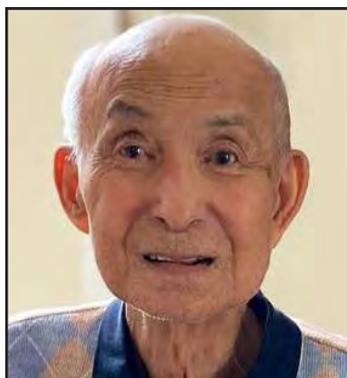
Fred will be dearly missed by his children, sons Eric (Carolyn Hill), Fred Jr. and Mitchell (Linda Capuano), and daughter Kyle; grandchildren Karryn and Mariko; nephews, nieces, and many dear friends, including Sherry Pleasant and Pat Noyes.

In an autobiographical account of his life written in 2012, Fred ended by saying: "My spirit will live on as long as memories of me live on." Fred touched the hearts of many and will indeed live on in our memories.

No services are planned at this time.

TRIBUTE

MARK ASADA



Mark Asada was born on Aug. 10, 1925, in Dinuba, Calif., and passed away on Tuesday, Aug. 17, 2021, in Cherry Hill, N.J., at the age of 96. He had been an active member of the Seabrook Buddhist Temple and the local Japanese American community since arriving in Upper Deerfield Township in 1945.

Mark graduated from Dinuba High School in May 1942, completing his school requirements after 3 years, sensing war might break out with the Empire of Japan. Then after

the bombing of Pearl Harbor, he and his family, along with 120,000 other Japanese Americans, were incarcerated during World War II per Executive Order 9066 to Poston, Ariz. (Camp III) from August 1942 to August 1945. His future wife, Itsuko Taniguchi was also incarcerated in Poston, AZ (Camp II).

Upon release from the incarceration camp in Poston, Mark and his mother and father resettled to Seabrook, N.J. He married Itsuko Taniguchi on Valentine's Day in 1953 and worked at Seabrook Farms for 20 years. He later transferred to the U.S. Postal Service and worked as a postal clerk in Vineland, N.J. He retired as a civil service employee after 25 years of service.

Mark was a lifelong member of the Seabrook Buddhist Temple, and was a tireless worker to help out in various Japanese social and cultural activities at the temple. He was also a member of the Seabrook JACL Chapter. His major passion in life was to "spoil" his two grandchildren whenever he could. Although he might have been separated from them physically, he was always able to maintain communications with them via the email. Up until the time of his passing, he would check his email account at least three times a day, if not more, to see how they were doing.

Mark is survived by his son, Michael Asada and his wife Kim Asada, and grandchildren Matthew and Mikki. Memorial services were held at the Padgett Funeral Home, Upper Deerfield Twp. on Saturday Sept. 4, 2021 and a reception was held at Olivet United Methodist Church in Pittsgrove Twp. following the service.

The family requests that in lieu of any flowers, donations be made to the Seabrook Buddhist Temple Inc., 9 Northville Road, Bridgeton, NJ 08302. Written condolences can be sent to the family through the funeral home website at www.padgettfuneralhomes.com.

PLACE A TRIBUTE

'In Memoriam' is a free listing that appears on a limited, space-available basis.

Tributes honor your loved ones with text and photos and appear in a timely manner at the rate of \$20/ column inch.

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REIMAGINE EVERYTHING

MENTAL HEALTH RESOURCES FOR VETERANS

By Ron Mori

During these difficult times, I cannot help but think of all the veterans and military families that have sacrificed so much. We should all take pause and take care of our mental health and remember how important it is to reach out and check on one another. This is especially important if you know someone in the veteran community.

Researchers have noted that Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder is one of the most common mental health challenges that veterans face. In some cases, it can be even more debilitating than physical wounds. Vietnam veterans have the highest lifetime prevalence of PTSD, followed by soldiers who served in Operation Iraqi Freedom and the Gulf War, according to a report by the Department of Veterans Affairs.

“Data shows, yes, their military

experience and any traumatic experiences, life-threatening experiences, combat experiences and deployment — those are all major factors. But they don’t really tell the whole story about what culminates and accrues to their suffering and potential disability later on in their life,” explained Christine Moutier, chief medical officer of the American Foundation for Suicide Prevention.

Some of those additional factors include veterans’ stress related to transitions that come with reintegration to civilian life after serving.

Many veterans don’t know they are suffering from mental health issues due to a stereotype that mental illness exists only in extreme circumstances. In reality, it’s not uncommon.

Resources for Veterans

If you or someone you know in the veteran community is struggling with PTSD or other mental health challenges, there are a number of

free programs and resources that might be able to help.

AARP Caregiving Resource Guide: Older adults and their family caregivers can use this guide to find programs, services and agencies in their community that provide a variety of health, legal and financial assistance.

Department of Veterans Affairs: Veterans enrolled in VA health care can get mental health support and treatment options from the VA. The department has a support page with resources for a variety of conditions, including the National Center for PTSD. Learn how to enroll in VA health care at the National Center for PTSD. Learn how to enroll in VA health care at <https://www.aarp.org/home-family/voices/veterans/info-2020/enroll-va-health-care.html>.

Disabled American Veterans: Connect with your local DAV benefits expert to learn about earned benefits or find the mental health services needed to diagnose and treat PTSD.

Home Base Veteran and Family Care: The organization’s two-week Intensive Clinical Program treats veterans with PTSD, Traumatic Brain Injury (TBI), sexual trauma, depression and anxiety. Although it is based in Boston, it uses a holistic approach and serves veterans and their families from across the country.

Lone Survivor Foundation: Veterans who live with PTSD, TBI or chronic pain can participate in a variety of therapeutic and outdoor opportunities focused on the recovery and health of service members and their families.

PTSD Foundation of America: Combat veterans and their families who have PTSD are offered peer-to-peer mentoring at local groups and chapters throughout the country.

True REST Float Spa: Veterans are offered one free hour of flotation therapy. The practice has been proven to alleviate anxiety, depression and chronic pain. There are locations in 14 states.

VA Mental Health Apps: The VA provides a variety of mobile apps that can help veterans with challenges such as PTSD and insomnia, as well as anger management.

Veterans Crisis Line: Veterans in crisis or those who are concerned about one can connect with a trained responder via phone (800-273-8255), text message or online chat. Responders are also able to connect veterans with their local suicide prevention coordinator to schedule future care.

Warrior Care Network: The Wounded Warrior Project partners with four academic medical centers to provide mental health services for post-Sept. 11 veterans. Participating veterans receive a year’s worth of

care during a two- to three-week outpatient program. Those who have participated report significant improvement in PTSD and depression symptoms.

For more free veteran, military and family resources, visit www.aarp.org/home-family/voices/veterans.

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

SYMPTOMS OF PTSD

PTSD symptoms can start soon after a traumatic event but in some cases it may not appear until months or years later. Symptoms may also come and go through the years. There are four types of PTSD symptoms, but they may not appear the same to everyone.

Reliving the traumatic event through nightmares, flashbacks, noises or smells that trigger memories of the event.

Avoiding things that remind you of the event such as crowds because they feel dangerous or driving because you were in a car accident.

Having more negative thoughts and feelings than before the event in ways that make you feel numb, forget parts of the traumatic event, becoming unable to talk about them, thinking the world is dangerous, and feelings of guilt or shame.

Feeling on edge or on alert to an extreme degree that leads to difficulty sleeping and concentrating, substance abuse, aggressive behavior, or bad reactions to loud noises or surprises.

Source: Department of Veterans Affairs

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