



PACIFIC CITIZEN

NEW YEAR'S ISSUE



Year of the Rabbit

JACL Announces 2023 Scholarship Program

By JACL National

SAN FRANCISCO — The JACL announced recently that the 2023 National Scholarship and Awards Program is now underway. The JACL annually offers approximately 30 college scholarships 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.

Scholarship Program guidelines, instructions and applications have been posted on the JACL website (www.jacl.org) and can be accessed by clicking the "Youth" tab on the menu bar.

Following previous years, the application forms for the scholarship program will be completely online. Freshman applications must be submitted directly by the applicant to National JACL through the online form no later than March 6 by 11:59



p.m. Hawaiian Standard Time (HST).

These freshman applications will then be disseminated to their respective chapters for review. Chapters will have one month to evaluate

their applications and forward the names of the most outstanding applicants to National JACL. It is these applications that shall be forwarded to the National Freshman Scholar-

ship Committee for final selection.

Applications for the nonfreshman scholarship categories (undergraduate, graduate, law, creative/performing arts and financial aid) are also to be sent directly by the applicant to National JACL through the online form no later than April 3 by 11:59 p.m. Hawaiian Standard Time (HST).

All those applying to the National JACL Scholarship Program must be a youth/student or individual member of the JACL; a couple/family membership held by a parent does NOT meet this requirement. Applicants must be enrolled in school in fall 2023 in order to be eligible for a scholarship. If a student has received two National scholarship awards previously, they are no longer eligible to apply, as the limit is two national awards per person.

For more information on the National JACL Scholarship Program, contact Scholarship Program Manager Matthew Weisbly at scholarships@jacl.org.

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Happy New Year!




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New Year Greetings from
Janwyn & Jack Funamura

In honor of our grandchildren:
Theo; Namik & Mia;
Olivia, Maiya & Luca

Happy New Year

from

The Nomura Family





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The *P.C.*'s mission is to 'educate on the past Japanese American experience and preserve, promote and help the current and future AAPI communities.'

** Your donations will help build and preserve a cohesive library of the Pacific Citizen to educate future generations.**

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

— Gil Asakawa





A MOTHER'S TAKE

THE LIGHT FROM WITHIN

By Marsha Aizumi

I am always curious how one person who has everything will struggle so much and another person who has faced a tremendous amount of adversity can become successful. That thought haunted me last year because a JA reader of my column sent me an email and said that he appreciated “A Mother’s Take,” as it “serves as examples of my own expression, which I am capable of giving, which have not been nurtured in me as a child growing up.”

My curiosity peaked by his initial outreach. I felt compelled to respond, saying, “I would love to hear more of your story.” I did not expect to receive an email that was so vulnerable and heartbreaking. It was four pages long. He said, “I will trust you with my story, which I never before revealed to anyone.” He has also trusted me to write this article.

Tad (not his real name, but the

name he asked me to use) and his family were incarcerated in Heart Mountain in Wyoming. After camp, Tad’s parents “desperately wanted to leave behind their Japanese heritage . . . anything Japanese was prohibited . . . even the word *Japanese*. I can recall concluding I was a burden on my parents as a reminder of their Japanese heritage. Today, I cry for them to have lived such lives to be unspeakable.”

Tad’s life was unbelievably hard, and I would even go further to say cruel. His parents hardly showed any love and affection to each other and to him. “When other students lied about getting into a fight with me, my mother would drag me away by my ear and whip me. She would scream at me and be so distraught.”

“On one occasion, she began to beat me with my father’s golf club. My father took away the golf club and told her to use something else. It made me feel like my father cared

more about the golf club than his own son.”

When Tad brought a friend home, they were never good enough. “My friend would say to me that my mother was ‘crabby’ and would refuse to be my friend. When I discussed this with Mother, she would scream at me and accuse me of it being my fault. . . . I was no longer able to share discussions with her.”

Reading through Tad’s life made me very sad. There were so many other scenarios that he described, but they’re too numerous to lay out in my column. He would explain that “my feelings as a child were always suppressed and even invalidated.”

But in his journey of self-determination, he has always looked to people who possess worthwhile values and sought to learn from them how to be brave and generous. “They have helped me overcome my difficulty in expressing feelings of my own.”

Today, Tad is retired and has had a successful career. “I learned to be resilient under disappointment and to be myself no matter how different from other people.” However, there was a price for his difficult childhood. “I feel uncomfortable when I receive praise . . . because I never deserved such from my own parents. I decided never to have children.

. . . I feared that I would become a parent like my own parents.”

As we begin this new year, I usually want to start with something upbeat, but somehow, Tad’s trust in me made me feel like his story could be a beacon of light to all of us in 2023.

How can we be better at showing love and affection? How can we be better listeners to others? How can we be “chosen family” to those whose family are not there for them?

There was something very inspiring about how Tad was able to find success after such a horrible childhood.

Tad is part of an organization that works toward social justice, and I am sure he lends his mind and knowledge to further their work. As difficult as his life has been, he has not let it stop him from doing good.

I was so proud to get to know Tad and honored to have him trust his story with me.

People have the ability to face adversity and emerge strong, but they need to find people who will nurture and believe in them along the way. If our own family does not provide love and see the potential in us, we cannot control that. What we can control is to find value within ourselves, create a chosen family of support and not allow the voices of others to tell us who we are or who we are not. . . .

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.”



The Aizumi family wishes you the best in 2023!

PHOTO: MARSHA AIZUMI



LEGAL-EASE: AN ATTORNEY'S PERSPECTIVE

2023 RECESSION — HOW TO PREPARE

By Judd Matsunaga, Esq.

Economists have been forecasting a recession for months now, and most see it starting early this year. Whether it’s deep or shallow, long or short, is up for debate, but the idea that the economy is going into a period of contraction is pretty much the consensus view among economists (*source: CNBC.com, Why Everyone Thinks a Recession Is Coming in 2023, Dec. 23, 2022*).

Recessions can be difficult to weather, but they’re not uncommon and should be considered in your regular financial planning. In fact, the U.S. has experienced 13 recessions in the last 100 years since the Great Depression. Typically, recessions are accompanied by high unemployment rates. Should unemployment rates rise from the current 3.7 percent to over 5 percent, several million Americans will lose their jobs.

With so much uncertainty in the

world today, it is natural to wonder how you and your family will weather the storm. The area that causes the most amount of stress for people in this regard is finances. To help alleviate some stress during periods of economic uncertainty, here are four steps that financial experts recommend preparing for a recession (*source: www.time.com, A Recession Is Widely Expected. Here’s How to Prepare, Dec. 10, 2022*).

1. Try to Build an Emergency Fund

Whether the economy is surging or stalling, it’s important to have enough money set aside so you can still pay your monthly bills in the event of an unexpected job loss or other emergency. “Your goal should be to have an emergency fund that has enough money to cover three to six months’ worth of expenses,” advised Robert Gilliland, managing director and senior wealth adviser with Houston-based Concenture Wealth Management.

That said, you may want to pad this account with extra money now to factor in the higher cost of living as a result of inflation and the potential for a job loss during a recession. You’ll need every bit of it when the income stops flowing. While tapping into your emergency fund is never a decision you should make lightly, losing a job or being forced to live on a reduced salary certainly qualifies as a good reason to use some of the cash you’ve put away.

However, it’s important to rebuild your emergency fund as soon as your financial situation is more stable.

2. Focus on Budgeting

Your monthly budget is a good place to start because you can see how much money you’re spending each month and on what. “Ask yourself: Where can I reduce monthly outflow?” says Gilliland. Even if job cuts or layoffs are looming, put as much cash into your emergency fund as possible.

Give up all the extras, including takeout and delivery. “Even cutting out small expenses, such as subscriptions to streaming services, are an easy way to save extra money that can be crucial for building an emergency fund,” he added.

3. Pay Off High-Interest Debt

(If You’re Able)

“The first thing I would tell people to do is to pay down high

interest debt, like credit card debt,” said Marguerita Cheng, a certified financial planner. Normally, it’s important to do whatever you can to keep your credit scores intact, but during a recession, that may not be possible. Therefore, you might have to forego paying one or more of these bills, so it’s important you prioritize which bills you need to pay.

Make sure you pay your rent or mortgage on time and in full. You don’t want to face foreclosure or eviction. If you need a car to get to work, make your car payment. If you buy your own health insurance, be sure you pay your premium on time, so your policy isn’t canceled. If your health insurance is offered through your employer, you will continue to receive health insurance coverage even if your medical bills mount.

If you’re making your payments on time, you can also ask your credit card company or any other lender about lowering your interest rates. You’ll never know what agreement you and your creditor can reach if you don’t ask.

4. Get Creative About Saving

Now is a good time to evaluate your entire financial picture, ahead of a recession, so you’re not caught by surprise. Think creatively about other ways to save more money. “For example, evaluating your insurance options to make sure you have the best option for your

personal circumstances could mean the difference of several hundred dollars each year,” Cheng says.

Consider other ways to earn more money — be it asking for a raise or adding another revenue stream through a side hustle. If you own your own home, you’re sitting on a gold mine!!! Look into tapping into the equity in your home with a reverse mortgage. Why a reverse mortgage? Because you don’t have to pay it back.

Your kids may have told you not to take out a reverse mortgage on your home. That’s because they hope to inherit your home “free and clear” when you die. But, if paying the bills or buying the groceries continue to rise while your savings are dwindling, IT’S YOUR HOME. In cities like Los Angeles, you could take out \$500,000 and still leave your kids \$500,000 to inherit (*according to Zillow.com*).

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.

'WE NEED TO STAY TRUE TO OUR MISSION AND STRIVE FOR CONSTANT IMPROVEMENT'

By Larry Oda,
JACL National President

As the Japanese American Citizens League approaches 100 years of protecting our community, we need to remember the events that got us here but also look forward to what we need to prepare for in the next 100 years.

As I began my term in August, because there were no declared candidates prior to the National Convention, four other candidates ran off the floor of the convention. Seia Watanabe for vp for public affairs; Dominique Mashburn for vp for One Thousand Club, membership and services; Mika Chan for NY/SC chair; and Sheera Tamura for NY/SC representative.

It was after the convention that David Lin offered to extend his role as vp for planning and development. Because there were no declared candidates for any of the offices, the opportunity for an orderly transition was delayed. We were only left with consultations with the previous board to provide some continuity for JACL. David graciously agreed to accept a temporary appointment until the end of 2022 to allow me time to find a suitable replacement for his position.

One of the roles of the national president is to appoint active members to vacancies on the National Board, and I was confident that it would be an easy task to find qualified candidates who would be willing to assume the responsibilities.

It is unprecedented for us to have

such a number of vacancies, and with the talent we have in our membership, I was not prepared for the difficulty in locating candidates who were willing to take on leadership roles in the organization.

To their credit, longtime fixture on the National Board Carol Kawamoto accepted an appointment to the position of vp for general operations; Watsonville-Santa Cruz treasurer Victor Kimura accepted an appointment to the office of secretary/treasurer; and Greater Los Angeles member and retired journalist John Saito Jr. accepted an appointment to the position of *Pacific Citizen* Editorial Board Chair.

I had been in contact with Gary Nakamura, a leader in the Houston chapter, on other matters in the past and appreciated his energy and enthusiasm. He is currently rebuilding the Houston chapter, has doubled its membership the past few months and has raised a substantial amount of money for chapter programs. He has accepted an appointment to assume David Lin's position, and we have begun the transition.

We have one position to fill, that of legal counsel, and I am struggling to complete our board and could use some help. We have some prospects, but let's keep our fingers crossed.

Our Investment Policy Committee has recently selected a new portfolio manager for our investments and hopes to affect a changeover to Vanguard Investments in the next couple of months. We have some sharp people on the IPC, and

I am confident that the performance of our portfolio manager will be appropriately managed.

I look forward to our next convention in Los Angeles where, hopefully, we will partner with Rev. Dr. Duncan Williams and the University of Southern California in Little Tokyo. The intent of the partnership in L.A. is to introduce the JACL delegates to the *Ireicho*, the sacred book of 125,000-plus names of everyone of Japanese descent who was wrongfully incarcerated during World War II.

Many folks are concerned about our financial health, and thanks to the foresight of our predecessors, we are fortunate that we are the recipient of bequests from our members that assist us with unanticipated revenue for the organization.

While some bequests are earmarked for scholarships, the bulk of what we have received are unrestricted in nature and are available for general uses. In the early 2000's, JACL started a Planned Giving Program to provide information to those interested in leaving a legacy and maximizing their impact.

Our foresight has come to fruition. It is much in this vein that I am engaging our board in a visioning exercise to prepare the organization to think strategically and imagine what we need to have in place to prepare us for what we may be 20 or 40 years from now.

Twenty years ago, I said the pace of change in the world is accelerating, and we need to expend the effort to stay abreast. The management prin-

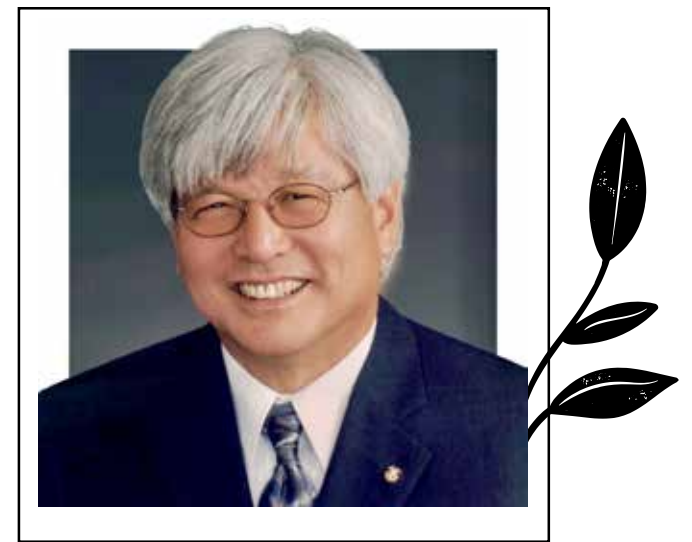
ciples and rules of law and society may also be changing, but we must remember that we cannot ignore what is right for what is expedient.

At some point in our existence, we stopped growing, not so much in membership, though that is also the case, but more so in leadership development, and we have started to fall behind.

I look at the lack of candidates at our biennial elections as a symptom of this decline. It will take more than this biennium to get us to where we need to be, but we must start. One important thing we must do is to arrest our membership decline.

I feel that most of the decrease is a result of our dedicated Nisei and older Sansei fading away. It's not a matter of re-enrolling a lapsed member. We have not been able to keep up with their loss with recruiting new members to replace them.

Our Membership Department, including Membership VP Dominique Mashburn, is holding monthly meetings to assist chapters with recruitments, and your chapter can benefit from the information that is discussed.



We are trying to change the world, but we realize that it is not going to happen overnight or even this biennium. We need to stay true to our mission and strive for constant improvement as we try to change society to keep Mike Masaoka's dream alive, to be better Americans in a greater America.

The National Board is thankful for your support and looks forward to a productive biennium for JACL. I am proud of the accomplishments of our board and committees. As the various regulatory agencies demand an increasing amount of accountability for organizations such as ours, we have been able to demonstrate that JACL has shown the appropriate level of prudence in the handling of its affairs, and I guarantee that we will continue to demonstrate due diligence and fiduciary responsibility with which the membership has entrusted us, while protecting our civil rights and preserving our cultural heritage.

On behalf of the National Board, thank you for your support and encouragement, and I wish you a prosperous Happy New Year! ■

An End-of-Year Hail Mary Brings HOPE FOR THE NEW YEAR

By David Inoue,
JACL Executive Director



By all counts, 2022 can largely be seen as a good year. We finally were largely able to come together again with various chapter events and our National Convention in Las Vegas. The most notable victory came at the eleventh hour when the Norman Y. Mineta Japanese American Confinement Education Act was passed by Congress and signed into law by President Joe Biden. The passage was a clear victory, but also the process that it underwent to be passed offers a glimmer of hope for the cooperation that can happen to get things done in Congress.

First, this important and much-needed legislation will extend funding for the Japanese American Confinement Sites grant program with another \$32 million in authorized spend-

ing. At current annual funding rates, this will extend the program at least another eight years. More importantly, the Mineta JACE Act also authorized the creation of a new JACS grant targeted to support Japanese American organizations developing major education initiatives.

Also passing Congress with the JACE Act was the Japanese American WWII History Network Act, which will promote the identification of sites important to telling the history of Japanese American incarceration during WWII. With both bills supportive of the telling of our history, what distinguished the two was primary sponsorship by Democrat and Republican Representatives and Senators, but what bound them together was bipartisan support.

In these times of attacks on ethnic studies and Critical Race Theory, we can take some comfort in that when we do get to the actual stories from our history, there can actually be agreement that these are stories worthy of being told and instructed through our schools, public forums and the federal government

under the National Park System.

But the cooperation that went into getting these laws passed runs deeper and played a much greater role in those last few weeks of the year. First attempts were made to have both pieces of legislation pass on a voice vote, or without objection.

Our hope was that with the broad bipartisan support both bills had and the ease with which they passed through committees and the House, they might similarly sail through the Senate. Unfortunately, nothing ever goes according to best plans, and there were objections from some senators. It turned out this was nothing out of the ordinary, as very little was getting through on unanimous consent.

Fortunately, with the strong support from both Democrat and Republican members of Congress, what we thought to be impossible actually was how these bills became law. As Ranking member of the Senate Energy and Natural Resources Committee, Sen. John Barrasso took leadership in slipping the two bills into the end-

» of-year, must-pass omnibus appropriations bill.

The politics at the time were that only a Republican Senator could have pulled this off, as they held all the leverage in providing the needed votes for passage of the final bill. Sen. Barrasso's staff worked with the bill negotiators over the weekend, and when the final version of the bill came out the following Tuesday, the two Japanese American bills were included.

At that point, though, there are rarely any guarantees in Washington — this was a near-guarantee that the bills would pass. While there were some efforts to block the omnibus bill, the overwhelming majority of senators voted for it, and it passed in the House with votes to spare two days before Christmas. The president's signature was a formality to be done the next week while on vacation.

I shared this tortuous story with you to show there is hope that our Congress can be functional, that it passed the \$1.7 trillion spending bill but didn't neglect to include the special interest of our legislation to shore up the opportunities to tell our community's history. And this was in the face of challenges to the telling of minority stories in history, ours was affirmed.

All this presents tremendous opportunity in the coming year. All expectations are that Congress won't be able to find much to agree on with the Senate under Democratic control and the House under Republican control.

Hopefully, this story highlights that there is the possibility of bipartisan cooperation. It is noteworthy that Sen. Barrasso is from Wyoming, the site of Heart Mountain Wyoming and the well-known story of Sec. Mineta and Sen. Alan

Simpson's longtime friendship. I can't help but think that this was in the minds of the senator and his staff as they worked to get the bipartisan bills, including one named for the late secretary who was respected by all his colleagues in Washington, regardless of party.

It is our responsibility to leverage the appreciation demonstrated for our history, to emphasize the importance of telling all stories from the rich diversity of our nation's history. The story of Japanese American incarceration is not a particularly feel-good story for our nation but is one that we have committed to keeping in our memory and learn the lessons of how insidious racism and xenophobia can become.

As we look forward to 2023, we have many activities of JACL and our Japanese American community beginning next month with Day of Remembrance, moving into April when we host our annual Leadership Summit and into July with convention. These are all opportunities for us to share our history with government officials, students and the general public.

As we return to in-person activities, make sure that those activities are an opportunity to share what JACL has meant to this country. It is by building that good will that we can accomplish anything, including getting impossible legislation passed.

Above all, I look forward to seeing you in person sometime this year, and especially in Little Tokyo in Los Angeles for our convention in July. Together, we will accomplish great things.

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

I HAVE A DREAM

By Victor Kimura,
JACL National Secretary/
Treasurer



It took me a week to accept Larry Oda's invitation to serve as his National Secretary/Treasurer, and I agreed principally because it was Larry who was asking.

Since that time and having been in the middle of financial discussions pertaining to the National organization, I have corroborated my concerns about many of the processes, procedures and, quite frankly, the financial integrity of JACL's "books."

My future wishes for the National organization continue to include the following:

- That year-end financial statements contain less detail so that the majority of JACL members reviewing the documents can understand them.
- That the preliminary budget process (prior to the annual convention) be simple and straightforward, and that draft copies be available for review well in advance of the convention.
- That revenues and expenditures

be tracked by fund, so that at any time we will know each fund balance.

- That financial statements (e.g., profit and loss, balance sheet, investment activity, comparisons to budget, etc.) be available for review by the middle of the following month.
- That staff resources be allocated to programs based on preassigned distributions in order to expedite the preparation of financial statements.

To me, simplicity and transparency are key to providing up-to-date, accurate, informative and understandable financial information to districts and chapters. Whether I can accomplish these goals over the next two years will depend greatly on our financial/accounting systems and on the support of board and staff. ■

Let's Raise the Bar and Continue to Take JACL's Programs to the Next Level

By David Lin,
JACL National VP Planning and
Development

Welcome to the New Year's issue of the *Pacific Citizen*, and I wish you and your family a happy, healthy and prosperous 2023!

It has been my honor and privilege to serve as the vp for planning and development in 2022, as my appointment ended on Dec. 31. I am grateful for the opportunity to serve on the National Board, I am grateful for the amazing work by the talented and dedicated staff and I am grateful to all JACL members for your commitment and continued support of the organization!

As we begin the new year, I would like to take this opportunity to share with you our 2022 accomplishments in the following major program areas:

• **Scholarship Program:** I am sure that you have read the recent announcement of the 2023 National Scholarship Program. The JACL annually offers approximately 30 scholarship awards for students who are incoming college freshmen, undergraduates, graduates and those specializing in law and the creative/performing arts. There are also financial aid scholarships for those demonstrating a need for financial assistance.

Scholarship Program 2023 guidelines, instructions and applications have been posted on the JACL website (www.jacl.org) and can be accessed by clicking the "Youth" tab on the menu bar. Since 2021, the

application forms for this program have been completely online and the submission deadline is March 6 for the freshman application and April 3 for the nonfreshman scholarship categories.

The PNW District has been in charge of the Freshman Scholarship Selection Committee and has successfully completed its three-year run in 2022. I commend Bill Tashima and his team not only for their amazing work but also for their outstanding efforts in utilizing this committee work as a vehicle to bringing together generations of JACLers!

For the 2023 program, the Eastern District Council has graciously accepted the challenge of leading the Freshman Scholarship Committee with Linda Adams, co-president of the Washington, D.C., chapter, stepping into the chairmanship. A very warm welcome to Linda and the EDC team!

For the Upperclassman Scholarship Committee, we have been very fortunate having someone of Karl Endo's caliber and dedication leading his team members from the IDC District. They have certainly done a great job during their first year of this three-year tour.

My sincere thanks to Bill, Karl, Linda and everyone who served on the Freshman and Upperclassman Committees, David Kawamoto for his continued service as the program mentor and Program Manager Matt Weisbly, along with Patty Wada, for their excellent staff support.

• **Legacy Fund Grants Program:** First, I want to extend a very warm

welcome to Lisa Shiosaki Olsen (IDC) and Sheldon Arakaki (PNW) as the new co-chairs of the committee for the 2023 program year and thank them for their willingness to step up to the plate taking the helm of this program. Please be on the lookout for the 2023 grant program, as it will be kicked off later this month.

I also want to take this opportunity to express my deepest gratitude to former co-chairs Roberta Barton (CCDC) and Toshi Abe (EDC) for their outstanding leadership, service and many contributions leading this committee for the past four years. It was such a pleasure working with both of them.

Lastly, I want to acknowledge Patty Wada, program manager, for all her great work and contributions to the program behind the scenes.

• **Education Fundraising Campaign:** I know that all of you have heard and most likely contributed to the JACL Centennial Education Fund by now as this initiative entered into the second year of its three-year campaign in July 2022.



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» Our intent is to continue to 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. This is extremely timely and appropriate in today's challenging environment.

We are so grateful to all of you for your generous donations toward this fund. I announced at the National Convention in August that we were almost at the \$2 million milestone, with the addition of a very generous bequest from the late Mr. Joe Shikami.

To push us over the \$3 million finish line and to build up JACL's fundraising talents and capacity at the same time, we are proposing the formation of a Leadership Fundraising Committee to achieve this critical goal, and we welcome your participation. If you are interested in being part of this winning team, please contact JACL's Phillip Ozaki for more information.

Much credit for the success of this program goes to Phillip for his leadership, hard work and marketing savvy, along with contributions from everyone else on the National Staff. This has been a true team effort, and I am extremely proud to be part of the team.

• **Investment Policy Committee:** The Investment Policy Committee has done a tremendous amount of work in 2022. I am proud to report that the IPC went through a very rigorous RFP process and selected Vanguard as the next investment manager to manage funds under the stewardship of the IPC. With the selection of Vanguard, JACL will be able to realize significant cost savings in investment expenses while delivering returns consistent with JACL's investment objectives. We are currently going through the onboarding process and expect to complete this transition in 1Q23.

Kudos to my fellow IPC members for their contributions to the RFP process: Matt Farrells (MDC), Dale Ikeda (CCDC), Gerald Kita (EDC) and Chip Larouche (PNW); along with Larry Oda and David Inoue for serving as ex-officio on the IPC. I would also like to acknowledge the outstanding leadership provided by James Aoki (IDC), who initiated the RFP process when he served as the IPC chair during the first half of 2022.

In closing, I thank all of you for your continued dedication and commitment to the JACL, and I am confident that Gary Nakamura, the next vp for planning and development, will raise the bar and take all of these programs to the next level. Once again, please accept my gratitude for this opportunity to serve the JACL and my best wishes for the new year! ■

LET'S FIND 'INNOVATIVE WAYS TO HELP JACL CONTINUE TO GROW IN THE FUTURE'



By Gary Nakamura,
Incoming JACL National VP
Planning and Development

Happy New Year JACL members. I reside in Houston, Texas, and work as an independent marketing consultant. I have over 20 years of experience in the field of marketing and advertising, and I specialize in the

areas of strategic planning, creative concept development and business development.

I also have extensive community work experience, first as an advocate for older adults in the State of Texas, and for the past 15 years, as an advocate for our AAPI community in Houston. I served as chairman of the Houston-Chiba Sister City Committee from 2009-13 and served on the City of Houston Mayor's International Trade and Development Council for Asia & Australia from 2012-16.

I also served as president of the JACL Houston chapter for six years from 2011-16, during which time we had the largest number of dues-paying members in our chapter's 47-year history. I was also able to contribute to the

successful passage of a dozen pieces of legislation over the past 20 years, including advocating for Senate Bill 1055 in 2009-10, which granted the Congressional Gold Medal to our beloved Nisei veterans.

My late father, George Nakamura, was a highly decorated veteran of the Military Intelligence Service, and he was one of the very first young men to volunteer for the U.S. Army in November 1942 when he and his family were incarcerated at Gila River in Arizona.

Like so many other Nisei Veterans, my father volunteered for the U.S. Army to prove his loyalty to the country of his birth. I had the great honor of caring for my late father for almost 14 years, and during that time, I took my father to our JACL Houston meetings and

events, and my father enjoyed all the JACL gatherings immensely. This is one of the main reasons why I care so much about JACL and have devoted 15 years of my life to help develop and grow our Houston chapter.

I am very grateful to Larry Oda for inviting me to join the National Board and giving me this opportunity to serve JACL and its members on the national level. I also realize that I have very large shoes to fill by succeeding David Lin, but I will try my best to learn as much as possible and work very diligently so that I can make a positive contribution to our organization.

I am extremely fortunate to be under the tutelage of two wonderful national presidents, Larry Oda and David Lin, and I look forward to working very closely with our national staff, our national board and our chapter leaders to find innovative ways to help JACL continue to grow in the future, so that JACL can thrive for another 93 years. ■

Let's Increase Our Membership by 1,000 or More in 2023

By Dominique Mashburn,
JACL National VP of 1000 Club,
Membership and Services

Happy New Year from Southern California! I hope everyone is feeling rested and ready for 2023. As I recently stepped into this new role in JACL's Membership Department, I am eternally thankful for the assistance of Saki Mori, who truly left big footsteps filled through the impact she made at the JACL. I am so grateful to be on a diverse board filled with enlightening individuals striving to reach JACL's mission.

Entering 2022 opened my eyes to the possibilities that JACL can achieve and continue to achieve as

we are nearing the 100th year of the organization. It was reinvigorating to be able to come together in person at the chapter and national levels after two years of virtual events.

With the National Convention specifically, JACL members were able to reconnect and share their stories of navigating new paths and achievements through the height of the pandemic. These interactions and stories demonstrated the true spirit of the JACL — through perseverance and solidarity, we remain unshaken as we head into the future.

The waves of this event have been felt in multiple ways. We had many submissions for the Membership Survey, which gave us valuable information regarding our membership

at the JACL. (See Ashley Bucher's article in this issue.)

In addition, we held a New Member Orientation in October, where we had a 30 percent increase in attendance than we had initially anticipated, with new signups all the way up until two hours before the orientations started! We are eagerly looking forward to holding more virtual events this year.

The Membership Department at the JACL works very diligently to provide the best experience for the organization's members. We all want to ensure that we hear your voices for ways we can better your experience. It is through surveys, feedback forms and other avenues that we can create effective, targeted campaigns that are best-fitted for the needs of the



JACL. If you have inquiries or suggestions regarding membership and its benefits, I highly encourage you to connect with your local chapter, JACL Membership Team or myself.

My personal goals for the membership position are centered around the idea of open channels of communication. To clarify, »



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» I feel that it is essential to receive more feedback from all possible members to help the organization grow through future targeted campaigns. This will allow us to better tune into the whole of the membership's wants and needs.

We have a great opportunity to reach out to new communities this year where we can help encourage new potential members to join. And

as the individuals in this organization have already shown that they have such wonderful, inspiring ideas, we want to hear your voice!

This is key to membership maintenance and growth. We also need to continue to highlight the stories of members and chapters in order to keep the light burning as the JACL continues its mission, with its vision at the forefront.

I am happy to announce from the

Membership Department that we will be creating a campaign to reach 1,000 NEW signups for the JACL by the end of 2023.

Through survey results and more, we feel that this would be a healthy goal to reach as the average number of new memberships is between 600-700 per year. More information to come!

To note, if you are overseeing membership in your chapter, we are

currently holding monthly meetings for the National Membership Committee. Typically, it is held via Zoom on the second Monday at 6 p.m. PST/9 p.m. EST. Our next meeting will be held on Feb. 13. I am so elated to meet with our NMC members each month to hear of their insights for improving membership at large.

Thank you all for your continued support and efforts for the JACL. It

doesn't go unnoticed, and it plants seeds of success for the future. I look forward to seeing you all in future online events and in person at the 2023 National Convention in Los Angeles.

As we embrace and thrive in 2023, please keep this *Uchinaaguchi* phrase in mind . . . *Shikinoo chui shiihii shiru kurasuru* — Let's live our best lives by helping each other in this world. ■

LET'S STRENGTHEN OUR EFFORTS AND AMPLIFY OUR VOICES

By *Mika Chan*,
JACL National Youth Chairperson

Happy New Year! My name is Mika Chan, and I am the current National Youth chairperson for the JACL's National Youth/Student Council. The NY/SC would like to wish everyone a happy start to 2023 and express our gratitude for all the support and love we received in 2022. This past year was an eventful year for the NY/SC board, and we are excited for what's to come in 2023.

At the beginning of 2022, the NY/SC was focused on several projects that were hosted online via social media and Zoom. We had a virtual retreat to kick-off National Convention workshop planning and held our Day of Remembrance programming, which included a virtual speaker event featuring a Minidoka National Park Service Ranger and a series of infographics on incarceration camps featured on our social media accounts.

Throughout the spring, district youth reps conducted their

district summits to promote youth engagement on local levels. The summits varied across the board and focused on a range of topics such as local Japanese American enclaves, a Tsuru fold-in, a guided museum tour and a cultural festival.

In June, we came together for our Spring Retreat in Washington, D.C. During the retreat, we worked on convention planning in the JACL headquarters, held a summit on legislative processes with the support of the JACL fellows and connected with NY/SC alumni based in the area for a memorial tour in the National Mall.

During the summer of 2022, we focused on preparing, finalizing and conducting projects for convention in Las Vegas. We were thrilled to conduct three workshops, a youth orientation, youth luncheon, youth mixer and fundraiser in Las Vegas. After convention, we welcomed and onboarded five new district youth representatives to the 2022-23 NY/SC board, which include Remy Kageyama, Lana Kobayashi, Lyra Paez, Cameron Sueoka and Ayako

Tischler.

In the fall, we worked on gearing up and planning out our calendar year. We held our Fall Retreat in October in San Francisco's Japantown, which was full of workshops, a tour of SF Japantown and our first in-person Kaiwa Convo.

This retreat had a significant impact on our board as we learned about preserving cultural enclaves through the remaining Japantowns in the U.S. Coming out of the retreat, the board felt very motivated and inspired to incorporate our takeaways into future projects.

In the last few months of 2022, our board worked on rolling out and doing outreach for our Back to School campaign, where youth reps will be delivering presentations on the JACL to local youth organizations on college campuses.

While we had an active and momentous year in 2022, there is still so much on the horizon for NY/SC and areas of opportunity to contribute more to the JACL as a whole. On a macro level, I would like to see the JACL sustain

our momentum in engaging with social justice and advocacy spaces alongside expanding and growing our membership constituents.

While there are strong existing partnerships with other organizations and companies, I believe the JACL has the potential and ability to become a leading organization in educating and advocating for civil rights in other spaces alongside those affiliated with racial and ethnic identity.

My hope is for the NY/SC to contribute to this vision by bringing solidarity to the forefront of our actions and strengthening our efforts in building coalitions with other communities. I would like to see the young people of this organization strengthen our efforts in amplifying our voices through collaborative initiatives with others from diverse backgrounds and histories such as ours.

Lastly, I want to say a huge thank you to everyone who has supported myself and NY/SC's endeavors throughout 2022. For the first half of 2022, I served as the Pacific



Northwest Youth Representative on the board but transitioned into the National Youth Chairperson role in August after running and being elected at convention.

In both positions, I have learned that the work that NY/SC carries out is only made possible with the immense support we receive from the JACL staffers, our district boards, our sponsors and the members of this community.

I'm so excited to continue working with this board and for what NY/SC has in store for 2023. Be sure to connect with us and keep an eye out for our programming throughout the year via our social media accounts (@jaclnysc) on Instagram and Facebook! ■



By *Sheera Tamura*,
JACL National Youth Representative

On behalf of the JACL's National Youth/Student Council, we would like to wish our P.C. readership a Happy New Year! Reflecting on this past year felt very sentimental as it was a year full of "new beginnings."

We Must 'REMAIN RESILIENT IN THE FACE OF ADVERSITY'

Dating back to the late summer months, we were very fortunate to welcome a brand-new team of district youth representatives that included Lana Kobayashi (PSW), Lyra Paez (CCDC), Cameron Sueoka (IDC) and Ayako Tischler (MDC). Their presence within the NY/SC has been nothing less than inspirational, and I am in everlasting awe of their diligence and commitment toward their local and nationwide JACL communities.

In 2022, the NY/SC was very fortunate to have had the opportunity to host its fall retreat in the historical region of San Francisco's Japantown. On a personal note, this particular location held many memories of nostalgia for me, as San Francisco was the location of my very first NY/SC retreat in the spring of 2020.

Engaging in the presence of San Francisco's

Japanese American community opened our eyes to the importance of preserving this culturally historic enclave. Learning that this region is one of three remaining U.S. Japantowns led us to establish the theme of "resiliency" within all of our NY/SC programming. As the Covid-19 pandemic has forced us to remain resilient in the face of adversity, we are still committed to advocating for the social and civil rights of our nationwide communities.

As we begin to ring in the new year, the NY/SC is eager to present a plethora of meaningfully engaging youth-targeted programs and campaigns. We strive to welcome any presented challenges with an open mind, and we are humbled by the support that we've received from our greater JACL community.

As I complete the final months of my NY/

SC term, I am left with immense feelings of gratitude to every individual who has supported me on my leadership journey throughout the past four years. Never in my wildest dreams did I ever think I'd have the privilege of serving on the national board of the nation's oldest and largest AAPI organization.

From the bottom of my heart, thank you to everyone who continued to believe in me while helping me to develop as a growing community leader. Although this chapter of my life will conclude within these final remaining months, it also serves as the beginning of a lifetime of learning and interpersonal growth.

On behalf of the JACL NY/SC, we wish you all a joyous and healthy 2023, and we cannot wait to make this year our best year yet! ■

'I Challenge ALL JACLERS TO DO THEIR PART'



By Dale Ikeda,
CCDC District Governor

I've been elected to serve as co-governor with newly elected CCDC Governor Brian Tsukimura through the end of the 2023 National Convention, currently planned for July.

Starting in early 2020, my goal was to update the Legacy Fund management policy, especially to provide greater flexibility in the use of the fund. I felt I had unfinished business as a member of the original Legacy Fund Committee, established in 1989 during my first term as CCDC governor and board member.

At the February 2020 board meeting, my motion to create a Legacy Fund Review Committee was approved. I was appointed chair. The LFRC issued its report to the board on April 8, 2022, including a new

Legacy Fund Management Policy. The National Council unanimously adopted the policy during its morning session on Aug. 6, 2022.

The proposed policy included an aspirational goal of reaching and maintaining an inflation adjusted amount based on the funds raised referred to as an "Inflation Adjusted Principal." The policy was amended by the National Council to an "Inflation Adjusted Corpus."

The IAC was considered by the LFRC but was changed to an IAP because that amount could be readily determined, whereas the IAC could not. As other members of the LFRC and I have warned, the IAC has yet to be determined, making it largely unworkable as a guide to fund spending. Many thanks to the LFRC members.

My goal for 2023 is to amend the policy to include a mechanism for the board to be able to access up to 2 percent of the fund annually for unforeseen emergencies upon a three-fourths majority vote. Then, National Legal Counsel Brandon Mita recommended that the policy be accompanied by a bylaw amendment. The proposal was approved by the board in 2022 and recognized by the current board. Due to technical

deadlines for bylaw amendments, this part of the policy will be submitted to the National Council at the 2023 National Convention.

The LFRC also recommended that the board adopt certain policies, including periodic reports from the LFRC to the board and JACL's members regarding the Legacy Fund, board member training relating to fiduciary duties regarding the fund and other endowed funds and improved recordkeeping and accounting of each of those funds. These policies will be taken up by the board at its January meeting and, hopefully, adopted by the time this article is published.

While working on the LFRC, it came to my attention that the JACL Investment Policy Committee played an important role in establishing an investment policy statement selecting the fund's portfolio manager and supervising the performance of the portfolio manager.

In February 2022, I agreed to an appointment to the IPC. The IPC has been meeting regularly. It was a busy 2022. With the board's approval, the IPC sought proposals for a new portfolio manager and recommended to the board that the Vanguard Group succeed Highmark Capital Management. The board approved Vanguard

as the new portfolio manager. The transition should be completed by the time this article has been published.

My term on the IPC terminated on Dec. 31, 2022. The IPC members serve three-year staggered terms. I've recommended Travis Nishi, Clovis chapter, as my replacement. National President Larry Oda has appointed Travis.

The IPC consists of seven members. I have agreed to serve an additional seven months, through the 2023 National Convention.

I commend President Larry Oda in focusing the board on the future of the JACL and the structural changes that will ensure JACL's viability, relevance and influence in the future. I have expressed the view that JACL's reliance on a "bottom-up" approach that relies on the strength of chapters and districts may need to change.

This is informed by my experience with the Clovis chapter and CCDC over the last 45 years. The leadership has relied on the same people for years, even decades, many of whom are at retirement age.

Recruiting, mentoring and developing younger leaders has largely been unsuccessful. As a result, several CCDC chapters are inactive and no longer in good standing. CCDC has struggled to fill the governor's position, hence my service as governor in my 70s.

My sense is that CCDC's experience is not unique. I have promoted consideration of reducing the number of vice presidents at the national level, providing strong financial support for the National Staff and a more "top-down" structure.

These are challenging times for JACL with the passing of the Nisei backbone of the organization and the aging of the Sansei, who have stepped in to fill the void. Will the Yonsei and Gosei generation perpetuate JACL?

The failure to have candidates for national office at recent National Conventions does not bode well for the continued viability and vitality of JACL. I challenge all JACLers to do their part, accept leadership positions at the chapter, district and national levels and recruit and mentor new members and future leaders of JACL.

I also challenge the Yonsei and Gosei to step up and assume leadership roles. JACL has a hard-fought reputation in Congress and in the civil rights community as a premier civil rights organization. We also have a national network of chapters that would be difficult to create from scratch.

JACL has a proud history and can have a continuing legacy as a premier civil rights organization in America if we all do our part. I am an optimist and hope that JACL will continue to play an important role in American life for many years to come. ■

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'There are many different "JACLs," Not Just One'



By Eric Langowski,
MDC District Governor

My favorite historian once told me that there are many different "JACLs," not just one. JACL is a place

where thousands of us can come together strengthened by our diversity. I represent the Midwest, and I am proud of what we have been able to accomplish this year.

Some of our greatest successes were the Chicago chapter's successful support of the Teaching Equitable Asian American Community History Act in Illinois, the Twin Cities chapter named Chapter of the Biennium at the JACL National Convention and in our members, who hosted dozens of events to spread the Japanese American story in coalition with Muslim, Black and other communities of color to fight racial injustice.

I broadly view National JACL as having two primary job functions, which can be oversimplified into "National" work (legislative advocacy, organizational coalitions, amicus briefs) and membership/internal community work.

National's recent work shoring up its finances and hiring incredible new staff puts us in the best position to complete our goals in years by securing Federal funding for programs and prominently advocating our priorities in Washington, D.C. Our staff are key to this work and do an amazing job. I am especially proud that JACL remains a competitive

employer in the Asian American advocacy space, which is a key priority of the National Board.

We remain at a crossroads on the second function. The long-term strategic shift of JACL staff from regional offices to centralized San Francisco, Los Angeles and Washington, D.C., offices means that our 1,000 or so members in the Midwest are about 1,000 miles away from the closest national office.

The continued exemplary work of staff to engage our members across this distance is commendable through new programs like the Otoshidama Campaign, but there is continual tension between JACL's position as a national organization and the

placement of staffing only on the coasts. JACL in the Midwest is often one of the only Asian American organizations in town, and the Midwest Office served a crucial role in hate crime response and advocacy work across our expansive region.

Our leaders in Cincinnati, Dayton, Indianapolis, Milwaukee, Chicago, Minneapolis, Omaha, St. Louis, Detroit and Houston serve alongside our Youth/Student and Young Professional Caucus Representative on the Midwest District Board. We continue to advocate for the hiring of a Midwest Regional Director or JACL staff to be placed in the Midwest and look forward to gathering in L.A. in the summer! ■

'SHARING KNOWLEDGE' Is Key to Growing JACL



By Lisa Shiosaki Olsen,
IDC District Governor

This 2023 New Year brought especially poignant reflections on my time with JACL because the sweet and persistent woman who asked me to join the Idaho Falls chapter recently passed away.

Taka Nukaya knew my family, who belonged to the Pocatello-Blackfoot chapter, but I had not been actively involved in JACL since college. Taka taught reading at my children's elementary school and invited me to join her chapter and purchase bento boxes from the IFJACL each time I picked my children up from school. She had to ask me to join repeatedly before I finally committed.

I then received a call from the chapter president, Brittney Harada Klepich, who invited me to attend an upcoming general meeting. She asked to be on the chapter board at that meeting, and I have continued to serve on the board since then.

I am thankful to Taka for repeatedly asking me to join and Brittney for inviting me to the meeting because my journey in JACL has been filled with amazing people, incredible learning opportunities and immense personal growth. I can truly say *Okage Sama De*: I am who I am because of you.

I am grateful for the dedication and service of the many individuals who serve in the Intermountain District Council. IDC would not function without the chapters, presidents, youth representatives and board members who serve. I appreciate their time and willingness to further the work of JACL in their states despite the business of their personal lives.

Communities are blessed due to the Day of Remembrance and educational programs held in Idaho, Utah and Colorado. Cemeteries are decorated and cleaned to honor our ancestors. Bichapter and trichapter picnics are held to strengthen and renew friendships and to honor traditional events. Letters are written, and contacts are made to preserve the history of our community and protect the civil rights of individuals. These are only a few of the ways that each of the chapters in IDC serves their community and preserves the legacy of JACL. I am grateful for all of their work.

I am also thankful to individuals who share their time and expertise on the National Board. I feel that I have learned more this year about the inner

workings of JACL than I have in all of my past years combined. Thank you to Sheldon Arakaki for taking the time to explain how to analyze reports and apply that knowledge to my chapter and district. I truly value your ability to mentor and inspire.

My focus for 2023 as the IDC governor is to implement a systematic approach to training and mentoring. So many individuals in my district have expertise that can and should be shared with others to strengthen local chapters and prepare for continued leadership. Sharing knowledge and helping one another is why I strongly believe in the power of JACL. There is power in words and education.

I wish all of you a happy and healthy year as we work together in JACL. ■

'We Must Use Our Voices to AID AND UPLIFT'

By Michael Asada,
EDC District Governor

During this upcoming "Year of the Rabbit," I would like to extend my sincere best wishes to everyone for a Happy New Year (*Akemashite Omedetōgozaimasu*). The shift in energy will be significant as we move out of 2022.

With respect to the Chinese Zodiac, the year can be an exciting yet tumultuous time of new beginnings. While this may sound ominous for 2023, rest assured, JACL will weather the challenges as we have the good fortune to rely upon the creative energy of our new National Board leaders.

I am grateful for the national leadership and staff for their selfless commitment to sustain a vital pulse for this timeless organization. Clearly without your passionate efforts to promote our cause as an advocate for social justice, our vocal support for violations in civil rights for all Americans would not be heard.

In addition, many kudos go out to the *Pacific Citizen* editorial staff and contributors. You have ensured that our voices on various human rights

issues and chapter news remains at the forefront of all of our readers. Thank you for your dedicated service and professional manner.

Every new year is a moment of rebirth. We sweep out the ashes of the old year and prepare for a brighter day. Yet, we still face the unwarranted attack on the AAPI community, and JACL remains committed to STOP AAPI HATE.

We are calling on federal and local governments, companies and organizations and leadership of all kinds to help put an end to AAPI Hate. AAPI hate is nothing new. While the Covid-19 pandemic has created a sharp increase in anti-Asian sentiment and violence against our communities, racism and xenophobia are deeply rooted in U.S. history.

Our communities are still hurting. AAPIs have already been disproportionately affected by the Covid-19 pandemic. In our efforts to recover from the ongoing pandemic and rise in hate incidents, we must use our voices to aid and uplift those most impacted, particularly LGBTQ+, women and our elderly.

In 2023, we need peace. Peace



with one another through dialogue to end conflict. Peace with nature and our climate to build a more sustainable world. Peace on the streets and in our communities with the full protection of all human rights. Peace in our places of worship with respect for each other's beliefs. And peace online, free from hate speech and abuse.

In 2023, let's put peace at the heart of our words and actions. Together, let's make 2023 a year when peace is restored to our lives, our homes and our world.

On behalf of the Eastern District Council, we extend our sincere best wishes to everyone in 2023 for a healthy and prosperous New Year. May the call for peace be heard throughout our daily living and message to our fellow citizens. ■

Looking Forward to Welcoming JACL in 2023

By Ryan Yoshikawa,
PSW District Governor

In 2022, the JACL was able to host its first in-person National Convention after two years of modified livelihood. It was a great opportunity for everyone to reconvene with old friends, introduce us to the faces of new ones and start laying the foundation for the bright future. I am looking forward to all the exciting opportunities and programs our district and chapter can hold for the near future.

In 2023, the PSW district is excited to host the next iteration of the JACL National Convention in Little Tokyo. We are excited to invite everyone from across the country to enjoy the festivities of the convention with the historic Little Tokyo and the Japanese American National Museum.

The convention has not been in Southern California in over 10 years. This will be a great opportunity to showcase how Little Tokyo has progressed and thrived over the pandemic and the anti-Asian hate wave



of the past few years.

I want to focus on sharing the mission and ideals of the JACL to everyone, especially young adults in the Southern California area. The convention should be an amazing way to demonstrate what the JACL represents and how it brings everyone from across the country together toward a common goal.

I would like to work with all the chapters in the PSW district to invite nonmembers to enjoy the National Convention and hopefully share why we enjoy being a part of the organization and a part of positive change in the country.

The PSW District Board wishes everyone a Happy New Year, and we all look forward to seeing everyone in-person soon! ■

'JACL Needs to Be a Much-Needed Beacon of Hope'



By Carol Kawase, NCWNP District Governor

Each new year, one often contemplates how to resolve to change our lives for the better. With 2023 shaping up to be a new normal post-Covid year, I look forward to seeing how our communities plan ways to be together again. It's a much anticipated challenge, but I'm confident that chapters and their stalwart members will rise to the occasion as they did admirably during the pandemic.

In determining how to move our district forward in the new year, I paused to reflect on my past 50-year involvement in JACL. I am struck by how our nation has become so polarized by political discord.

The current political climate fueling anti-Asian hate, racial scapegoating and violence and the current immi-

gration dilemma is especially alarming. It's easy to become disheartened. I'm reminded of a specific moment in time as a participant in the first joint JACL-OCA Washington, D.C. Leadership Summit.

After a lovely dinner hosted by longtime JACL members, Pat and Lily Okura, Pat mentioned his epiphany moment, the realization that after 60 years of social justice work, he couldn't see the rewards of true social equity. Our group was stunned into contemplative silence but realized the gravity of his observation and the work cut out for us.

Our current state of affairs and Pat's comment makes me realize that with each generation, history seems to be willfully bent on repeating itself over and over again. JACL needs to be a much-needed beacon of hope to continue the tireless work dedicated to civil rights, social advocacy, social justice and a strong voice defending all minority groups. This is why life commitment to JACL continues to be important to me.

There is always strength in numbers. It's imperative to expand the organization to include as many diverse members as possible who believe in and will aspire to maintain social justice for all.

Let's invite and include non-JACL communities and organizations to join in the power of strength in numbers. It can become an arsenal of resources and voices to come together to support one another in times of need. National JACL is a part of many coalitions and collaborations. We can support this effort regionally by creating alliances at the local level.

Working together, collaborating, sharing ideas, creating connections through allyship, as well as mentoring the next generation are my long-term goals for the NCWNP District.

My hope is to strengthen the organization to weather the next 50 years of repeating history by sharing the successes, teaching the lessons and inspiring people to join in being committed to continuing the dream inspired by Martin Luther King, that the following generations will one day live in a nation where they will not be judged by how they look, but by the content of their character.

"Together again" has greater meaning for me because not only does it apply to the challenge of post-Covid gatherings, but also the need to gather together with other diverse groups for greater allyship to secure strength in numbers. ■

Let's Get 'BACK TO BASICS'

By Sheldon Arakaki, PNW District Governor

A PATH FORWARD

At the most recent National Convention, I asked Executive Director David Inoue during the National Council session a question along the lines of "At the end of the next biennium, what will this organization look like or what will we have accomplished with this proposed 20-plus percent increase in the budget?"

While an opportunity for David Inoue to express a vision or measurable time-bound goals, this floor question was also for all JACLers present to think about what we are doing and where are we headed but in the context of a two-year time horizon.

What I look forward to in 2023 from the second Oda administration is the start of a vision and strategic planning process with a time horizon greater than 10-plus years that is not exclusively top-down or bottom-up, involves our key community partners and allies and is not decidedly California-centric.

JACL policy focus can be organized into three categories: issues of interest or concern primarily with Japanese Americans, issues of interest or concern with Asian Americans and issues of common interest of

concern with allies such as the Anti-Defamation League or the LGBTQIA community. How will these areas of policy inform our vision and strategic planning process?

This will be a complex undertaking. One year from now in the 2024 January issue of the *Pacific Citizen*, we will be reading about the first year of this multiyear effort and what the work plan will be for 2024. Readers should be aware that 2024 is a board officer election year, and if the current officers do not stand for re-election, then we must make sure that the next set of officers are committed to continue the work and a path forward.

BACK TO BASICS

Meanwhile, I also look forward to operationally getting back to basics in 2023. VP for General Operations Carol Kawamoto spoke of the need to reinvigorate the program owner and program manager relationship. There are work plans and processes owned and managed.

National programs exist to recruit new members, engage existing and help retain members. The programs occur more or less at the same time each year on the calendar. Applications open, applications close, the program executes and outcomes are presented, whether a trip to Japan, a



scholarship or a visit to Capitol Hill to advocate for a policy issue.

For me and my fellow governors, our challenge is to understand the programs, their purpose, intent and accessibility. We can use that to assist interested chapters to be proactive and not reactive by incorporating these national opportunities in their activities for the year. We can plan for this.

And with intentional participation by our members, we can produce better feedback for the programs to see if we have achieved what we set out to do.

For example, the D.C. Leadership Summit application process will close, and the participants will be notified by the time this is published. The summit will occur by the spring National Board meeting. Will the 2023 participants be involved with their chapters once they return and apply what they've learned and experienced? Or one year from now? Ask your governor and the officer who owns this program. ■

THE RESULTS ARE IN: Membership Survey Reveals the Diversity and Unique Journeys of JACL MEMBERS

By Ashley Bucher, JACL Membership Coordinator



A total of 1,095 — that's the number of JACL supporters who took our membership survey last summer — far more than we ever expected. While most participated online, nearly two dozen mailed their responses. To those who took part, we can't thank you enough for your time and thoughtful answers. The valuable insights we gained from you will guide our membership strategy this year and beyond.

One of our biggest takeaways is the sheer diversity of our members and supporters and how much more diverse membership is than just two years ago (when the last survey was conducted).

For example, nonbinary folks make up 2 percent of our membership. Overall, 2 in 3 new members are mixed or not Japanese. Sansei make up 50 percent, but Yonsei, Gosei and Shin-Nisei are on the rise. Some members care about civil rights in general, while others hope we focus on AANHPI (Asian American, Native Hawaiian and Pacific Islander) issues specifically.

Beyond demographics, we also have a better understanding of our new members' motivations for joining and renewing. Interestingly, almost half of current members joined to get involved with the community and connect with their heritage, and about half say they'll renew for civil rights.

Looking at members who joined in the past two years specifically, trends show younger members joined out of a desire to connect with their family history and identity, older members joined out of a desire to connect or reconnect with family history and the JACL/JA community they grew up with and Shin-Nikkei folks joined due to an interest in civil rights for all.

From these responses, we have a better idea of who our members are, what they desire from JACL and what's important to them.

Another key takeaway is what the customer journey for new members looks like — essentially, someone's journey of not knowing what JACL is to signing up to become a member.

Results show that around 70 percent of new members first heard about JACL from their family or friends, which speaks to the value of "planting the seed" with loved ones. Nearly 1 in 5 simply found our website and signed up, without attending an event or following us on social media for a bit first. Many ultimately became a member due to family history, a desire to give back or feeling encouraged by a JACL member. Gaining a better understanding of what new members' JACL journeys look like helps us decide how to appeal to potential members.

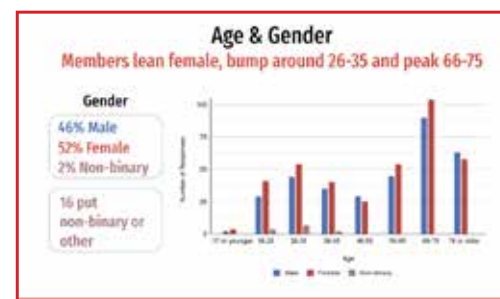
Other compelling results include insights from nonmembers/lapsed members in our database (e.g., about half say they would consider becoming a member — they just need to be asked!) as well as premium/life members (e.g., 40 percent felt compelled to upgrade because they wanted to give more support).

Looking ahead, we're excited for these results to inform the work we do at JACL, especially targeted campaigns focused on membership.

I'm hopeful to see how our growing diversity and different experiences make our community stronger together and am optimistic this will bolster our pursuit of social justice.

Do you know someone who should be a JACL member? Feel free to reach out to me at abucher@jacl.org or (415) 921-5225, ext. 25. I'm happy to get in touch with them or share materials with you!

Special thanks to Brigham Walker for sharing his expertise; Phillip Ozaki for his guidance and input; Robert Hirai and Eileen Lamphere for transcribing mail responses; Matthew Weisbly, the *Pacific Citizen* and Tomiko Ismail for getting the word out; and the National Staff, National Board, NY/SC and YPC for their feedback. ■



Part of the results for member age and gender

In MEMORIAM



Abe, Albert, 92, Tacoma, WA, Oct. 5, 2022; veteran (Army); B.A., M.S., Portland State University; he was active in Japanese Ancestral Society of Portland, Japanese American Museum of Oregon, JACL, Iko no Kai (hot lunch program), Portland Bentham Lions Club, Oregon Nisei Veterans and Japan-America Society of Oregon; awarded the Order of the Sacred Treasure, Gold and Silver Rays by the Japanese gov't; he was predeceased by his wife, Patsy; he is survived by his children, Debby Abe and John Abe; sister, Polly Ann Caughey; he is also survived by many nephews, nieces and other relatives.

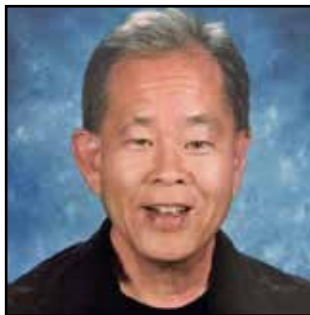
Fujiwara, Betty Taka, 92, Los Angeles, CA, Nov. 14, 2022; she is survived by her children, Nancy (Carlos) Codina, Robert Fujiwara, Ron Fujiwara and Dan Fujiwara.



Hamada, Masako, 99, Spokane, WA, Jan. 10, 2022; she was active with Boise JACL, Hospital Auxiliary, Senior Citizens Center, First Congregational Church, Historical Society, Visitor's Center, Elkettes and American Legion Auxiliary, Highland Park United Methodist Church; she was predeceased by her husband, Harry H. Hamada; she is survived by her children, Bonnie (David DeGraff) and Alice (Vance Edman); sisters-in-law, Ame Kobayashi and Joan Hamada; she is also survived by many nieces, nephews and friends.

Hatae, Masaji, 93, Los Angeles, CA, July 23, 2022; during WWII, he was incarcerated at the Manzanar WRA Center in CA; veteran (Army, Korean War); UCLA and USC; he was active in Bella Vista Optimist Club, El Patio Investment Club and Union Church of L.A.; he was predeceased by his sister, Junko Yamashita; he is survived by his wife, Grace; children, David (Audrey) and Sharon (Joseph) Vargas; sister, Mary Nomura; gc: 6.

Inouye, Fumie, 91, Bonsall, CA, July 29, 2022.



Ishida, Randall, 70, Sacramento, CA, Aug. 18, 2022; B.A., San Jose State Univ., journalism; he is survived by his brothers, Dean (Tami) and Brent; 2 nieces; brother-in-law, Lee Kusumoto.

TRIBUTE

TOSHIO INAHARA



Jan. 9, 1921-Dec. 9, 2022

Dr. Toshio Inahara passed away Dec. 9, 2022, at 101 years of age. He is survived by his four children, six grandchildren and three great-grandchildren. He was the eldest of five brothers and survived them all.

Toshio was born on Jan. 9, 1921, in Tacoma, Wash., where he spent his early childhood years. He faced challenging times in his youth when his father decided to give up a successful business in Tacoma and move his family to Hillsboro, Ore., to take up farming. Toshio managed the farm and interpreted for his parents while attending grade school. Despite these responsibilities, he was still able to participate in grade school, then high school sports. He played JV football and varsity baseball at Hillsboro High School and was the sports editor for the school paper.

Toshio was enrolled at the University of Oregon in 1938, but first took a year off to be the general contractor to build his parents' house. He continued to manage the farm for the next few years until the war began. Toshio was denied an enlistment in the Air Force for ancestral reasons in 1942. His family was able to relocate to eastern Oregon until 1943 when he enrolled in the University of Wisconsin for a year. Subsequently, he transferred to the University of Oregon to complete his undergraduate degree. He then attended the University of Oregon medical school. While a student in Wisconsin, he met Chizuko Yamamoto in 1944, in Chicago, and they later married in Portland in 1949 during his last year in medical school.

After receiving his medical degree in 1950, he completed a surgical residency in Portland, followed by a two-year vascular fellowship at Massachusetts General Hospital in Boston. Toshio and his young family returned to Portland where he became the first vascular surgeon in the state of Oregon. He had a long and very successful career at St. Vincent Hospital in Portland while pioneering new vascular surgical techniques and developing the Inahara-Pruitt vascular shunt before retiring in 1994.

In retirement, Toshio enjoyed his grandchildren and great-grandchildren, golfing, fishing, clamming, gardening and traveling. He had a deep love and appreciation of nature, art and design, music and good food. In his last years, he spent time writing and self-published four books. He led a rich and brilliant life.

Johnson, Hatsuko Shoji, 84, Irvine, CA, Oct. 25, 2022; she was predeceased by her husband, Clarence, and brothers, Kazuo Shoji, Isamu Shoji, Hideo Shoji, Takashi Shoji, Keigo Shoji, Masaru Shoji, Minoru Shoji and Kunio Shoji; she is survived by her children, Shunichi Ronald Johnson and Cynthia Ann Heinemann; gc: 4.

Tsuruda, Kayo, 99, Fullerton, CA, Oct. 24, 2022; she was predeceased by her husband, Dave, and her son, Gary; she is survived by her daughter, Nancy; she is also survived by many nieces, nephews and other relatives; gc: 2; ggc: 3.



Kinoshita, Masayuki, 95, Lodi, CA. The Kinoshita family was evacuated from Lodi to the WRA Relocation Center in Rohwer, Ark., for three years. A veteran, Army and USAF; AA, San Joaquin Delta College; BA, CSU Stanislaus; he was predeceased by his son, Kenneth Masami; sisters, Sadako Kinoshita, Misao Janet Sugimoto and Eiko Nishimori; he is survived by his wife, Yoko, sister, Mieko Shirley Komatsu, brother, Akira David (Naomi) Kinoshita; several nephews and a niece and relatives in Japan.

Yamamoto, Sachiko, 88, Hilo, HI, Aug. 27, 2022; she was active in Hilo Higashi Hongwanji Mission, Hilo Hospital Retirees; she is survived by her sister, Miyuki Masuda; she is also survived by many nephews, nieces and cousins.

TRIBUTE

CHITOSE YASUMOTO



Chitose "Chibi" Yasumoto passed away peacefully on Dec. 31, 2021, at the age of 94. Chibi was predeceased by her husband of 53 years, John, and brothers Larry and Leo. She is survived by her son, Jason, and daughter, Liane; brother Stan, nieces and nephews, and many other relatives.

Chibi was born to Kenichi and Tonayo Yamamoto in Honolulu, Hawaii, and moved to Los Angeles when she was six years old. She and her family were interned in Gila River, Ariz., during WWII. After the war ended, Chibi attended UCLA for two years and then transferred to UC Berkeley and earned her BA in General Curriculum (Sociology, Psychology and Education).

In the '60s, Chibi was active in the San Francisco Japanese American Citizens League, where she served as board secretary. It was there that she met and eventually married John, who was serving as board president. They had two children, Jason and Liane.

Chibi worked as a paraprofessional while her children were young so she could be home with them after school and share the same vacation schedules. As they grew older and became more independent, she took a job as a medical transcriber at S.F. General Hospital. Later, she worked as a secretary at the Buddhist Church of America.

Chibi and John relished traveling abroad, but their favorite destination was Chibi's birthplace of Honolulu, where they found the most pleasure simply spending time with special Ohana. Hawaii was her home.

Chibi loved children, orchids, and See's chocolates. Her varied hobbies over the years included Ikebana (Japanese flower arranging), sewing and knitting, hula and tap dancing, sudoku and jigsaw puzzles. She enjoyed watching "Dancing With the Stars" (even calling to vote when Kristi Yamaguchi and Apolo Anton Ohno competed!), and rooting for her Warriors, especially Steph Curry because she thought he was "the best" and "cute!"

We are extremely grateful for her wisdom and compassion and miss her dearly. We miss her warm cheerful nature, her thoughtfulness and her ability to see the brighter side of life. All of these attributes in addition to her patience, resilience and love continue to guide us. She remains our true warrior forever.

*"Aloha 'oe, aloha 'oe
(Farewell to thee, farewell to thee)
E ke onaona noho i ka lipo
(The sweet and gentle one living in the distance)
One fond embrace,
A ho'i a'e au
(Ere I depart)
Until we meet again."*

If you would like to make a gift in Chibi's memory, please consider the Buddhist Church of San Francisco (1881 Pine Street, San Francisco, CA 94109) or Coming Home Hospice (115 Diamond Street, San Francisco, CA 94114).

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PLACE A TRIBUTE

'In Memoriam' is a free listing that appears on a limited, space-available basis. Tributes honor your loved ones with text and photos and appear in a timely manner at the rate of \$20/column inch.

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