JACL WELCOMES NEW NORMAN Y. MINETA FELLOW

Former national staffer Bridget Keaveney transitions to new role within the organization.

By JA CL National

JACL is pleased to announce the transition of Bridget Keaveney from membership coordinator to the new Norman Y. Mineta Fellow. Keaveney will move from the organization’s San Francisco headquarters office to its Washington, D.C., office in February 2022.

Keaveney has served as the JACL membership coordinator for the past nine months. Before arriving at JACL, she worked in archiving and democratizing Japanese American history from her time at the Japanese American Museum of Oregon. She graduated Summa Cum Laude from Portland State University in 2019. Her professional experience also includes a content creation background as a co-publisher and illustrator for the children’s book “Dreams of Little Miss Aeva,” as well as a social media background at a global disabilities advocacy group Traipsin’ Global on Wheels.

“I couldn’t be more excited to start this next chapter in my career!” said Keaveney of her new appointment. “The word ‘grateful’ certainly comes to mind; I couldn’t have made it this far without the loving support of my family and friends. I look forward to supporting my colleagues in Washington, D.C., and advocating at a national level.

“As someone who strives to be an effective change agent, I wish to uplift, empower and protect the civil rights of all those who are marginalized,” Keaveney continued. “It is of great importance to me that I do all that I can to best support and serve the AANHPI community, as the issues that face the community are deeply personal to me. I am proud to represent the JACL but even prouder to be Shin-Nisei!”

The Norman Y. Mineta Fellowship was established in 2007 in honor of the American politician who served as U.S. Secretary of Transportation and Secretary of Commerce and helped found the Congressional Asian Pacific American Caucus. For more information on the fellowship, please visit www.jacl.org/internships-and-fellowships.

JACL’s staff, volunteers and members are so thankful for Keaveney’s leadership in our membership program and delighted that she will stay at JACL.

JACL ANNOUNCES THE 2022 LEGACY FUND GRANTS PROGRAM

The JACL Legacy Fund Grants Awards Committee is pleased to announce that applications are now being accepted for 2022 Legacy Fund grants. LFG applications are now being accepted for projects and activities that support the mission of JACL and the National JACL Strategic Plan. Inquiries and application forms can be downloaded from the national JACL’s website (https://jacl.org/legacy-fund-grants/), and submissions for grants must be received by May 1.

The JACL Legacy Fund Program was created by the JACL National Council at the 1990 JACL National Convention in San Diego. Much of the original funds were donated by JACL members who gave portions of their redress awards to further the legacy of the JACL. Each year, a portion of the earnings from the Legacy Fund Endowment is earmarked for the program.

For questions or additional information, please contact the co-chairs, Roberta Barton (rbarton4106@comcast.net) or Toshi Abe (tabe@jacl.org). Completed applications are due by May 1. Grant award recipients will be announced at the JACL National Convention in Las Vegas in August.
LIFE, LOVE AND UNCLE MARTY

By Marsha Aizumi

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s I was writing my article for January’s Pacific Citizen about new beginnings, a devastating and heartbreaking ending happened to me. My brother, who I adore, unexpectedly collapsed and died on Jan. 10, 2022. His health had been declining, but he wanted to live, and I thought that he had more years to be with us... with me. I feel a grief that I have never felt before.

I have experienced the loss of my parents, relatives and friends, which has touched me deeply, but losing my brother, who I loved and who wanted to live so much, has taken me to a different level of grief.

In Brene Brown’s recently released book “Atlas of the Heart,” she talks about feelings that we experience. Sadness, despair and grief are in her chapter “Places We Go When We’re Hurting.” I am hurting, I am feeling great loss and I am mourning the emptiness that my brother’s death has left.

I don’t want people to feel bad for me. I don’t want people to try to cheer me up; that makes me sadder. I just want people to hold space for my grief. And what I have appreciated the most is how much sharing stories of how my brother touched their lives has helped me.

One person sent me an email sharing how my brother gave her a rock that said “strength.” They met at a PFLAG support group, and she was struggling with her family. Marty told her when she needed strength to hold this rock and know there are people rooting for her. Her life is better today, and she still has this rock. Marty, you gave her the gift of strength and knowing others care about her.

I know another family that calls my brother Uncle Marty. He used to go pick up fresh blue fin tuna from them when the husband would go fishing. Marty would drive over 30 miles to pick up the fish and would take that tuna to a widow from Japan. Marty, you have this way of making people feel so special.

I am suddenly reduced to sobbing.

Marsha Aizumi is an advocate for the LGBTQ+ community and author of the book “Two Spirits, One Heart: A Mother, Her Transgender Son and Their Journey to Love and Acceptance.”

LEGAL-EASE: AN ATTORNEY’S PERSPECTIVE

DOES YOUR POWER OF ATTORNEY NEED TO BE UPDATED?

By Judd Matsunaga, Esq.

One of the simplest, least expensive and smart estate planning documents is for an older adult to complete a general durable power of attorney (POA) document. A power of attorney is a written document where an individual authorizes one or more people to act on the individual’s behalf regarding property and financial matters.

Imagine being hospitalized and incapacitated after contracting Covid-19 or being in a coma after suffering a head injury in a car crash. Who will pay your bills and/or manage your financial affairs? A power of attorney allows your loved ones to take care of your finances without having to deal with court proceedings. A durable POA allows an “attorney-in-fact,” i.e., the agent of your choosing, to take action once you (i.e., the principal) becomes “incapacitated.” The best part is that you get to choose who will act for you. It could be a spouse, an adult child, or trusted friend.

If you do not have a POA and become too ill to manage your financial affairs, it may be necessary for a loved one to petition a court to appoint a conservator (or guardian, depending upon your state law) of your property.

If a court proceeding is needed, you may not have the ability to choose the person who will act for you. Even if you have a spouse and/or adult children, the court could appoint someone you don’t even know, i.e., a stranger, to control your assets. If that bothers you (and it should), it is much easier, much safer and much cheaper to have an agent in place through a POA.

Do not assume that being married means you do not need a POA. If you become incapacitated and are no longer competent because of a stroke or an accident, your spouse cannot access bank accounts in your name alone, sign contracts and other legal documents on your behalf without a POA.

Powers of attorney are common for seniors but should be considered for all adults over 18. Parents with children over 18 may not realize that they can no longer act on their child’s behalf if they are no longer competent because of a stroke or an accident.

Although your POA might be valid under your state law, many banks are taking the position that federal law, i.e., the USA Patriot Act passed after Sept. 11, 2001, takes precedence over state law, i.e., it is pre-empted.

For banks, investors, financial advisors, intermediaries, broker/dealers, commodity merchants and the like, the practical result of the Patriot Act’s Title II can be interpreted to translate to unprecedented levels of due diligence on any corresponding accounts that exist in money-laundering jurisdictions throughout the world. For this reason, many banks are taking a “better-safe-than-sorry” approach to gathering as much information as possible.

My understanding is that at least one national bank, pursuant to the Patriot Act and other federal legislation and regulations, takes the position that it has discretion (and perhaps the duty) to verify the identity of the person from whom it is being asked to do business, as part of the federal program to deter money laundering, that its action or inaction on a POA is an exercise of that discretion or fulfillment of that duty.

Financial and other institutions often impose their own requirements with respect to their willingness to recognize and act on a durable power of attorney. To be safe, take your POA to the bank, brokerage firm or other financial institution with which your agent under the POA is more likely to have dealings. Ask them to review it and make sure it would be honored. The institution may require that any durable power of attorney be executed on its own.

In conclusion, why not make it your 2022 New Year’s resolution — execute (or re-execute) a valid POA. After all, nobody wants to be subject to a public proceeding called a Guardianship or Conservatorship.

So, executing your POA to avoid the high cost and delay of a court proceeding is extremely important. For your peace of mind, along with a financial and health care POA, you need to be part of everyone’s 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.
LET’S KEEP THE MOMENTUM GOING

By Jeffrey Moy, JACL National President

Happy New Year! After a challenging 2021, it feels like 2022 arrived rather abruptly, but I’m excited about the opportunities ahead. It’s incredible how quickly the last few years have gone by, and as I enter the last several months of my term, I’m hopeful that we can keep up the positive momentum we’ve generated despite what a challenging time it’s been.

Last year saw continued adaptation and success. Virtual programming continued, and as we approached the end of the year, we even saw some in-person events taking place at the national, district, and chapter level. While the Omicron variant has presented challenges as we start 2022, I’m hopeful that this year will see a return to more in-person activities, which I know all of us are looking forward to. Rest assured that we will continue to consider the health of our members first and are continuing to learn public health best practices as we plan for any national programming, particularly around convention this August in Las Vegas.

Despite these challenges, I wanted to share some of the exciting growth for our organization internally that you may not have learned about or may not have been highlighted through our external communications and programming.

First, the Centennial Education Fund was launched to a great reception, and we are excited to announce that we have already met the $1 million mark. A big thanks to all of you who have contributed to this effort, which is critical to strengthening our efforts to build our organization and the country as a whole.

Second, the JACL’s Edward Aoki Leadership Scholarship Fund was launched to a great reception, and we are excited to announce that we have already met this goal in three years, so let’s keep the momentum going and ensure our organization has the resources we need to continue to be a leader in this area.

The third, thanks to careful budgeting and revenue growth, 2021 saw us increase salaries for all staff, something that was long overdue, well-deserved, and keeps us more competitive with other nonprofit organizations. We also added new staff positions in development and education roles, which have resulted in immediate positive results, strengthening our partnerships with community partners and funders. Moreover, we expect to continue to build up our staff capacity in operations and programs, additions that will undoubtedly have positive impacts on our organization as a whole.

When I ran for president, I promised to lead a board that would do things differently, one that understood the urgency of the moment for our organization and the country as a whole. A board that understood that in order for JACL to continue to be an organizing force in the future, we needed to become a more flexible and stronger organization now. A board that was not afraid to acknowledge the challenges a 93-year-old organization faces, while continuing to honor our in-fallible legacy as well.

I believed that if we really seized this moment, JACL would head into our 100th anniversary healthier than ever, and thanks to the tireless efforts of our staff, board, and all of you, that is exactly the trajectory we’re on.

I’m so thankful for the continued work of this community in finding new ways to move us forward. The unprecedented challenges we’ve faced the last couple of years have required all of us to get out of our comfort zones, and we have all responded, knowing that it was critical to staying connected and supporting each other however we can.

As we approach the elections for a new board, I look forward to hearing from candidates about how they hope to shape JACL. If you are interested in stepping up, I encourage you to reach out to board members and learn more about their roles. Thanks again for everything you do for JACL and best of luck in the new year!

FOR A GREATER AMERICA

By David Inoue, JACL Executive Director

We continue to look toward the future and the possibilities for what we can accomplish as an organization and a nation. The Japanese American creed is often derided for its outdated way of thinking, that it is overly deferential to our nation, despite the obvious injustices it had inflicted upon our community. As recently as the 2019 National Convention, there were once again efforts to remove the creed from our organization’s constitution and bylaws.

I think we can all agree that there are elements of the creed that are anachronistic when read in the context of what we understand today as history and the current situation in our country. Today, we recognize that opportunity does not exist equally for everyone, that not everyone has had equal, or even any, opportunity to build a home, earn a fair livelihood and the other freedoms enlisted in the creed and considered fundamental to our American citizenship.

The America that exists today looks very different from the one where Mike Masaoka wrote the creed. Our country has continued to evolve, and the context in which we recite and apply the creed must also evolve.

The creed is a vital part of our history as Japanese Americans. It was an attempt to demonstrate our community’s enduring loyalty to our nation’s ideals, even nearly a year later after it was written, when we did not have full access to our rights as citizens.

This column may sound more like a sermon, and I am going to reinforce that with reference to my own personal faith as a Presbyterian. In the Presbyterian church, we are governed by three primary documents: the Bible, Book of Confessions, and the Book of Order.

As a Christian faith, the Bible is obvious. The Book of Order serves as our Bylaws, instructing us on how to operate the church and act as an organization. The Book of Confessions is a collection of historical statements of the church on what Christian faith ought to look like.

This is something that has changed over time, but we recognize truth existed within the historical context of the earliest statements from 1700 years ago, as we have changed our understanding of our faith and the church with two added confessions in the past century after new confessions since the 1600s. While the Bible remains constant in its writing, our Confessions and the Book of Order possess a fluidity in how we interpret the Bible’s message to us.

Which brings us back to the Japanese American creed — how can it speak to us in this modern day? I have gone to the closing phrase of the creed multiple times in speeches, and this column here in the Pacific Citizen “in the hope that I might become a better American in a greater America.” As we look at all that faces our country, and what lies ahead for the coming year, I can think of no better way to frame what we as an organization and as individuals must do.

As the Japanese American Citizens Leagues have a special bond to our place as mostly citizens of this country to want to make it better for all who live here. Wanting a “greater” America acknowledges the imperfection and the need to be better. How can we go about that? Fundamental to our identity as citizens is the right to vote, and the efforts to abridge that right are out of control. One of the oddities of our Federal system of government is that voting laws can be different in every state and territory.

However, the federal government should and does have an interest in establishing minimum thresholds for rights for all citizens regardless of where they might happen to live. We need the Senate, and unless we can convince 10 Republican senators that voting is a fundamental American right in need of protection, we need two Democratic senators to recognize that voting rights should not be abridged, or we will be further from that Greater America to which we aspire.

The filibuster is not something enshrined in our nation’s constitution. It is a part of the Senate’s rules that it establishes as a body. The filibuster has become an impediment to the Senate actually accomplishing any work because there is no interest from the minority party in cooperating with the majority party when they think they can simply wait until the next election.

For some, a dysfunctional government is actually their objective. Unfortunately, the result is that we have a government that has no future, grants no liberties or opportunities and remains mired in reinforcing its institutions and ideals at the expense of its ideals.

There is much more that we seek to accomplish this year, but which we also need a functioning government to do so. We are on the cusp of passing the Japanese American Confinement Education Act, which would reauthorize the JACS program and establish a new source of funds to promote education program development on the Japanese American experience.

We continue to advocate for long-overdue reparations. Nearly 35 years after Japanese American redress passed, Japanese Latin Americans and African Americans remain uncompensated for the injustices our government has inflicted upon their communities. And we work to protect our history but ensure our future as we seek justice in the misguided location of the Lava Ridge wind farm at the front doorstep of the Minidoka National Historic Site.

There is a lot we will be working on in the coming year. As we work together, may we do it in the context of our vital role as Americans working for a greater America. We can work individually to do what we can to improve ourselves, our citizenry, but in doing so, will improve our nation and realize the progress that we make toward our ideals and away from the mistakes we have made in the past.

David Inoue is executive director of the JACL. He is based in the organization’s Washington, D.C., office.
The lingering effects of the pandemic proved to be an obstacle to our normal way of doing business. To the surprise of many, the financial markets continued to be positive, and as a result, increased our endowment balances. Staffing has also been a challenge, particularly to fill a finance director role. As Secretary/Treasurer, it is my duty to understand how these factors impact the organization and work with my fellow board members and staff to ensure we are prudently managing the organization’s finances during these challenging times. I am happy to report that as we close the books for 2021, strong revenue and expenses, which were in-line to budget, have led to a budget surplus. Despite a virtual convention, fundraising revenue from sponsors was healthy. Additionally, the Centennial Education Fund Campaign has been a large success, and we anticipate it will continue to be into the future. Membership revenue and annual giving and fundraising were also bright spots for revenue generation, exceeding our expectations as far as amount of dollars raised. When looking closer at expenses, the obvious items of meetings/conferences and board activity were also largely under our budgeted amounts for the year and helped offset some of the cost overages related to hiring a temporary business manager and other occupancy-related costs. The organization’s value is largely driven from its human capital, our staff, and is defined as a fixed expense for obvious reasons.

When summarizing 2021 from a financial perspective, the obvious items for obvious reasons.

**Key Growth Is Planned for JACL’s Program Activities and Initiatives**

_Welcome to the New Year’s issue of the Pacific Citizen, and I wish you and your family a happy, healthy and prosperous 2022._

It has been a tremendous honor and privilege for me to serve as the VP for Planning and Development since October 2021. I am grateful for the amazing work by the talented and dedicated staff, and I am grateful to all of the JACL members for your commitment and support of the organization!

In the following report, I would like to share with you our 2021 accomplishments in three major program areas and activities and initiatives that we have planned for each of them in 2022.

**Scholarship Program**

I am sure that you have read the recent announcement of the 2022 National Scholarship and Awards Program. The JACL annually offers approximately 30 scholarship awards for students who are incoming college freshmen, undergraduates and graduates, as well as those specializing in law and the creative/performing arts. There are also financial aid scholarships for those demonstrating a need for financial assistance.

As of the 2021 scholarship cycle, which was recently completed, the National JACL Scholarship Program is completely online, and the program information can be accessed on the JACL website (www.jacl.org) by clicking the “Youth” tab on the menu bar.

The PNW District has been in charge of the Freshman Scholarship Committee and will continue that role for one more year (2022) of reviewing and scoring the applications; meanwhile, the MDC District has successfully completed its three-year run of leading the Upperclassmen Scholarship Committee in 2021 and is passing that responsibility on to the IDC District in 2022. My sincere thanks to the Scholarship Program Committee Co-Chairs, Sharon Uyeda and Bill Tashima, members of the committee, everyone who served on the Freshman and Upperclassmen Committees, David Kawamoto for serving as the program mentor and Patty Wada and Program Manager Matt Weisbly for their excellent staff support.

**Legacy Fund Grants Program**

Under the leadership of Co-Chairs Roberta Barton (CCDC) and Toshi Abe (EDC), the Legacy Fund Grants Committee has been working hard to finalize 2022 application materials and the funding cap for each grant. In summary, the deadline for program application is May 1, 2022, and the maximum grant award is $6,000.

For the 2021 program year, Co-chairs Roberta and Toshi led the Legacy Fund Grants Committee in its selection of six grant recipients — Eden Township, Mile High, New Mexico, Portland, Seattle and Sonoma County chapters. The recipients and their respective projects were introduced at the 2021 National Convention.

I want to thank Roberta and Toshi for their leadership, members of the committee for their contributions and Patty Wada for her outstanding staff support.

**Education Fundraising Campaign**

As all of you have undoubtedly read and heard about the JACL Centennial Education Fund that we launched at the National Convention this past July, the thinking behind this education fundraising campaign is that we should absolutely leverage JACL’s unique position in telling the story about the tragedy of the Japanese American incarceration during World War II and share these important lessons widely, especially in today’s challenging environment.

We are extremely grateful that Sec. Norman Y. Mineta has agreed to chair the Honorary Committee for this three-year, $3 million campaign. And we are equally grateful to all of you for your generous donations.

With that, I am delighted to report that we have received approximately $700,000 in donations and pledges since the campaign launch in July, which is an excellent start. Of course, we still have a way to go to reach our goal of $3 million by 2024. However, with all of your support and commitment, I am confident that we will get there.

I want to thank Phillip Ozaki on the staff for his leadership, hard work and marketing savvy to get this campaign off the ground, as well as everyone else on the staff for their contributions to make this campaign a reality. This has been a true team effort, and I am extremely proud to be a part of this team.

In closing, I thank all of you for your continued dedication and commitment to the JACL, since it is members like you who provide the solid foundation for this organization to accomplish JACL’s mission of advancing the civil rights of Japanese Americans and all those who are victimized by injustice and bigotry.

Once again, please accept my gratitude for this opportunity to serve the JACL and my best wishes for the New Year!

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**THE THING THAT MAKES THE JACL GREAT IS THE PEOPLE**

_By Sarah Baker, VP for Public Affairs_

I can hardly believe it’s 2022! As we collectively continue to experience the traumas of 2020, and by extension 2021, I hope that everyone is taking some much-needed time for themselves — whatever that may look like for you! Despite things “returning to normal,” I think we can all agree that the world we are existing in today is drastically different than we had ever thought it would be. As for me? Well . . . I’m trying to take things more slowly. Reading more, checking my sense of urgency, saying “no” to things. All easier said than done, but it’s been nice being intentional about taking space not only where I need to, but also where I want to.

Regarding my work with the JACL, it’s pretty wild to me that this year I am closing out my second term as VP for Public Affairs. Where has the time gone?! I am, as ever, eternally grateful for the continued hard work of our staff, board and members. Even though we haven’t been able to do as much in-person programming, I am so impressed by everyone’s resiliency. And can we stop and take a moment to acknowledge how exhausting it is being resilient? It feels like we are constantly pushing against the tide. But the work doesn’t seem as overwhelming with all of us by my side. From the bottom of my heart, thank you for all that you do.

Looking ahead to the remainder of my term, I’m hoping to be able to devote more of my time to the JACL in the upcoming months. I’ll be graduating from my MPA program in mid-March (woo-hoo!!) and I am really looking forward to tackling some of the projects I have been wanting to address.
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I reflect on JACL during this Covid-19 pandemic, and I am grateful for the JACL community. Personally, being a member of JACL has been one of the pillars that has helped me to get through the day-to-day of this pandemic and make sense of what we are experiencing. Even though the three-hour time zone between the East Coast and the West Coast can be tough at times we are experiencing.

I am lucky to have the opportunity and ability to be a part of JACL with you where you can learn and share with you. Whether it’s learning something new about JACL and our organizational history through Floyd Mori, Ken Inouye, Dale Ikeda and Chip Larouche to discussing how to continue to move our organization forward with the National Staff and Board to observing the energy and passion of the National Youth/Student Council, I am always in awe of how I get to work with you all. Although 2021 seemed to be a repeat of 2020, and despite the continued uncertainty, JACL continued to adapt the operations of our organization and chapters and remained steadfast to our mission and community.

Although the way we work together is different than before, we met the challenge by putting our programs, meetings and National Convention online; making improvements to strengthen our direct mail campaigns; utilizing innovations offered through our Salsalabs database to keep our membership data up to date; and staying informed through our chapter newsletters and the Pacific Citizen. These accomplishments were made through a learning experience for all of us and helped recommit ourselves to JACL’s value and purpose.

The common thread that weaved through our accomplishments is how we utilized communications to stay connected, innovate and adapt.

As we move forward with our lessons learned and look to 2022, the membership program envisions to continue the strides made with communications by offering resources to use the various communication tools and platforms available; telling the stories of our members, leaders and chapters; continue to elevate the JACL mission to meet the future.

It’s critical to use this year to prepare and develop ideas and resources in order to meet our priorities, put ideas into action and respond more effectively to the needs of our chapters, communities and country. In order to remain steadfast and drive JACL’s mission forward, we need the support of all members. If you are interested in getting more involved in your chapter, across chapters or our national programs and efforts, do not hesitate to reach out to your chapter leaders, or you may reach out to me at smori@jacl.org. Also, if you are involved in overseeing membership in your chapter, please make sure to join the monthly National Membership Committee meetings on the second Monday of each month at 6 p.m. PT/9 p.m. ET on Zoom/conference call.

Also, last but not least, I welcome all of our new members to JACL. We had a record number of new members this year. This is a significant achievement during this time but signals the importance of JACL, our members and our work. I look forward to connecting with our new members, and please stay tuned for a special online meeting for new members. I thank the members of the National Membership Committee for suggesting additional resources and ways for our new members to get to know JACL and meet each other.

To reiterate the beginning of my message, I thank you all for your membership. Everyone is a supporter. I wish you all continued health and wellness, and I hope to see you soon and perhaps meet with you in-person at National Convention 2022.

By Saki Mori,
JACL National VP of 1000 Club, Membership and Services

By Philipp Ozaki,
JACL National Program Director — Membership and Fund Development

Since working at JACL, I’ve heard our organization discuss our membership program’s challenges without also highlighting its rich accomplishments. I wanted to take a moment to reframe our membership program and thank each and every one of you for being a critical part of it.

Yes, it’s true that JACL membership declines year on year, but it’s also true that membership revenue has grown for the last three years. Unfortunately, our 2021 membership growth rate was -1.5 percent because of our aging membership. However, we raised well over $550,000 in membership last year, far exceeding our goal.

We accomplished this because of members like you! Rather than focus on declining membership, let’s start by saying that we have some of the most loyal members in the country. The average nonprofit has a renewal rate of 45 percent. JACL members renew at 81 percent!

Our members also go above and beyond to increase their giving to JACL. For example, we started 2021 with 27 Millennium Club members and ended with 42. We have a surge of premium and life members. We also had 719 new members join—that’s a new record! This is because our movement for justice is strong. It’s also because our online presence grows, and premium members can now pay through automatic monthly credit card payment rather than the lump sum.

We thank Bridget Keaveney for her leadership as the Membership Coordinator. As a Shin-Nikkei artist and activist, she brought new life to our program through the Otoshidama Gift Membership campaign. Channeling her knowledge of the Japanese New Year’s tradition of Otoshidama, she launched a new campaign where over 90 new members joined.

Bridget also gave our members a chance to share their JACL stories. I remember the first one that came in, Ryan Sudo from the Twin Cities, who participated in September’s in-person JACL/OCAR Leadership Summit and is inspired to continue his grandparents’ legacy by leading his chapter.

We heard from members like Dr. John Fuji, who gifted his children life memberships. He said, “Membership support of JACL thus helps assure my children’s civil rights will be protected today and in the future. . . With the recent rise in Asian hate crime, the need is just as apparent now as in the past.”

If you would still like to share your story or gift a membership, write or call us at mbr@jacl.org, 415) 921-JACL (5225) or mail a letter and photo to our headquarters (JACL Membership Department, 1765 Sutter St., San Francisco, CA 94115). We congratulate Bridget, who will transition to our Norman Y. Mineta Fellow. We are also excited to announce that we have hired Ashley (Ima) Bucher as our new membership manager. She will start in February.

Lastly, at our 2021 Convention in July, we launched the Centennial Education Fund. Your investments in the fund allowed us to hire a new education staff specialist, innovate the first-ever virtual teaching training workshop and plan more programs and hiring for this year.

There’s been a paradigm shift in our membership program because of loyal, engaged and caring members like you.

Thank you for your contributions to JACL! We look forward to continuing our mission with you in 2022 and beyond!

By Rob Buscher,
P.C. Editorial Board Chair

Greetings JACL members and Pacific Citizen subscribers, and I hope the new year finds you all safe and healthy.

To say that the last couple of years have been difficult would be a terrible understatement, yet knowing you have navigated the trials and tribulations of this pandemic as we all have, I will not belabor the point. Instead, I will point to the dignified manner in which our community continues to persevere through these troubled times, as ever we have before. Twenty-twenty was a year of tremendous change that began with the Jan. 6 Capitol Insurrection and March 16 Atlanta Spa Shootings. Anti-Asian violence continues to plague our communities, but we have also seen Pan Asian American organizing at a scale that is previously unheard of.

As Japanese Americans, we are no stranger to anti-Asian hate, and with the possible exception of Chinese Americans during the Chinese Exclusion Era, our community has faced more

MEMBERS ARE ESSENTIAL IN DRIVING JACL’S MISSION FORWARD

NEW YEAR’S ISSUE

PACIFIC CITIZEN

The Membership Program Paradigm Shift

‘JACL and the Pacific Citizen Can Be Our Guiding Light as We Continue to Educate This Nation’
This is the time to stand in solidarity with our other Asian American brothers and sisters, and while their issues may differ greatly from our own in many ways, we can help each other in the battle against hate. The recent hate crimes against Asian Americans continue to mount, it is Chinese, Korean, and Southeast Asian Americans who are facing the brunt of this hatred that is intense hatred than any other Asian ethnic group in our nation’s history.

Yet, as the Covid-related violence continues to mount, it is Chinese, Korean, and Southeast Asian Americans who are facing the brunt of these attacks. As I write this, the East Coast is reeling in the aftermath of the heinous murder of Michelle Alyssa Go, a Chinese American who was shoved in front of a New York subway train earlier this week. Although Ms. Go was not Japanese American, this attack could just as easily have occurred against a member of our own community. As we have seen so many times before, like in the killing of Vincent Chin, people looking to commit racially motivated acts of violence do not differentiate between our ethnicities.

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There is no question that the past few years were marked with health challenges due to Covid-19 and full of examples of political/social unrest. The year 2021 was no exception. For years, we have lived in a divided nation and in a society where our democratic values have been challenged. We hope and pray that this 2022 will be different from 2021’s year of the Ox, which was all about hard work and pragmatism.

Think about it: in 2021, the world had to plod through months of pandemic lockdowns and isolation. It wasn’t glamorous or fun, but we plodded on because we knew it was necessary. Because years are marked by change. Tigers are also quick to take action, so be prepared in 2022 for situations to change quickly through decisive action.

As we approach the new year, we reflect upon our members that have accompanied the JACL. I am so thankful for the many wonderful individuals who serve on the National Board, IDC Board and local chapters. They inspire me in so many ways and renew my dedication to JACL.

Our Organization is a Collective Effort!

By Michael Asano
EDC District Governor

The current rise in anti-Asian hate and violence gives this very important project even more relevance and priority. We hope the National Park Service’s Japanese American Confinement Sites Program will give the National JACL and this new film project, “Our League of Dreams,” their highest consideration and acceptance. The film will provide a unique view of the Japanese American wartime experience that will educate audiences, our youth and our future generations especially in light of the 80th anniversary of Executive Order 9066. JACL had to work hard to keep up with the many challenges that developed in 2021. As to the year 2022, with our collective commitment to social justice, we are determined to move forward tirelessly serving our shared humanity.

Once again, we thank all our dedicated members, corporate sponsors and partners from the bottom of our hearts. We especially thank our National Board members, staff and advisory members that selflessly serve to advance our mission. Our organization is a collective effort, and we count on everyone to achieve our goals.

In closing, I would like to extend my sincere wishes that this year will be a rewarding one for all of you. We wish all of our friends and supporters a pleasant new year full of happiness, peace and prosperity. We hope that peace and justice will become a reality to all in 2022. We look forward to continuing our work with you this upcoming year and beyond.

New Year’s Issue

By Justin Kawaguchi
NYSC Chair

Happy 2022! On behalf of the JACL National Youth/Student Council, we wish the readership of the Pacific Citizen health and happiness in the new year. As we enter into what seems to be another dark winter of lockdowns and pandemic experiences, it can be challenging to maintain hope and support for the future.

Yet, at the NY/SC we have been reflecting on the wonderful opportunities and memories forged in 2021 and are optimistic for what is to come. In the past year, we welcomed three new NY/SC members to our council: Kayla Ikemiya (CCDC), Joey Tanino Springsteen (IDC) and Bianca Burke (NCWNP). In October, we attended our first in-person retreat in nearly two years! The last time we all gathered was in February 2020 in San Francisco, in the period right before we realized that the world would change drastically over the course of the following two years. This time around, we met in the historical Little Tokyo neighborhood in Los Angeles. For several of our council, it was their first time visiting Los Angeles, ever! Thanks to the generous support of the Japanese American National Museum and the state of LA, our council engaged in a memorable weekend of community building, strategic planning and team bonding.

We also toured the Little Tokyo neighborhood with the Little Tokyo Historical Society, learned from inspirational guest speakers like Alan Nishio and Craig Ishii and hosted an in-person summit tour of JANM. In addition, we snapped tons of photos to remember the trip and got to enjoy each other’s company over delicious meals. We have full coverage of the trip on our Instagram at @jacusc. With the energy brought forth by our fall retreat, we are excited for what 2022 will hold, no matter the challenges thrown at our group.

We’ve learned of the incredible strength and resiliency of the JACL community and have practiced flexibility in building meaningful experiences virtually.

Our youth reps are feeling empowered to continue engaging youth members across the nation and
appreciate JACL chapter members’ support. We are always looking to connect with new youth who may be interested in the JACL’s mission and vision and urge members to reach out to district youth reps with potential new members.

On a personal note, I am both nervous and excited to enter into what will be my last calendar year on the NY/SC. Since joining the council in my freshman year in 2017, the JACL NY/SC has been a family to me throughout my undergraduate studies and even now as I complete my graduate degree program in the spring.

From serving as the Pacific Southwest District Youth Representative to now leading the council as National Youth Chair, it has been the honor of a lifetime to connect, learn and grow with the JACL community. The end of my term does not mean the end of my journey with the JACL, and I look forward to a lifetime of service with the organization (YPC, here I come?). Thank you to all those who were a part of my JACL journey and who believed in me along the way. I hope I made you proud! On behalf of the NY/SC, please follow along our journey on our Instagram and Facebook, and we wish you all a Happy 2022!

‘There Is Always a Way to Make a Difference in the World’
By Sheera Tamura, NYSC Youth Representative

As we conclude another year of youth programming, I am left with an immense feeling of gratitude. The acts of resilience and selflessness that were exhibited amongst all the youth representatives within the JACL’s National Youth/Student Council has been extremely humbling and exhilarating to be a part of.

From facilitating a nationwide series of Civic Dinners to collectively traveling to the historical area of Los Angeles’ Little Tokyo, I am deeply touched by the quality of care that each youth representative has shown for their individual communities.

I believe that it is a privilege to be able to represent the youth of this organization as we are responsible for sustaining the future generations of the JACL. The friendships and relationships that have kindled throughout the past year has reminded me of how blessed I am to have met such kind leaders in a not-so-kind world.

These individuals inspire me to seek the good in communities and cherish the precious encounters that have been created along the way. Although the pandemic has beaten us down relentlessly, I am reminded that there is always a way to make a difference in the world.

In this new year, it is my hope that we as a council can remain intentional about our work so that we can continue to serve our communities from a place of authenticity and humility. As the NY/SC’s National Youth Representative, I intend on creating a space for individual and collective periods of self-reflection so that each youth representative can reflect upon their purpose for serving their respective districts.

I also aspire to strengthen the relationships between each youth representative and their district board, so that members can rest assured in knowing that there are efforts being made to support the youth members within the JACL.

I believe that 2022 will be a year of transformation, and I am extremely eager for the sensational year we have ahead.

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TRIBUTE

JOSEPH SETO

Joseph Tobey Seto, Ph.D., passed away peacefully in his sleep Feb. 23, 2021, in Los Angeles. He was 96. Born in Tacoma, Wash., Joe’s microbiology and virology career spanned 55 years as professor at Cal State Univ. Los Angeles and researcher at the University of Giessen, Germany. He enjoyed his students, research, golf, fishing, travel and ice cream.

He is survived by his loving wife of 61 years, Grace Seto; daughter, Susan (Mark); grandchildren Emily and Alex; son, Steven Seto; and sister, Grace (Richard) Okita, of Honolulu; and many nieces, nephews and relatives.

In lieu of flowers, the family would like to honor Joe with donations to the Joseph T. Seto Microbiology Scholarship at campaign.calstatela.edu/give.

TRIBUTE

HARRY HARUMI HIGAKI

Harry Higaki, 101, of Hillsborough, Calif., passed away peacefully in his home Dec. 16, 2021, with his children by his side. Born in San Francisco on Aug. 29, 1920, Harry was the eldest son of the late Nobuo Higaki and Motoko Kubouchi, and he graduated from Sequoia High School in Redwood City (1938) and attended Heald Business College in San Francisco.

In 1942, following Executive Order 9066, Harry was forced to lease the family business and relocate his family to Idaho, where he was drafted to the Military Intelligence Service and sent to Fort Snelling, Minn., for language training. In 1947, he was honorably discharged as a U.S. Army sergeant after serving in the Counter Intelligence Corps in Kobe, Japan, where he met and married the love of his life, the late Sachiko Iwai Higaki, on Oct. 7, 1949. Harry and Sachiko were married for 67 years.

In the postwar years, Harry incorporated and expanded the family nursery into Bay City Flower Co., which distributed flowers nationwide. To the end, he remained grateful for the company’s long-time employees, customers and vendors. In 1994, he was named Flower Marketer of the Year by the Produce Marketing Association. He was also named Farmer of the Year (1990, 1998) by the San Mateo County Farm Bureau and Hall Moon Bay Coastside Chamber of Commerce.

In 2011, Harry received the Nisei Soldiers of World War II Congressional Gold Medal in belated recognition of his service to the United States. He was a man of steadfast faith and a founding member of Peninsula Free Methodist Church (now Peninsula Hope Church).

Harry was a devoted, loving father and a friend to many. He is survived by his children and their spouses, Harrison Higaki (Heidi), Sharon Okamoto (John) and Audrey Sakai (Perry), seven grandchildren and their spouses, and 10 great-grandchildren. Harry is also survived by his siblings, Naomi Higaki, Aiko Joo, and Emiko Hamai. Harry was predeceased by his beloved wife, Sachiko, his daughter Lois Toyo Higaki, his parents, and his brothers, Juichi and Shigeru.

Private services. Donations in honor of his memory may be made to Peninsula Hope Church, Redwood City or the Japanese American Citizens League.

TRIBUTE

OLIVER NISHIMURA

Oliver Nishimura (Hayward, Calif.) passed away in June 2021. He was born in 1922 in San Lorenzo, Calif., graduated from Hayward High School and attended business college. In 1942, he evacuated with his family to Idaho, then Colorado, and volunteered to serve in the U.S. Army in 1943. He was in Co. K of the 442nd RCT and was injured during the battle to rescue the Texas Lost Battalion. After the war, he married Michiko in 1947. He worked at the San Lorenzo Nursery Co. and retired as manager of their San Jose floral supply store. He was an active member of the San Lorenzo Japanese Christian Church since its inception in 1929 for which his grandparents, Kumaichiro and Masuno Shinoda donated the building and land.

He is survived by his wife, Michiko; daughters Valerie (Bruce Satow), Stephanie and Erin; in-laws Irene Nishimura, Nori Komorita, Yo Hazama, Taro and Mary Ishimoto, Susan and Morris Nakamura and other extended family. He was predeceased by his siblings, Luther, Samuel, Edith Sato and Roy.
OBITUARIES

TRIBUTES

EIJI EDWARD KUBOKAWA

Eiji or Ed Kubokawa, as most people knew him, passed away peacefully in Bellevue, Wash., on Dec. 21, 2021, at the age of 96. Eiji was born in San Francisco, attended Lowell High School, graduated from UC Berkeley, and worked for many years at Modern Foods and Kasho in San Francisco as a commodities buyer. At the end of his career, he set up the produce packing operation for Campbell Foods in Fresno, Calif. An Army veteran of World War II, he was incarcerated at the Topaz, Utah, concentration camp, before the Quakers helped him, and attended college in Ypsilanti, Mich., for two years. Ed served as co-president of his local JACL chapter, and Mth his wife, Ellen, attended the Seattle National Convention, to support their district governor, Mollie Fujijoka, candidate for JACL national president. Ed is survived by his blended family: Jo Anne, Joyce, Jon, Jay, Bruce and Dale.

Ron Mano

The world lost a wonderful person on Dec. 6, 2021. Ronald Makoto Mano passed away at St. Marks Hospital in Salt Lake City, surrounded by loving family members, after suffering a heart attack. He was 79. Ron was born on Aug. 28, 1942, at the Dee Hospital in Ogden, Utah, around five months after his family arrived in Utah. They had done the voluntary evacuation from Los Angeles after the start of World War II. Ron was a loving son, brother, husband, father, grandfather, uncle, friend and teacher. He married Cheryl Shimizu (daughter of Takashi Bill and Gene Shimizu) on March 22, 1969, in the Los Angeles Temple of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. Cheryl passed away on Feb. 10, 2021, after an almost four-year battle with pancreatic cancer. They are the parents of Tiffany Hilton (John), Patrice Mano, Tisha Woolf (Neil), Karisa Sepp (Chris), Rhett Mano (Amy), Darin Mano (Kevin) and Taryn Khong (Christon). They have 18 grandchildren.

Ron’s parents are Eisaku Mano and Michi Morio Mano. His siblings are Kenneth Mano (Caroly), Irene Mori (Floyd), Sharon Haraguchi (Wally) and Richard Mano (Linda). He served a mission to Japan for the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints and was a devoted member of the church throughout his lifetime. He graduated from Bountiful High School in Bountiful, Utah. He earned a bachelor’s degree and an MBA from the University of Utah. He received a Ph.D. from the University of Nebraska-Lincoln. He was a college professor at the University of Utah, Weber State University and Westminster College. Although Ron had technically retired from teaching, he continued teaching courses and mentoring students up to the day he suffered his heart attack.

Ron worked hard throughout his entire life. He worked on the family farm and had a paper route as a teenager. He worked at a produce market while in college. He served in the U.S. Army and was extremely patriotic. Ron is a long-time member of the JACL. He started convention treasurer for a National JACL Convention held in Salt Lake City. His brother is president of the Mount Olympus JACL Chapter.

The last social event Ron attended was the Mount Olympus JACL Chapter Christmas Party which was held in Salt Lake City on Saturday, Dec. 4, 2021. He seemed well and was able to visit with friends and family. That night he suffered a heart attack. He had emergency surgery, but he passed away less than two days after entering the hospital. Ron has been very supportive of his children and grandchildren. His son Darin recently won election to the Salt Lake City Council after having been appointed to the position earlier. Ron encouraged his children to learn about their heritage and took Darin as a teenager to Topaz. Darin was the architect for the Topaz Museum.

Ron Mano lived an exemplary life and will be greatly missed by all who knew him.

PLACE A TRIBUTE

In Memoriam ‘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 a rate of $20/column inch.

CONTACT:
Editorial@pacificcitizen.org or call (213) 620-1767 ext. 104

TRIBUTE

GEORGE IKEDA

George Kazuo Ikeda, 99, formerly of Emmaus, Pa., died Nov. 30, 2021 at Lehigh Valley Hospital. He was born in San Juan Bautista, Calif., the oldest of five sons born to farmer Genroku Ikeda and his wife, Tsuyuko. In 1942, George and his family were incarcerated in the Poston Internment Camp in Poston, Ariz.

In 1944 George moved to the Philadelphia area and began his career. He worked as a draftsman at York Corp. from 1945-57 and was committed to supporting his family and helping his younger brothers attend college. He went on to attend Rutgers University through academic scholarships from Union Carbide and Western Electric and graduated with a degree in mechanical engineering in 1958. Following graduation, he joined Air Products and Chemicals in Trexlertown, Pa., and worked there until his retirement in 1986.

George was dedicated to his family and the Lehigh Valley community. He was active with Junior Achievement, YMCA as a coach and board member, board member of the Emmaus Shelter House and Allentown Art Museum, member of the Japanese American Citizens League and an active member and past president (Allentown West Chapter) of Rotary International. In his free time, he enjoyed photography, gardening, cooking, international travel and spending time with his family. In later life, he took great pride watching his grandchildren play a variety of sports and enjoyed his Yuengling Lager with lunch and sharing a bottle of wine with his family.

George is survived by his children Carolyn (Ed Linhart) of Alexandria, Va., Bruce (Anne) of Berwyn, Pa., Dr. Jane (Dr. Steve Gohsler) of Mendenhall, N.J., and Doug (Tanya) of Allentown, Pa.; grandchildren Brian (Casey), Ken, Aiden, Kyle, Eric, Dan and Becky Gohsler; great-grandchildren Hana and Grant Gohsler; his youngest brother, Ken; and his favorite, granddog, Baxter.

After WWII, Lucille settled in Salt Lake City, Utah, where she met the love of her life, Kaoru (Bill) Honda, and they were married on April 17, 1954.

Lucille is survived by her three sons, David, Paul and Mark, and was predeceased by Bill, her husband of 57 years, and eldest son, Clifford. She is also survived by two daughters-in-law (Cynthia, Marie); five grandchildren (Natalie, Katelyn, David, William and Daniel); and two great-grandchildren (Otto, Theo); as well as many nieces, nephews and good friends.

Lucille was a long-time member of Bethany Congregational Church in Santa Barbara for over 60 years. She spent most of her working career as a paralegal working for the County of Santa Barbara’s Water Agency and county counsel.

Lucille lived a very healthy and active lifestyle, performing daily exercises and diet routines, even until the end. She was a dedicated and loving wife, mother and grandmother, and will be remembered for her love, kindness, gentleness and generosity.

A family service will be held in the near future. Donations in Lucille’s memory may be sent to Bethany Congregational Church, 556 N. Hope Ave., Santa Barbara, CA 93110.

LUCILLE HONDA

Lucille Yoshiie Honda (née Kawate), our beloved and devoted mother and grandmother, passed away Jan. 5, 2022, at age 96. She is now with our Lord Jesus Christ, living with him in paradise for eternity.

Lucille was born on Dec. 5, 1925, in Salt Lake City to Masachi i and Shinobu Kawate. She lived her early life in Emory, Utah, where her father was a section foreman for the Union Pacific Railroad, along with his other children Masa (Mary), Masao (Nelson) and Isami (Sam).

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AARP LAUNCHES DIGITAL PLATFORM TO HELP VETERANS AND MILITARY SPOUSES COMPETE IN TODAY’S JOB MARKET

The new platform offers free courses and resources to boost job search, overcome underemployment.

By Scott Tanaka

I am excited to continue our AARP column for the Pacific Citizen. It is an honor for me as a Yonsei who grew up in Los Angeles and now live in Maryland. My journey to AARP and interest in social work and gerontology was not a traditional path. Prior to joining AARP and getting my master’s degree in social work from USC, I was working in accounting and helping people with their taxes. It was quite the shift for me, but I couldn’t be happier. I was always close to my grandparents in Torrance, Calif., and this led me to want to pursue a career in geriatric social work and mental health. Following graduate school, I accepted a fellowship at AARP that led to my current role in AARP’s Policy, Research and International Affairs department. In my role, I serve as an adviser in the Office of the Chief Public Policy Officer.

A natural outcome is to be able to share AARP content, research findings and public policy positions on a variety of topic areas that impact people 50-plus. I am excited to continue the path that was established by Ron Mori, as he brought AARP research findings and helpful articles to help families over the years.

A great example of a helpful resource tool that was just launched is the AARP Veterans and Military Spouses Job Center, a new digital platform bringing together valuable information and resources to help veterans and military spouses compete in today’s job market.

The job center includes a new Veterans Career Advantage Course to build on career planning and skills development to help navigate the job market. According to an AARP survey, more than half (56 percent) of employers say experience and the use of skills in previous positions are “very important” when evaluating an applicant’s skills.

“When you’re a veteran or military spouse, it can be challenging to know how to get employers to understand how your job skills, experience and character transfer to a new position,” said Troy Broussard, senior advisor for AARP Veterans and Military Families Initiative and U.S. Army Desert Storm veteran. “This free, one-stop resource will help veterans and military spouses learn how to effectively leverage their military skills and experience to give them an edge in today’s competitive job market and avoid underemployment.”

The AARP Veterans and Military Spouses Job Center features a range of free resources to help the 8.3 million veterans in the U.S. workforce:

• New Veterans Career Advantage Course focuses on career planning and skills development.
• The AARP Job Board features a “Veterans Wanted” filter so transitioning and former service members can quickly find employers that value their military experience.
• New AARP Veterans and Military Spouses Job Search Toolkit — a comprehensive guide to find and secure employment.
• New AARP Video: “Tips for Veterans to Ace a Civilian Job Interview.”
• AARPWebinar: “Rethinking Work for Veterans, Military and Their Families” on hiring and career trends to help adapt to a quickly changing job market.

According to the most recent U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics jobs report, veteran unemployment fell to 3.2 percent in December 2021. While unemployment has decreased over the past year, underemployment continues to hold many veterans back.

Two-thirds of all veteran employees reported having a job unequal to the level of skills and qualifications that they had gained in the military, according to the 2018 Blue Star Families’ annual Military Family Lifestyle Survey.

Other resources include AARP Resume Advisor, AARP Skills Builder for Work, Be Your Own Boss and Small Business Resource Center, visit www.aarp.org/vetsjobcenter.

For more information and other free resources on how AARP supports veterans and military families on caregiving, fighting fraud through Operation Protect Veterans and connecting with earned service benefits, visit www.aarp.org/veterans.

Scott Tanaka is a member of the JACL Washington, D.C., chapter and policy, research and international affairs adviser at AARP.