The Spirit Consoling Structure is in the early design process. Preliminary renderings show projection technology and gold fracture line designs.

CONSOLING SPIRITS

The Irei Names Monument seeks to make visible what was once erased.

PAGE 2
Remembering Norman Y. Mineta

PAGE 5
JANM Honors 30 Under 30 for 2022
Tributes and condolences honoring the extraordinary lifetime of the Hon. Norman Y. Mineta, who died peacefully surrounded by family in Edgewater, Md., on May 3 due to a heart ailment according to John Flaherty, Mineta’s former chief of staff, continue across the country, honoring the man who broke racial barriers for Asian Americans and committed his life to public service.

Forcibly incarcerated as a young boy at Heart Mountain in Wyoming at the onset of World War II to eventually serving as the mayor of San Jose, Calif., early in his career to eventually serving as the Secretary of Transportation, Mineta continued. “. . . We were lucky to have him here today is very real. He loved you. And was proud of you. Just like the family we all are. . . . he cherished the work you did together. He exalted in your rise and promotions, and he sank with your lows and hardships. He was as proud of your achievements, personal, professional, you know, marriages, births, as any proud father or grandfather could be. All of it brought him sustenance. And it was beautiful. It was real and exceeded all that we could have hoped for in our lives. While we haven’t seen many of you for a while, please know that you remained in Norm’s heart. You embraced Norm. You embraced our family. And you loved the work you were doing. That probably reminded him of his start so many decades ago. That sense of community joining together for the common good, that joining together was what helped lift him up to help others.

“Our family is profoundly touched and proud by the outpouring of condolences, but really, it’s the stories that so many are sharing about your interactions with dad that have made such an impact on us,” Stuart Mineta continued. “. . . We were lucky enough to follow his example. And to hear that he made such an impression on so many people just reinforces what we knew about dad and how he lived his life. So, thank you for continuing his life’s work of advocacy and service for others.”

In remembering his father, David Mineta recalled, “In whatever way you knew dad, the feeling that brought you here today is very real. He loved you. And was proud of you. Just like the family we all are. . . . he cherished the work you did together. He exalted in your rise and promotions, and he sank with your lows and hardships. He was as proud of your achievements, personal, professional, you know, marriages, births, as any proud father or grandfather could be. All of it brought him sustenance. And it was beautiful. It was real and will always be even as he departs this world for the next. . . . Cry the necessary tears of mourning. Laugh out loud with the belly laugh that is required when remembering a funny moment. But know our community is fundamentally stronger for the love you gave him. And he gave us back. It is not hyperbole to say the imprint on the collective American experience is fundamentally different because of it. It is what we know is a basic truth and the very large extended family of Norman Y. Mineta. As dad would always say, thanks a million.”

>See MINETA on page 8
PUBLIC HEALTH IS NOT DETERMINED BY PUBLIC OPINION

By David Inoue, JACL Executive Director

While most of the news from the courts has been the leaked decision from the Supreme Court regarding the highly overturning of Roe v. Wade and Planned Parenthood v. Casey, the lower federal courts have weighed in on two other public health issues with decisions that will likely reach the Supreme Court as well.

On April 18, Florida District Judge Kathryn Kimball Mizelle issued a decision blocking the government’s ability to impose mask mandates, stating the CDC exceeded the authority vested by Title 42 of the Public Health Act and also violated the Administrative Procedures Act, which requires public comment of proposed regulations.

The history of masks throughout the pandemic has admittedly been confusing. Initially, the recommendation was that masks be reserved for healthcare workers and voluntary guidance that masks were unnecessary unless someone was symptomatic. Once we learned asymptomatic transmission was possible, guidance was quickly changed to recommend masks for everyone. This was not a failure of public health, but a changing of guidance based on changing information about a newly discovered disease.

At this time, Covid remains present within our community and continues to spread widely. It is not the time to lift a mask mandate that remains a key strategy to prevent the spread of Covid.

However, the lifting of the mandate was met with soon-to-be posted videos of airline passengers gleefully removing and throwing away their masks. Visiting a restaurant or any public space will force a subsequent visit to the probate court, which can take months or even years. The other major problem with probate is expensive.

The probate process could have unintended consequences. For example, if a will is not completed, which can take months or even years, the wills, trusts and powers of attorney that many parents have thought about how to properly fund your trust. So, even if you create a DIY online trust, i.e., state that “no legal advice is being given.”

Another huge problem is the possibility that you may want to tap the ability to impose mask mandates, is there really a threat? The courts have stepped in to assert that the health emergency is not justification to maintain mask mandates, yet are also sending the message that the public health emergency should only be used to justify mask mandates, not other public health policies.

Ultimately, it is not the place of the courts to substitute legal arguments that supersede the need to respond to an emergency situation. We have seen this logic used previously to give the government the latitude when questions of national security arise.

Ultimately, it must be the public health physicians, scientists and other experts who should be determining public health policy. While it is important to question if a threat exists, public health or otherwise, the courts must remain consistent in allowing the government to respond to threats to our country: foreign, domestic, and now more than ever, disease.

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

By Marsha Aizumi

The initial eight days beginning the month of May were a whirlwind; my first-in-person speaking engagement with Aiden in over two years, an Okaeri virtual workshop about well-being, a final farewell to my brother who passed away in January, a virtual support meeting for our Asian American Pacific Islander LGBTQ+ community and, of course, Mother’s Day. It seems like a lot, but these were all places I wanted to be, and so as busy as it seemed, it was a smooth and gentle flow from one event to another with moments of rest.

All of these events highlighted the themes for the month of May: Mother’s Day, Mental Health Awareness and Asian American Pacific Islander Heritage. I realize how I have been touched by the intersectionality of all of these themes, and I have grown from their influence.

Mental health, which continues to be a stigma for our AAPI community, has been a place where I have ventured into unfamiliar spaces. It wasn’t always fun, but having good mental health continues to inform how I feel about who I am and how I show up in the world.

My life today, though busy, is also filled with times of rest, walking, appreciating nature, flowers and candles. It is filled with watching BritBox detective programs, which I love, and getting to know Hercule Poirot, Inspector Morse or Lewis. It is taking time to rest and read books I love like Harry Bosch or Brene Brown.

Mental health, for me, is finding balance in my life, so that I can be present in the best possible way. And should I need professional help, I am not filled with shame to reach out for support. It is what has kept our family together because we didn’t have all the answers.

Talking about reading a good book, I just finished an old classic . . . “A Tree Grows in Brooklyn,” Anna Quindlen in the forward says, “The best anyone can say is that it is a story about what it means to be human.” I strive to be a good human being, but I am also learning what that means. This is all part of my journey still.

At the same time, I was reading Pema Chodrin’s “Welcoming the Unwelcome.” My favorite quote in this book was, “Some people naturally bring out the best in us. In their presence, we become more noble, brave and altruistic. We become less cynical, petty and self-doubting.”

I realize the people I love to spend the most time with fall into the first category . . . thank you to those who make me more noble, brave and altruistic!

I continue to grow and learn more about my Asian American history and family. Recently, I met with a cousin from Ohio and one from San Diego to talk about family history. We shared pictures, stories and documents about our family.

Along with meeting with my family, I loved attending the PFLAG National AAPI Connects space, where even more discussion about our AAPI heritage and family took place. At our last meeting, we had people representing the Hawaiian, Japanese, Chinese, Vietnamese and Indian LGBTQ+ communities.

I was thrilled to have one of the LGBTQ+ individuals ask for support, and we were able to connect him with another gay man from his ethnicity and another organization that specifically supports his culture.

If any AAPI individual needs support around the LGBTQ+ topic, please reach out to me at mazumi8888@gmail.com or visit https://pflag.org/connects/communities/aapi for additional information about support or resources.

Finally, celebrating Mother’s Day with Aiden, Mary, Stefen, Cat and Papa just brought everything together for me. They are the best thing for my mental health; they nourish my spirit and have taught me to be a better mother, wife and human being.

Aiden coming out has led me back to my AAPI community and understanding how my heritage has influenced me to be the person I am today. Dolly Parton says, “Find out who you are. Do it on purpose.” Even as a senior citizen, I am discovering more of who I am . . . and, yes, Dolly, I am living my life on purpose and with purpose.

Happy Mother’s Day to all the mothers, both biological and chosen!

Happy AAPI Month to all that share this rich culture!

Happy Mental Health Month to all of us that reach out for support so we can be the best humans possible!

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.”

AARP Celebrates 15 AAPI Leaders During Asian Pacific American Heritage Month

By Scott Tanaka

In May, AARP is celebrating the immeasurable contributions of the Asian American and Pacific Islander community on our nation’s culture and history as part of Asian Pacific American Heritage Month. As AARP honors the history of AAPI resilience, there is an esteemed ensemble of AAPI members within the organization who are currently making progress through exemplary leadership.

There’s an equal commitment in working to address the recent rise in anti-Asian violence directed toward AAPI elders. AARP is committed to the fight for social justice and ending intolerance, embracing a culture of innovation and advocating for health care, financial resilience and personal fulfillment for all.

This month is the perfect time to recognize the strength of AARP’s AAPI leaders. Here are a few 2022 Top 15 AARP leaders — individuals who are worth getting to know, as they are moving the needle and making positive change for families and communities.

DAPHNE KWOK

Daphne Kwok’s work empowers Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders to choose how they live as they age.

Our first in-person speaking event: Marsha, Aiden, Papa, Cousin Joy and Tim Cobb.

First book signing in over two years at Montebello Women’s Club

Aiden, Papa, Cousin Joy and Tim Cobb.

She brings to AARP her experience as a “leader of leaders” through her community service in promoting and empowering the AAPI community. For 11 years, she was the executive director of the Organization of Chinese Americans, a national membership-based civil rights organization, where she addressed hate crimes, campaign finance, immigration, Census 2000, English-only and affirmative action.

She was also the first elected chair of the National Council of Asian Pacific Americans, a network of national APA organizations. In addition, Kwok served as executive director of the Asian Pacific American Institute for Congressional Studies.

Kwok’s board service includes chair of APIA Vote, a member of the Comcast-NBCUniversal Joint Diversity Advisory Council, co-chair of the Nielsen External Asian Pacific Advisory Council and board member of the American Advertising Federation.

INDIRA VENKAT

Indira Venkat is the senior vp of AARP Research. She previously led the Consumer Insights function consisting of several issue-focused teams — financial resilience, health security, personal fulfillment, strategic and local issues and brand and membership.

She is responsible for designing a research agenda that yields actionable insights and fosters innovative thinking about AARP’s current and future consumers. Most recently, she led the strategic insights function at the Weather Channel, supporting all facets of programming, digital product and sales strategies.

Prior to that, as a member of Travel Channel’s executive team, Venkat oversaw the Audiences and Research function covering research, program strategy, digital and short-form shows.

BANDANA SHRESTHA

As state director, Bandana Shrestha leads the day-to-day operations of AARP Oregon and is responsible for carrying out AARP’s vision of health security, financial resilience and community engagement for over 500,000 members and Oregonians 50-plus and their families across the state.

During her 20-plus year career as a leader in local, national and international organizations, Bandana has worked to drive people-powered solutions to affect positive social change, improve lives and transform communities.

Before her appointment as state director, Bandana served as AARP Oregon director of community engagement and led outreach and advocacy efforts on hunger, prescription drugs, caregiving, long-term care, grandparent rights, raising grandchildren, as well as multicultural and volunteer engagement.

Most recently, Bandana led AARP’s livable communities work in the state, including growing and supporting the Network of Age-Friendly Communities, advocating for affordable and accessible housing and transportation options at the state and local levels.

To learn more about AARP’s commitment to the AAPI community and see the full list of AAPI leaders being honored at AARP AAPI Community’s Facebook page, visit https://www.facebook.com/ AARPAAPI and website at aarp.org/AAPI.

Scott Tanaka is a member of the JACL, Washington, D.C., chapter and is a policy, research and international affairs adviser at AARP.
The museum’s annual fundraiser recognizes changemakers under 30.

By P.C. Staff

Young people back in the 1960s had a saying: Never trust anyone over 30.

But that was the past. In 2022, the Japanese American demographic of that generation is older by well more than double that figure — and looking to the future by putting its trust in a younger generation to carry on its heritage, legacy and traditions.

That spirit was epitomized when the Japanese American National Museum in Los Angeles’ Little Tokyo celebrated its 30th anniversary by recognizing 30 community members under the age of 30 — on April 30, of course.

The anniversary also marked a return to an in-person setting at the Inter-Continental Los Angeles Downtown, with the event livestreamed for those unable to attend.

Celebrities in attendance included KTLA telejournalist Frank Buckley, who shared master of ceremony duties with Erin Aoyama, co-director of the Japanese American Memoriescape Project, and one of the evening’s honorees, as well as actor-activist-social-media maven George Takei, who interviewed five of the honorees, as well as actor-activist-social-media maven George Takei, who interviewed five of the honorees, as well as actor-activist-social-media maven George Takei, who interviewed five of the honorees.

The evening’s entertainment was provided by singer-choreographer Nobuko Miyamoto.

Welcoming remarks were made by JANM President and CEO Ann Burroughs, who noted that the last time JANM was able to hold its annual fundraising dinner was in 2019.

After noting all the lives touched and achievements JANM had accrued over the years, Burroughs thanked the founders for their “tenacity and perseverance,” as well as that of the staff in making sure that “what happened to Japanese Americans in 1942 wouldn’t happen again to any other group.”

The audience was also shown a video greeting from Japanese Ambassador to the United States Koji Tomita, who expressed his congratulations to the museum on its 30th anniversary.

Tomita was followed by Kazuo Koshi, managing executive officer of MUFG Bank and JANM board of governors’ member.

Next up were videos of JANM’s history and an in memoriam roll call of recent passings of community members and supporters, followed by a video of JANM’s educational program.

A speech by Jennifer Hirano, daughter of founding JANM President and CEO Irene and KTLA-5 Los Angeles’ Frank Buckley served as the event’s co-master of ceremonies.

Longtime community activist/actor George Takei

Hirano Inouye, who died April 7, 2020, followed. She addressed the Bid for Education program that was initiated by Sen. Daniel K. Inouye, her stepfather and Hirano Inouye’s husband, who died in 2012.

After a fundraising bid by the museum’s education staff, veteran volunteer Masako Koga Murakami, accompanied by her grandson Cole Kawana (one of the 30 under 30 honorees) recalled how her volunteer work began in 1986 at 941 E. Third Street, a building that also at the time housed the office of the Pacific Citizen. She said she felt “fortunate to see how much the volunteers have contributed” to the museum’s success.

Representing Toyota Motor North America was Chief Financial Officer Tracey Doi, who facilitated the drawing for a new Lexus 450h. She noted that more than $8,000 tickets were sold — which raised more than $155,000 for the museum, which was augmented by an additional grant of $100.00 by Toyota — with the winners of the vehicle being Dan Abrams and Nan Cohen of Sarasota, Fla.

All told, the evening raised more than $203,000 by the end of the program.

JANM recognized 30 Changemakers Under 30 during its fundraising gala on April 30, which also coincided with its 30th anniversary. Pictured are the honorees along with (center, seated) Frank Buckley, Ann Burroughs and George Takei.
The Irei Names Monument seeks to make visible what was once erased — all the names of the Japanese Americans incarcerated.

By Lynda Lin Grigsby, Contributor

In 1903, on a ship bound for the United States, Ayaka Takahashi — as the ship’s manifest identified him — befriended a passenger who questioned the need for the vowel at the end of his surname if it wasn’t pronounced. Japanese, like many languages, is amorphous. Sometimes the “i” at the end of the word speaks, but sometimes it is silent. As the story goes, the Issei took the “i” and dropped it in the Pacific Ocean, and the waves carried its superfluity away. He became Ayaka Takahashi.

“It was a deliberate choice made by my grandfather,” said Janis Hirohama, a South Bay JACL member. “And it is a meaningful part of our family history.”

Takahashi’s reclamation of his name signified a rare form of agency during a time when Japanese American names and identities were often changed because of U.S. government misspellings or lexical gaps. A misspelling can live for generations and render a person into abstraction until spelling can live for generations and make visible what was once erased?

What if we can take back our names like Takahashi by throwing out unnecessary letters, crossing out misspellings and writing in the correct spelling? Would that simple act of reclamation plant a seed of healing?

A first of its kind memorial to honor all Japanese Americans who were incarcerated during World War II seeks to answer those questions by establishing a master list of incarceree names. We know official records often cite that 125,000 Japanese American people were forcibly evacuated, but up until now, the records have been a scattering of camp intake forms, draft cards, even camp rosters handwritten by incarcerees — but no master list of all incarcerees existed.

It makes the historical event — a lived experience in your families — an abstraction experienced by what Duncan Ryuken Williams calls an “undifferentiated mass who were guilty by association.” This pain can only be repaired if names are given back.

Spearheaded by the USC Shinso Ito Center for Japanese Religions and Culture, with Williams as the director, the Ireiō, or “Book of Names,” is one part of the ambitious memorial funded by the Mellon Foundation to bring into focus the individuals behind the undifferentiated mass. The faceless people on the scattering of records, reduced to numbers written on tags, were people like Takahashi who suffered, loved and laughed. In the Ireiō, his name will be listed as he intended.

A Healing Memorial

The Irei Names Monument seeks to make visible what was once erased. The USC Shinso Ito Center received a $3.4 million grant over three years from the Mellon Foundation to build the memorial.

The idea borrows from the Buddhist tradition of writing and recitation of ancestors’ names as an act of bringing the past and the present together. For a community to be made whole, we must count every individual, said Williams, a Soto Zen Buddhist priest and scholar.

The memorial will be composed of three elements:

Ireiō or Consoling Spirits Website

The beta version of Ireizo.com will launch in the fall to provide more details of individuals incarcerated during WWII. Here, the names will be listed in alphabetical order and mapped to camps and additional information from Densho archives. The full version will launch in 2023.

Irei or Spirit Consoling Structure

Like the memorial at the Manzanar National Historic Site, the Ireiō will encourage pilgrimages. Seven small-scale monuments will be installed at confinement sites and visitors’ centers starting in 2024. A large-scale version of the monument will be unveiled at JANM in 2025.

The Irei Names Monument will be born during a time when many are rethinking memorials. The idea came out of many individual stories. She is pictured at the 2018 Poston Pilgrimage with her family’s memorial brick.
of the movement to think beyond monuments as permanent and static — like Abraham Lincoln sat down and never got up despite history continually being reinterpreted around him. This memorial will be dynamic and interactive, said Williams. Names will scroll and change. The idea is to take this memorial beyond remembrance to repair.

What is this memorial trying to repair? First, it seeks to correct misspellings. Surnames like Matsukuma became Matsuguma with the click of a typewriter key.

“The way we don’t honor those who have come before us is by replicating the errors, which are unfortunately replete in these government rosters,” said Williams.

During WWII, Japanese American names were taken away and replaced with unique numbers. The memorial also seeks to restore full identities.

“Names matter,” said Hirohama, a Sansei Buddhist minister’s assistant. During WWII, her grandparents and great-grandparents were incarcerated at Poston. “My family is more than ‘Family Number 41919.’”

**Getting to 99.9 Percent Accuracy**

In 2019, Williams wanted to organize a collective national moment of chanting and recitation of the names of the 125,000 victims of the WWII incarceration — all he needed was a master list of names. It was a moment of ambitious idealism that quickly ended when he found out no such list existed.

Well, he thought to himself, I guess I need to create it.

“I see why nobody’s ever done this,” said Williams. “It’s such a massive undertaking.”

To put together an accurate master list of former WWII incarcerated meant gathering rosters from the main War Relocation Authority camps and the Department of Justice camps — which rarely got included in the official count. During the war, individuals and families often transferred from camp to camp, creating a confusing spiderweb of information that the memorial’s 12-person team picked through and cross-checked with a complex flow chart.

The goal was to determine with 99.9 percent certainty what the actual number of persons of Japanese ancestry were incarcerated in any confinement sites, said Williams. Among the records he came across were camp rosters written in Japanese script that included information about a person’s name and address before the incarceration. Romanizing the names was not as easy as it sounded.

“Although there were typical names that I could easily decipher, there were also a number of cases where a character could be read in a few different ways,” said Yukari Inoue Swanson, a translator and research assistant on the project.

“I had to make the best guess with the consideration of name trends in that time. When Williams came across Takahashi’s name, it raised a red flag. By chance, he knew Hirohama, who told him about the dropped “i” in the Pacific Ocean, so Takahashi’s name remained in the book of names as intended.

**Kintsugi and Community Interaction**

The Sept. 23 *treichō* installation at JANM will have all the pomp and ceremony of a religious procession. The vision is clear, but the exact route is yet to be determined. A group of clergy members will carry the books from Maryk nell Japanese Catholic Center to JANM.

During WWII, Maryknoll and the site of the old Nishi Hong-wanji Temple — now the plaza in front of JANM — were gathering spots for transportation to both the Santa Anita Assembly Center and Manzanar.

The healing power of the memorial will lie in the interaction with its audience. In a Japanese tradition called kaigun, artifacts are enlivened through interaction. For a year after the book of names installation at JANM, survivors and their family members will be invited to correct misspellings, add names that may have been omitted, as well as add gold lines on the glyph between each name. Each gold line — a symbolic link between the past and the present — honors the memory of the person.

“It’s a way of involving the community to correct the record and repair the history,” said Williams.

Repair is transitory. It changes and morphs. Another Japanese tradition called *kintsugi* calls for the repair to be visible and celebrated. When a bowl or teapot breaks, it is fixed with gold-adorned fracture lines.

The memorial in all three of its elements continues the repair work in the Japanese American community that started with a government apology in 1988. Healing is a process that, if done right, draws you in and changes you. With the *Irei* Names Memorial, it also shows how the names — and the people — were all interconnected.

In mid-May when I talked to Williams from Japan where he is visiting family, the team of name translators and cross-checkers were on the last phase of verification.

“We’re seeing the light at the end of the tunnel,” said Williams, a Shin Iseii or first-generation Japanese American who lived and worked in the U.S. with visas for 33 years before becoming an American citizen in 2020.

He has another rule called the “camp survivor rule,” which stated that what a survivor wants overrides all.

On records from Rohwer where George Takei was a child of camp, he was listed as Hosato George Takei. At Tule Lake, he was listed as Hozato George Takei. His birth certificate cites Hosato Takei, so Williams contacted the actor, who told him that the origins of his famous name traced back to the reign of King George VI.

Takei’s dad was an Anglophile so fascinated with the British royal family that he started calling his son the regal name. There is something poignant about calling a child a king while he is incarcerated behind barbed wire.

The former “Star Trek” actor asked to be listed in the book of names as George Hosato Takei. Even with a well-known name, there still so much to learn about each individual. Eighty years after the WWII incarceration, age and power are back in the hands of the powerless.

**NJAHS AWARDED PANDEMIC RECOVERY GRANT**

SAN FRANCISCO — The National Japanese American Historical Society has been awarded a grant through the National Writing Project’s Building a More Perfect Union grant program for humanities organizations across the U.S. to assist in recovering from interruptions to operations due to the coronavirus pandemic.

As part of the American Rescue Plan: Humanities Grantmaking for Organizations at the National Endowment for the Humanities, the Building a More Perfect Union program funds organizations to develop programming in anticipation of the upcoming 250th anniversary of the founding of the U.S.

“We are delighted to be a part of America’s recovery, and we are honored to be a recipient of a grant awarded by the National Writing Project. It comes as an opportune time for us to gear up to receive visitors and explore with them the meaning and legacy of the Japanese American Redress movement,” noted NJAHS Executive Director Rosalyn Tonai.

The NJAHS’ project, “Japanese American Redress: Reckoning and Recovery,” will develop an interactive multimedia kiosk display at the Military Intelligence Service Historic Learning Center, which will inform and engage the public in a lesson of democracy — the exploration of the Japanese American call for restitution, the governmental means by which it was pursued and the subsequent passage of the watershed Civil Liberties Act of 1988.

NJAHS will design and produce interactive elements that draw upon first-person narratives, primary documents, visual records and scholarly analysis.

“Each project contributes to a shared national conversation in important ways,” said Elyse Eidman-Aadahl, executive director of the National Writing Project. “Building a More Perfect Union recognizes the unique role that local, regional and cross-regional humanities organizations play in understanding and making visible fuller stories of our national experience.”

To learn more about the NJAHS’s Building a More Perfect Union grant, please visit www.njahs.org.
Remembrances from across the nation are many. Following are anecdotes, tributes and loving memories of the late Norman Y. Mineta.

Jeffrey Moy (JACL National President)

"I first met Secretary Mineta, then-Congressman, as a child in a chance encounter at a local hardware store in Maryland. I never imagined that years later, I would be lucky enough for our paths to cross again and again, whether at various events in Washington, D.C., or at JACL conventions. That so many others undoubtedly feel the same way underscores how important Norm was to our community and the impact he had across generations, whether he served in the various political positions he served as or as a great friend and supporter of JACL. I will forever remember how he championed civil rights, acesso the aisle with class and dignity, willing to listen but never straying from his core values. While his loss is immeasurable, his mentorship and support of our community leave an everlasting legacy for all of us to carry forward."

David Inoue (JACL Executive Director)

"Secretary Mineta was well known for his leadership in the Japanese American and Asian American community, especially with JACL. What I will remember most was at an event where everyone, as always, wanted to talk to him, but he took the time to pull my then-8-year-old son aside and spoke with him at length with all his attention. It was this warmth that guided Secretary Mineta throughout his career and made him such a great mentor to so many people. He often spoke of how important the words ‘American Citizen’ were to him, and how he provided us all with a model of how to be the best possible."

John Tateishi (former JACL Executive Director and former JACL National Redress Committee Chair)

"As the nation mourns the passing of Norm Mineta for his many contributions in his lifetime of public service, we in the community feel his loss on a deeply personal level and recognize that we have lost one of the best among us. Despite all his many achievements and national stature, Norm remained humble and never forgot his roots in the community and opened the portal through which hundreds of Asian Americans have passed to run for public office. And having worked with Norm for several years on the redress campaign, I know that he was a driving force of the JACL’s redress effort even before we took the campaign public, and I know, too, that his leadership and dedication were instrumental in the success of the campaign. There would not have been redress without Norm Mineta, of that, I am absolutely certain."

Hoyt Mort (past JACL National President and Executive Director)

"Norm Mineta and his encouraging spirit will be sorely missed in the AANHPI community. He was one of a kind who was a shining star, yet he served others willingly without question. He was a mentor and supporter of all that I did during the past 50 years. He was a dear friend who influenced my life always for the better. Our love and condolences to his family."

Ron Watanapasiri (past JACL National Director)

"His accomplishments are many and significant, but the image pictured for me is just having lunch in the House Dining Room and seeing the powerful politician bantering with the wait staff. He knew them by name and their families. He knew the milestones and trials for each of them. I’ve seen this in Japanese American community events. He knew everyone by name. His sense of humor, quick wit, and kindness made you feel so self-effacing you forgot that he had been at the highest levels of power and about all of his accomplishments. Because he was the same age as my Nisei parents, I understood him, but on the other hand, he had the drive and courage to excel, and his success inspired other Japanese Americans rarely reach."

"I hope that he is remembered for his integrity, his love for people and his commitment to help underrepresented people, whether it was people of color, people with disabilities or people in the LGBTQ community. He was one of a kind and will be truly missed.” (Related article: See pacificcitizen.org/norman-minetas-american-legacy.)"

Karen Narasaki (former JACL Washington Representative and former U.S. Commission on Civil Rights Commissioner)

"I was given the assignment of asking him to address the JACL convention in Utah on the issue of marriage equality. The ask was only to remind JACL leaders that his good friends Barney Frank had moved redress out of his committee, but Mineta insisted on taking a strong position supporting the right for same-sex couples to marry. His speech is one of the reasons JACL maintained its historic position by a handful of votes. He told me that good Congressmen should be willing to risk losing donors and an election to be on the right side of history."

"I sat in meetings with him when he was Secretary of Transportation, after 9/11, with members of the South Asian, Middle Eastern and Muslim communities, experiencing discrimination at airports where he committed to reminding the airlines of their obligations not to discriminate and am certain that Mineta is one of the reasons that President Bush made an early visit to a mosque to try to stem the backlash. Through it all, he mentored thousands of community leaders, young elected officials and federal appointees. He was generous with his wisdom, with his time and with his friendship."

Dianée Fukusumi (producer/director, ‘Norman Mineta and His Legacy: An American Legacy’)

"It was a privilege and honor to get to know Norm really well during the seven years of production on the documentary film ‘Norman Mineta and His Legacy: An American Legacy.’ In his presence, he roomed that the words ‘American Citizen’ were to him, and how he provided us all with a model of how to be the best possible.”

"His accomplishments are many and significant, but the image pictured for me is just having lunch in the House Dining Room and seeing the powerful politician bantering with the wait staff. He knew them by name and their families. He knew the milestones and trials for each of them. I’ve seen this in Japanese American community events. He knew everyone by name. His sense of humor, quick wit, and kindness made you feel so self-effacing you forgot that he had been at the highest levels of power and about all of his accomplishments. Because he was the same age as my Nisei parents, I understood him, but on the other hand, he had the drive and courage to excel, and his success inspired other Japanese Americans rarely reach."

"I hope that he is remembered for his integrity, his love for people and his commitment to help underrepresented people, whether it was people of color, people with disabilities or people in the LGBTQ community. He was one of a kind and will be truly missed.” (Related article: See pacificcitizen.org/norman-minetas-american-legacy.)"
JACL WELCOMES NEW OPERATIONS MANAGER BRIDGETTE WATSON

JACL is happy to announce our newest team member, Bridgette Watson! She has an academic background in journalism from City College of San Francisco and photography from the Brooks Institute of Photography. Watson is also certified as a teacher of English as a Foreign Language.

In addition, Watson worked for a few years in the hospitality industry as a manager and sales agent before transitioning to the academic field managing Continuing Medical Education programs, event planning and project and grant management for UCSF and then UC Berkeley. Watson also has experience working in organic farming, something she initially did pre-pandemic in Scotland and during the pandemic in New Mexico. She lives in the Pacifica, Calif., area and loves its proximity to the ocean.

“I’m happy to be part of working with a nonprofit that focuses on making the community better,” said Watson to the Pacific Citizen. “I hope to focus on keeping things up to date within our office in San Francisco and the JACL and be more involved with the JACL and learn more about my heritage. Looking forward to making a difference.”

Welcome Bridgette!

—JACL National

JACL CALLS FOR NATIONAL ACTION TO COMBAT WHITE SUPREMACY IN THE WAKE OF RECENT TRAGEDY IN BUFFALO

By JACL National

On May 14 in Buffalo, N.Y., 10 people were murdered in a supermarket in an attack perpetrated by a self-identified white supremacist. This is sadly yet another attack that has affected communities of color in the last several years; a grim reflection of the history of our nation, in which white supremacy has been an ever-present and violent institution.

In a manifesto that the attacker posted online prior to the shooting were references to the “Great Replacement,” a conspiracy theory built upon an anti-Semitic lie that states that Jews are intentionally replacing white Americans with minority populations. This dangerous ideology has been cited by other mass shooters in the past and was one of the major factors behind the anti-Semitic massacre in Pittsburgh in 2018 and the attack on an immigrant community in El Paso in 2019. The “Great Replacement” was also responsible for many of the racist views that led to the scapegoating of Japanese Americans in the lead-up to their incarceration during World War II.

Also incredibly troubling is the role that the internet played in radicalizing the murderer, providing the propaganda of misinformation and hatred as well as the forum to broadcast his despicable acts in real-time. Virtual content platforms must be more proactive to stop the spread of hate and extremism. The shooter did not act independently, but with the support of a broad network of encouragement, that has been allowed to flourish online.

White supremacy continues to be a dangerous terrorist movement that threatens our country and our safety. It must be addressed at all levels from individuals to institutions, to politicians, in order to continue to protect the communities that are the most impacted by these atrocities.

Attacks like these are sudden, violent and intended to evoke fear and helplessness within us, but we refuse to be intimidated. Prosecution alone will not stop this hatred, it must be at all levels within our county, both public and private. Efforts must be directed toward prevention of the spread of misinformation, education on racial issues and proper training for response and reporting groups and should include language access to ensure minority communities are able to effectively provide crucial information to the institutions that are sworn to protect them.

We will continue to fight against these threats and demand swift and responsible action from our elected officials, law enforcement professionals, and corporate leaders to hold those who spread this rhetoric accountable and to eventually stop hate crimes.

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

NATIONAL
52nd JACL National Convention: ‘Strengthening Our Community Through Action!’
Las Vegas, NV
Aug. 3-7
Price: Visit jacl.org for Event and Pricing Information
This year’s convention welcomes partner organization OCA-Asian Pacific American Advocates. Enjoy full access to four days of programming, expanded workshop and mixer opportunities, Sayonara Banquet and Awards luncheons, in addition to National Council meetings and an in-person election of officers. Programming will be in-person and virtual.
Info: Visit www.jacl.org for more information. Registration closes July 27. Virtual rates are also available.

NCWNP
The Healing Art of Kintsugi
San Francisco, CA
Virtual Creative Workshop Presented by JCCNCN
Price: $75 Center Members; $85 General Public; Registration Includes All Materials Kit
Learn how to repair and create your own kintsugi art pieces in this virtual crafting workshop led by instructor Alexandra Kitty, artist and author of “The Art of Kintsugi: Learning the Japanese Craft of Beautiful Repair.”

Nikkie Open 2022
Half Moon Bay, CA
July 30
Half Moon Bay Golf Links (Ocean Course) 2 Miramontes Point Road Price: $325; Foursome $1,300
Mark your calendars for the 27th Annual Nikkie Open Charity Golf Tournament, which will be a best ball scramble format with hole-in-one and closest to the pin contests. Participants can play in one of two flights of competitions sponsored by longtime sponsor Sumofish.
Info: Visit www.jccnc.org for more information.

PNW
Na Oni Shintani: ‘Dream Refugee for Children Imprisoned’
Portland, OR
Thru September
Japanese American Museum of Oregon 411 N.W. Flanders St. (entrance on 4th Avenue)
Price: Ticket Admission
"Dream Refuge for Children” is an installation by San Francisco artist Na Om Shintani that explores the trauma of children that have been incarcerated. Shintani has created a series of cot arrangements in a circle with an image of a sleeping child drawn directly on each mattress that draws parallels between different children who have been imprisoned and derailed their culture.

PSW
Hisashiburi: A Long Time Since the Last Time
Los Angeles, CA
June 5; 3-5:30 p.m.
Terasaki Budokan 249 S. Los Angeles St.
Price: Ticket Prices Vary
Kizuna is delighted to host an afternoon reunion and joyful celebration honoring the time spent apart during the pandemic and the reminder to connect again. Join the organization as it looks forward to an exciting summer of new growth and youth engagement.
Info: Email info@gokizuna.org for full details or visit https://gokizuna.org/hisashiburi.

MDC
‘Then They Came for Me: Incarceration of Japanese Americans During WWII and the Demise of Civil Rights’
Milwaukee, WI
Thru May 22
Jewish Museum Milwaukee 1360 N. Prospect Ave.
Price: Contact Museum for Admission Pricing
This multimedia exhibition illustrates the impact the WWII incarceration had on those who experienced it firsthand and the lasting repercussions on the generations that followed. Imagery from noted American photographers Dorothy Lange and Ansel Adams, alongside works by Toyo Miyatake and artifacts from generations that followed. Imagery from noted American photographers Dorothy Lange and Ansel Adams, alongside works by Toyo Miyatake and artifacts from generations that followed. Imagery from noted American photographers Dorothy Lange and Ansel Adams, alongside works by Toyo Miyatake and artifacts from generations that followed.
Info: For more information, call (414) 324-6611 or email matsu@jcc-milwaukee.org.

EJC
Amache Community Open House
Granada, CO
June 30, 7-8:30 p.m.; July 1, 8 a.m.-8 p.m.
The University of Denver Amache proj-ect will be leading four weeks of field research at Amache and the Amache Museum in Granada, Colo., June 14- July 8. June 30 will include a talk about Amache history at the Granada Community Center, and July 1 will feature visits with the archaeologists, guided tours of family barracks, reconstructed structures and other areas of interest, exhibits at the Amache museum and a dinner for all open house participants.
Info: RSVP by June 10 to Melanie As-sia at (303) 871-2677 or email melanie.assia@du.edu.

EDC
Asia North 2022: ‘Remembrance, Resilience, Power + Pride’
Baltimore, MD
Thru May 28
Motor House and Stillpointe Theatre 120 W. North Ave.
This exhibit provides a healing and empowering space for regional Asian and API artists to express remembrance, resilience, power and pride within the context of the ongoing triple pandemic of Covid-19, social, environmental and racial injustice and economic insecurity. In resistance to these injustices, this exhibit celebrates pride in cultural heritage and calls attention to the importance of civic engagement and environmental stewardship.
Info: Gallery hours are Tuesday-Friday, Noon-2 p.m. and 7-10 p.m. For more information, visit www.towson.edu.

The Go For Broke Spirit’ Photo Exhibit
Washington, D.C.
June 9-July 22
Japan Information and Culture Center 1150 18th St. N.W.
This exhibit features images of Japanese American veterans who served during World War II by Shane Sato, a photographer based in Los Angeles. The exhibit runs Monday-Friday, with Saturday hours on June 11.
Info: Visit https://www.java-us.org for more information.

Vincent Chin 40th Remembrance and Redication
Detroit, MI
June 16-19
Virtual Event
This four-day commemoration will remember and celebrate the life of Vincent Chin, who was the victim of a vicious racially motivated beating on June 19, 1982, that led to his death. His murderers never spent a day in jail, targeting him because he was Asian. This commemoration will include a special screening of the film “Who Killed Vincent Chin?” in addition to a national conversation on democracy, racial justice and Asian Americans. This event is presented by the Vincent Chin 40th Remembrance and Redication Organizing Committee and American Citizens for Justice.

JAVAs Day of Affirmation Dinner
Fort Belvoir, VA
June 14; 4:30-8:30 p.m.
National Museum of the U.S. Army 1775 Liberty Dr.
Price: $150 Per Ticket; Business Attire
Info: Email javatopomac@gmail.com for questions or visit www.java-us.org.

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PACIFIC CITIZEN
Hashimoto, Yoshiko, 94, Monterey Park, CA, Jan. 12; she was predeceased by her husband, Mitsuo; son, John Hashimoto; she is survived by her daughter, Theresa Hashimoto; sisters-in-law, Reiko Yasamaki and Hiroko Hashimoto; she is also survived by 3 nephews; 5 nieces and many other relatives.

Hayashi, Leo Ryo, 90, Los Angeles, CA, Dec. 10, 2021; he is survived by his wife, June; sisters, Marie and Naomi; children, Ray, Don, Susan and Kei; gc: 7.

Hisayasu, Yaeko, 91, Arleta, CA, Feb. 10; she was predeceased by her husband, Bruce; she is survived by her children, Toru (Diane), Makoto (Dawn) Naritoku; brother-in-law, Etsuo Hisayasu; she is also survived by many nieces, nephews and other relatives; gc: 4; ggc: 1.

Iketani, Roy, 91, Los Angeles, CA, Feb. 3; during WWII, his family and he were incarcerated at the Poston WRA Center in AZ; veteran (Navy); graduate, UCLA; former president, Southwest Los Angeles JACL Chapter; active with East San Gabriel Valley Japanese Community Center; he was predeceased by his wife, Nanccee; he is survived by 7 children; a sister; gc: 10.

Ito, David Kazunori, 73, Waipahu, HI, Feb. 18.

Hashimoto, Ichiro, 85, Winnetka, CA, March 30; B.S., M.S. and Ph.D., UCLA; he is survived by his wife, Margaret; siblings, Toji, Midee and Kimiko; he is also survived by 2 nieces.

Endo, Doris, 99, Morton Grove, IL, Feb. 21; she was predeceased by her husband, Harry; daughter, Donna Ichikawa; siblings, Jerry Ito, Kiyo Ito, Hiroshi Ito, Grace Motooka and June Aragaki; she is survived by her children, Alan (Nancy) and Hisa (Ricardo) Garcia; sister, Shigeo Ito; gc: 6; ggc: 1.

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The Women of the Year Luncheon was held for the first time since 2019, due to a pandemic-caused suspension. But thanks to the rollout of effective Covid-19 vaccinations, a decision to continue in 2022 the nearly six-decades-long tradition of honoring women of Japanese ancestry for their support, volunteerism, dedication and contributions to community and cultural activities was made, with the two-yearlong layoff causing no missteps for the event’s organizers. So it was that on May 1 at the Quiet Cannon in Montebello, Calif., that the Japanese Women’s Society of Southern California and the Downtown Los Angeles Chapter of the Japanese American Citizens League feted with the usual aplomb the afternoon’s honorees, Yoko Awaya and Miyoko Nishimoto.

The luncheon began with introductory remarks from George Kita, president of the Downtown Los Angeles Chapter of JACL, and Joyce Chinn, president of the Japanese Women’s Society of Southern California, as well as an invocation by the Rev. Jeffrey Snell of Westwood Presbyterian Church. Honored first was Tokyo-born Awaya, a renowned master of the koto and founder of Awaya-kai (1974) and the Yoko Awaya Koto Music Conservatory (1994), both of which she formed in the years after emigrating from Japan in 1965. Awaya has been a consistent teacher, performer, contributor and recording artist over the ensuing decades.

Awaya’s award was presented by Beverly Findlay-Kaneko, an Awaya-kai board member who noted that “Awaya sensei’s 50th anniversary concert is in fall 2023 and also will feature a multicultural program” in Torrance, Calif.

Nishimoto was the day’s other honoree. Born in the capital city of Fukuoka prefecture and raised in the city of Ureshino in Saga prefecture, she was recognized for her more than three decades of volunteerism and participation with such groups as the Orange County Japanese American Assn., the Japanese Chamber of Commerce of Southern California, Southern California Amami Kai, Southern California Saga Kenjinkai and more.

Presenting Nishimoto’s award was Ken Inouye, past chair and current treasurer of the Orange County Human Relations Commission, stalwart SELANOCO JACL chapter member and former JACL national president. He noted that “anyone from Orange County knows this incredible woman” who went out of her way to make people feel comfortable.

Pictured (from left) are Nancy Takayama, PSWD JACL; Amy Tambara, Downtown L.A. Chapter JACL; Kitty Sankey, Downtown L.A. Chapter JACL; Ken Inouye, past JACL national president; Joyce Chinn, president of the Japanese Women’s Society of Southern California; Nancy Nix, Downtown L.A. Chapter JACL; George Kita, president of the Downtown L.A. Chapter JACL; and Rodney Nakada, Downtown L.A. Chapter JACL.

Photos: George Toshio Johnston

Displaying awards and certificates of recognition are (from left) Joyce Chinn, president of the Japanese Women’s Society of Southern California; Yoko Awaya; Miyoko Nishimoto; and George Kita, president of the Downtown L.A. Chapter JACL.

PHOTOS: GEORGE TOSHIO JOHNSTON

May is AANHPI Heritage Month—time to honor our community’s contributions to making America stronger. Take pride in our past by making history today. Stay healthy and get everyone in your family vaccinated. Talk to a doctor if you have any questions.

Find vaccines and boosters near you at vaccines.gov

PHOTOS: GEORGE TOSHIO JOHNSTON