



PACIFIC CITIZEN

JACLers convened in the City of Brotherly Love and Sisterly Affection for its annual confab.

PHOTO: SUSAN YOKOYAMA

2024 JAACL NATIONAL CONVENTION PHILADELPHIA *Looking into the Future Together*

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CELEBRATING
95
Years

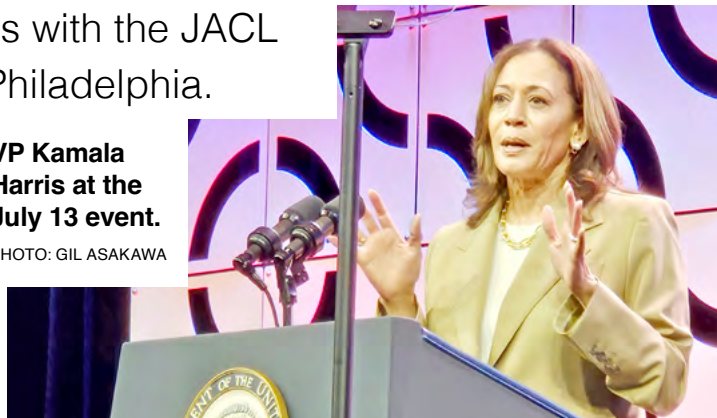
ANALYSIS: Harris Headlines Historic Presidential Town Hall

Veep's speech coincides with the JACL National Convention in Philadelphia.

By George Toshio Johnston, Senior Editor

VP Kamala Harris at the July 13 event.

PHOTO: GIL ASAKAWA



Let's face it: On July 13, calling it a Presidential Town Hall was borderline false advertising. Neither of the presumptive Republican or Democratic nominees for the U.S. presidency were on the bill for the live and in-person event at the Pennsylvania Convention Center.

The combined potential voting blocs of the event's sponsor, APIA Vote, as well as OCA and JACL, all of which were present at the same time in the same city, did not garner enough interest for either former President Donald Trump or incumbent President Joe Biden to show up. (The latter, by comparison, was there in person on July 16 for the NAACP Convention in Las Vegas.)

Post-July 21, however, having Vice President Kamala Harris headline the Presidential Town Hall now looks smart and prescient.

Under any circumstance, seeing and hearing the vice president of the United States in person is a rare, historic and memorable event. For the 1,200 who came to see and hear VP Harris that Saturday — not to mention the thousands more who livestreamed the event or watched the broadcast on Fox and PBS — as the keynote speaker, there was an added layer significance: It was, in retrospect, one of the last public appearances Harris would make as Biden's running mate for his re-election bid as the presumptive presidential candidate for the Democratic Party.

Meantime, on the same day that

Harris took the stage in Philadelphia, elsewhere in the same state, the former president and presumptive Republican presidential candidate survived an assassination attempt in the town of Butler, more than 300 miles from Philadelphia.

That attack resulted in the deaths of the gunman, who was killed by a Secret Service sharpshooter, and a man in the crowd who was felled by a round fired from the assassin's rifle, as well as critical injuries to two audience members in attendance at the rally.

By July 15, former President Trump — whose right ear was said by authorities to have been grazed by one of the gunman's bullets — was in Milwaukee, Wis., to attend the Republican National Convention and announce his running mate, Ohio Sen. J.D. Vance, with both that announcement and the assassination attempt adding momentum to Trump's bid to retake the White House.

Then, just eight days after Harris' Philadelphia appearance, the 81-year-old Biden delivered a historic, head-spinning and potentially game-changing announcement: He would not seek a second term. Furthermore, he endorsed the younger

and more vibrant and vigorous Harris to lead the ticket as the Democrat's presumptive candidate for the U.S. presidency come Nov. 5. In the chess match for the White House, it was a momentum-shifting move that thus far has been a boon to Harris.

Looking back, was there anything of significance on display that day or that Harris said in Philadelphia that might augur what is to come now that America now has its first-ever woman of South Asian and African American heritage running for the most-powerful political position in the world?

The answer is yes, both positive and negative.

First, some pluses. Regarding the growth potential for Asian Americans in politics, on display July 13 on the same bill as Harris were several Asian American politicians, national and local (Philadelphia City Councilmember Nina Ahmad), as well as many local-level AANHPI community leaders.

Reps. Judy Chu, Jill Tokuda and Ted Lieu, as well as Sen. Mazie Hirono, stand to gain political power and prestige should Harris become POTUS. They were there for her in Philadelphia and presumably, should she win, Harris will be there

for them when it comes to getting her support for their respective re-election bids — or for cabinet-level, ambassadorial and other high-level appointments.

Another plus: If true to her word, Harris should be an ally on the issue of saving Asian American ethnic enclaves and historic sites from being paved over by developers unsympathetic to both the historic significance of those sites and the displacement of any low-income residents therein.

Said Harris: "President Biden and I have also addressed many long-standing inequities, including inequities like the lasting effect of so-called urban renewal projects, including right here in Philadelphia, the Vine Street Expressway decades ago. That expressway was built to cut right through Chinatown."

Today, the issue in Philadelphia is a new sports arena that threatens its Chinatown. There is also the issue of saving what is left of Salt Lake City's historic Japantown from yet another sports arena. Furthermore, there is the preservation of historic integrity of Japanese American incarceration sites that are also facing changes from encroaching development.

Then there is the issue of the rise in anti-Asian hate crimes and related incidents, not to mention the rise in modern-day alien land laws. As a woman who is South Asian from her mother's lineage, Harris has an inherent stake in fighting the problem and the potential to use the powers of the presidency, if elected, to take strong stands against perpetrators and her past professional background to ensure that said perpetrators are prosecuted to the full extent of the law.

» See TOWN HALL on page 8

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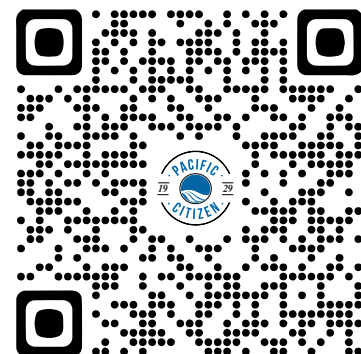
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2024 SPRING CAMPAIGN

'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





FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

NOT THE LESSONS EXPECTED FROM CONVENTION

By David Inoue, JACL Executive Director

As National Council drew to a close this year, there was a sense of calm that we had successfully navigated passage of a resolution calling for a ceasefire in Gaza and an emergency resolution on protecting Salt Lake City's remaining Japantown icons. The budget had passed unanimously, and we were looking forward to the APIAVote Presidential Townhall featuring Vice President Kamala Harris. Unfortunately, the Trump campaign elected not to participate.

Part of the reasoning for the Trump campaign's nonparticipation was that he was across the state at another event in Western Pennsylvania.

Word was that they didn't want to have "competing" events in the same state. Minutes before we began our Sayonara Gala, former President Donald Trump was shot in an apparent assassination attempt at that event in Butler, Pa.

Where typically we would be riding the wave of euphoria following the conclusion of convention, particularly with an event as significant as hearing from the vice president, instead, we interrupted the gala to share the news, and rather than our traditional statement about the successes of convention, we were focused on a response to the shooting, just as we had done five years prior after two mass shootings the weekend we concluded our convention in Salt Lake City.

While the passage of the Gaza ceasefire resolution highlighted the desire for occasional engagement on what might be considered more foreign affairs issues, the attempt on President Trump's life is a quick reminder that where JACL is most important to the dialogue is in domestic issues.

And even then, we have expanded our breadth of engagement. During the Obama administration, we took a strong position supporting universal health care. Although I was not in a position to influence this much at the time, I was working in expanding access to health care for the unhoused, and seeing JACL engage in this way was energizing for someone whose work would be directly supported by expansion of public support for health care.

Gun violence is another one of these issues we have not historically been as engaged in, nor has the broader Asian American Native Hawaiian Pacific Islander community, but we have been touched significantly by guns whether it is my memories of Asian business owners standing on their rooftops during the Rodney King riots to protect their business or the tragedy of the Monterey Park and Half Moon Bay shootings.

While our core mission continues to ensure the memory of what happened to Japanese Americans during World War II remains relevant, where that relevancy is found may shift and develop to include the importance of health care or the sad reminder that the Second Amendment does not offer protection from the tyranny of government overreach.

These are lessons learned from the Japanese American incarceration experience. Sam Mihara often tells the story of how his father lost his vision because he didn't have access to an ophthalmologist at Heart Mountain to treat his glaucoma.

I can't help but laugh when I hear Second Amendment rights advocates make the ridiculous claim that had Japanese Americans been armed and resisted incarceration with guns, our community would have been left alone. I am sure this would not have been the outcome of an armed conflict in Little Tokyo.

While the traditional energy of convention may have been lost, especially one where we had the excitement of working with OCA and APIAVote, we must draw energy from what happened with President Trump.

Recognize JACL's role in fostering difficult conversations, just as we did in reaching overwhelming support for challenging resolutions and a difficult budget. We can play a role in reducing the toxicity in politics and tackling challenging issues like gun violence prevention.

As your national staff works toward this in Washington, D.C., I hope that you will also do so in your local communities. At this year's convention, we celebrated 40 years of the Leadership Summit. The goal of that program is not to simply bring our members to Washington, D.C., but ensure that those ambassadors understand the power of working in coalition with partners like OCA and APIAVote and carry that spirit back home.

You don't need to be a Leadership Summit alum to do this, just be a JACL member and reach out to others in your community that share our values to work collaboratively and strive to be better Americans for a greater America.

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



LEGAL-EASE: AN ATTORNEY'S PERSPECTIVE

Americans Are Living Longer

By Judd Matsunaga, Esq.

I have two goals in life. My first goal is to live to be 100 years old. My second goal is to bowl a perfect 300 game. My bowling buddies at the Nikkei bowling leagues say I've got a better chance to make it to 100. Fortunately for me (and you, too), the CDC National Center for Health Statistics says the 100-plus population is living longer (*source: www.cdc.gov/nchs/data/databriefs/db233.pdf*).

"How much longer?" you might ask. Well, the L.A. Dodgers recently recognized 110-year-old Yoshiko Miwa on Japanese Heritage night. She is believed to be the second-oldest person living in California and the oldest

Japanese American in the country.

The good news is that studies have shown that the total number of Americans living to age 100 or older is going up.

However, the bad news is that Alzheimer's increases with age. It is the only Top 10 cause of death that cannot be prevented, cured or even slowed. Sounds frightening? You bet.

No one likes to think about the possibility of becoming mentally incapacitated. However, having a plan in place ensures that your wishes will be honored if and when cognitive impairment arises. By procrastinating, you are doing yourself and your loved ones a great disservice.

With Alzheimer's and dementia

affecting millions of people each year, it is increasingly important that individuals have an estate plan before symptoms appear.

Legal capacity is the ability to understand and appreciate the consequences of one's actions and make rational decisions. Creating an estate plan requires someone to have the mental capacity to understand and make judgments regarding the nature and consequences of decisions made. As long as the person has legal capacity, he or she should take part in legal planning.

Here's the key — a medical diagnosis of Alzheimer's or other dementia does not mean "incapacity." Specific laws can vary by state, but a guiding principle is a person's current mental state — usually being "of sound mind" — and not a specific diagnosis. A lawyer can help determine what level of legal capacity is required for a particular document, as it can vary from one type of document to another.

In most cases, if a person with dementia is able to understand the meaning and importance of a given legal document, he or she likely has

the legal capacity to execute (to carry out by signing) it. In California, there is a rebuttable presumption that all persons have the capacity necessary to make decisions and be accountable for them. However, this presumption can be challenged in specific situations.

Example 1 — Mom has moderate Alzheimer's disease: Although she can't remember what she had for breakfast, she understands she needs to execute a trust to avoid probate. She has one daughter who gets 100 percent of the estate. Conclusion: Mom can execute estate planning documents because nobody is going to challenge it.

Example 2 — Mom has moderate Alzheimer's disease: Although she can't remember what she had for breakfast, she understands she needs to execute a trust to avoid probate. She has three children and wants to disinherit two, leaving 100 percent of the estate to the care-giving child. Conclusion: Mom can execute estate planning documents but should get a medical validation of mental capacity.

Remember, there's no law that states that a parent has to divide his or her estate to all the children "equally." However, if that's not the plan, make sure you execute your will or trust before any medical records indicate cognitive issues.

Therefore, people diagnosed with Alzheimer's or dementia who are not dividing their estate "equally" should have their mental capacity verified by a qualified health-care provider before proceeding with an estate plan. If you have concerns about the person's ability to understand, a doctor will be able to help determine the level of his or her mental capacity.

If the doctor is not able to help, and you still want to make an unequal distribution of your estate, there are ways to reduce the likelihood of future litigation between your children: Make a small gift to the child or children you wish to disinherit. Then, put a "no contest" clause in your will or trust. This way, it discourages a challenge. In other words, they would rather get something than nothing. ➔



Thank You for Your JACL Membership!

We're grateful to have some of the most engaged and committed members around! Because of your loyal support, we have more premium membership upgrades and generous additional gifts than ever. We're also appreciative for those who renew year after year (some for 50 years or more!) and for our increase in new members. Your dedication is essential to our ongoing mission for social justice, education, and community! Thank you! - JACL Membership Department



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A MOTHER'S TAKE

Tyler Inouye's loving family
(Tyler is pictured at left).

PHOTO: COURTESY OF TYLER INOUE



Coming Home, Celebration and Community: OKAERI MATSURI

By Marsha Aizumi

On June 29, the Terasaki Budokan was a place of celebration, connecting with others and seeing faces of joy. It was a place where you could be your authentic self at the intersection of being Nikkei and LGBTQ+. It was a place where 400 people came together to celebrate being queer, trans or loving their queer or trans children, family member and friends.

One attendee, Tyler Inouye, said, "This was like a homecoming. I saw many friends that I came to know during my college years in Southern California. None of us were really out as LGBTQ+ in those early days, but here we all were in the same space reconnecting as our true

selves, feeling safe and no longer having to hide who we were." When I listened to Tyler, I could feel how happy he was.

Tyler also talked about how the Okaeri conference helped him eventually come out to his family. He shared, "I heard stories of rejection in the Japanese American community. I heard of JA parents not acknowledging or accepting their gay child's partner. But at Okaeri, I saw Japanese American moms who loved their queer or trans child and embraced all of who they are." And so, Tyler made the decision to come out.

Tyler's parents have accepted him wholly after working through the fear of their son being rejected or treated differently after he came out. His family and extended

family, including his father, who Tyler thought might have a hard time, have encircled him warmly and said, "We love you, Tyler." And his father said, "As long as you are happy, that's all that matters."

Tyler shared, "I am fortunate in ways others are not." Today, Tyler works at his dream job for Nintendo of America. He is living his life as an openly gay person, loved by his family and feeling part of the JA community he truly values.

One of the moments at Matsuri which really moved me and will inspire me for years to come is seeing a gay man arrive and being greeted with a kiss from his husband. I realized in that simple kiss what we dreamed for: Okaeri was coming true. LGBTQ+ individuals could show their love for each other without wondering

if they would be judged or unsafe. I hope more people in the future can share their feelings openly like this couple did because Okaeri has created a space that allows this love to flow naturally.

I also met a mixed-race couple, James and Nick. Nick is Caucasian and James is mixed-race Japanese and Latinx. Nick is accepted by his family, but James is not. They attended Okaeri Queer Obon last year and returned again this year, to Matsuri, because they both felt so accepted. James says he often does not feel he fits in anywhere since he is mixed race and gay. And Nick said he did not dance in the circle last year, but this year he felt like he wanted to try. It is amazing how acceptance gives you the courage step into new spaces and experience new things.

I hoped that Okaeri could be a place for my son to see people who looked like him and accepted him at the intersection of being Japanese American and LGBTQ+. And yet, I hope that Okaeri has given our community so much more.

Not just a place for Aiden, but a place for parents, allies and other LGBTQ+ individuals. A place when faced with any negative feelings, we can see the infinite power of our love to rise above those feelings . . . to cherish our family and friends if

we are allies, love ourselves if we are LGBTQ+ and love our children if we are parents.

I would like to close this article with the lyrics of a new song for Okaeri Obon that was created in partnership with Great Leap. It is at the intersection of our Japanese culture and our LGBTQ+ hope. Enjoy . . .

TAKE OFF YOUR SHOES

YOU ARE NOT ALONE

TADAIMA! OKAERI!

YOU ARE WELCOMED HOME

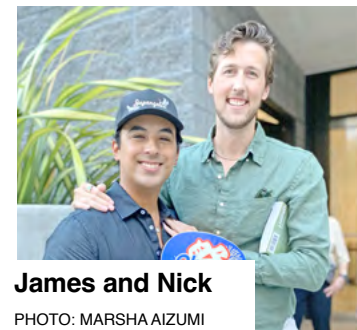
WHOEVER YOU ARE

GAY, TRANS, AND QUEER

TADAIMA! OKAERI!

YOU ARE WELCOME HERE

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."



James and Nick

PHOTO: MARSHA AIZUMI

While you're at it, make sure your aging parent also creates valid Power-of-Attorneys (POAs). You need a Durable POA in case of incapacity. Without one, the court could appoint a stranger to be your public guardian. If you have an adult child helping you pay the bills now, the POA could be effective "immediately." If you're still quite capable, most POAs are "springing," meaning the agent's power springs into effect upon incapacity determined by a doctor.

In conclusion, just because your aging parent rebuffs your concerns, ignores safety issues or refuses to accept help, that doesn't mean he or she has lost mental capacity. Taking the time to create an estate plan ensures that, in the event of incapacity, a person's affairs are managed according to their wishes, and care needs are adequately addressed.

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.



REIMAGINE EVERYTHING

Your Vote Matters

By Scott Tanaka

This past week, I had the opportunity to join many of you at this year's JACL National Convention in Philadelphia! I really enjoyed the co-hosted programming with OCA — Asian Pacific American Advocates and APIAVote, many of which focused on getting out the vote. This was very fitting for this year's theme, "Looking Into the Future Together."

Voters 50+ are the majority of voters in every election, and they are stretched to the limit. They want to see politicians address their day-to-day challenges like caring for their loved ones and protecting their hard-earned Social Security. That's why AARP is fighting to inform voters that AARP provides trusted, up-to-date information on when, where and how to vote in the 2024 elections so Americans can make their voices heard.

How to Vote in Your State

Voting regulations vary from state

to state, and many have changed since the last presidential election cycle in 2020. AARP's 53 state and U.S. territory voting guides can help you navigate voting rules and regulations as they evolve.

They provide information on how to register to vote in your state, whether absentee voting is offered and if you should bring your ID to the polls. These guides include state-specific deadlines and where to find resources. To find information about how to vote in your state, visit www.aarp.org/electionguides. All you have to do is click on your state or territory to learn more.



AARP offers nationwide voters numerous resources to help inform them about the 2024 elections.

PHOTO: AARP

Why Your Vote Matters

I appreciate those of you who stopped by the AARP table during the convention's Community Fair and shared with me about your caregiving experiences. AARP is mobilizing America's over 48 million family caregivers — 1 in 5 voters — to fight for common sense solutions that will save them time and money and get them more support.

Family caregivers are the backbone of a broken long-term care system, helping with everything from buying groceries to managing medications to bathing and dressing — often putting their finances and jobs at risk.

They provide over \$600 billion in unpaid labor each year, saving taxpayers billions and keeping loved ones at home and out of costly nursing homes. Both parties have a big opportunity to win these voters. Caregivers vote, and they can make the difference in a close election.

AARP will also continue to fight to protect Social Security. AARP knows you work hard and pay into Social Security, so it's only fair for you to expect to get the money you've earned. If Washington doesn't take action in the next 10 years to protect and save Social Security, it could be cut by 20 percent, an average of \$4,000 a year.

AARP is urging Congress to reach a bipartisan solution to protect Social Security for generations to come. To learn more about what AARP is doing to strengthen Social Security and what to consider during the upcoming elections, go to <https://www.aarp.org/politics-society/government-elections/info-2024/election-issue-social-security.html>.

AARP is committed to giving voters in every state the information they need to cast a ballot. AARP is working to make sure all voters, including Asian American, Native Hawaiian and Pacific Islander voters, have the information they need to vote in the 2024 elections.

For additional voter resources, visit www.aarp.org/vote.

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

JACL NATIONAL CONVENTION GETS IT DONE

The National Council passes resolutions, makes CBL changes and elects a new National Board in Philly.

By P.C. Staff

By the time the 54th Japanese American Citizens League National Convention that ran July 10-14 at the Downtown Sheraton in Philadelphia wrapped on a Sunday with the first meeting of the new 2024-26 National Board, no one could argue that little of substance was accomplished.

On the contrary, both the JACL National Board and JACL National Council managed to deal with an abundance of JACL business at the convention. Not only were there several panel discussions and workshops, the agenda also included a preliminary screening of Lane Nishikawa's JACL documentary "League of Dreams."

As for official business accomplished, some of which took place included:

- Reporting by National Board officers to the National Council of recent accomplishments
- Honoring stalwart individual JACLers
- Speeches by former JACL youth leader Kota Mizutani, who now works for the White House as the Office of Public Engagement's primary liaison to Asian American, Native Hawaiian and Pacific Islander (AANHPI) communities; and Japan's Masaru Sato, head of Chancery at the Japanese Embassy in

Washington, D.C.

- Approving a new budget that comes with a new monthly reporting method to better track spending
- Debating and approving the annual salary (approximately \$150K) for an imminent new staff hire for a director of development position in which that person must immediately raise enough funds to cover the position's pay scale, plus double or triple that figure
- Retaining the option for the annual JACL convention format with a reversion to the old biennial model for odd years for National Council meetings as a cost-saving measure
- Discussing the status of the Legacy Fund
- Under the heading of "special dues rates," approval by the National Board of setting the costs for newly approved premium membership tiers, namely Bronze, Silver and Gold
- Formalizing Albuquerque, N.M., as the site for next year's JACL National Convention (and viewing a video about what the city offers)
- Learning about AmplifyAAPI, a joint venture between AARP and NORC at the University of Chicago to build, as AARP VP at the Office of Diversity, Equity & Inclusion, Asian American & Pacific Audience



JACL Secretary/Treasurer Jonathan Okamoto presents the proposed biennium budget to the National Council.

PHOTO: GIL ASAKAWA

Strategy Daphne Kwok described it, an affordable and reliable AANHPI research survey panel"

- Electing national officers — one new, the rest holdovers — for the current biennium that will last until the summer of 2026.

On that last item, it was a far cry from the 2024 convention, when no one ran for any office until at the 11th hour, Larry Oda — who served as JACL's national president in back-to-back terms from 2006-10 — stepped up to save the organization from chaos and embarrassment.

In the run-up to this biennial election, there

was only one contested race, for the position of vp of general operations, with Matthew Asada and Ryan Yoshikawa both vying for the role. Any suspense ended, however, when Asada dropped out for work-related concerns. After the National Council's votes were counted on July 13, Nominations Chair, MDC District Governor and Hoosier Chapter delegate Eric Langowsky reported the following election results:

- Oda, re-elected as national president with 70 of 70 votes
- Yoshikawa, elected vp of general operations with 69 of 70 votes
- Seia Watanabe, re-elected as vp of public affairs with 70 of 70 votes
- Dominique Mashburn, re-elected as vp of membership with 70 of 70 votes
- Jonathan Okamoto, re-elected as secretary/treasurer with 68 of 70 votes
- Remy Kageyama, elected as National Youth/Student Council chairperson, with 7 of 7 votes.

With Yoshikawa's election to vp of general operations, he stepped down as Pacific Southwest District governor. Replacing him in that position was Joseph Gu, currently co-president of the SELANOCO-Orange County JACL chapter. At July 14's National Board meeting, Oda announced that Legal Counsel Ken Massey and P.C. Editorial Board Chair John Saito Jr. had agreed to continue in those respective roles.

» See NATIONAL on page 8




JACL national presidents (from left) David Lin, Ken Inouye, David Kawamoto, Larry Oda, Floyd Mori and Floyd Shimomura

PHOTO: KRIS IKEJIRI



JACL National Board members (back row, from left) Sheldon Arakaki, Lisa Shiosaki Olsen, Joseph Gu, Eric Langowski, Ken Massey, Paul Uyehara, John Saito Jr. and (front row, from left) Jonathan Okamoto, Dominique Mashburn, Larry Oda and Ryan Yoshikawa.

PHOTO: GIL ASAKAWA



DO YOU KNOW THE ORIGINS OF THE CENTURY CLUB?

We believe the Century Club was founded in 1976 at the JACL National Convention. In anticipation of new category names, we hope to honor its founders and history.

PLEASE EMAIL MBR@JACL.ORG OR CALL (415) 921-5225 EXT. 25 WITH ANY DETAILS. THANK YOU!

WELCOME RECEPTION

After arriving from sundry far-flung locales for the 54th JACL National Convention in Philadelphia, JACLers took the confab’s theme — “Looking Into the Future Together” — several steps farther, with many attendees also walking into Philadelphia’s City Hall together from convention venue Sheraton Downtown Philadelphia on July 10.

Upon entering the mercifully air-conditioned, standing-room only Mayor’s Reception Room, conventiongoers heard from several distinguished speakers, including Acting Labor Dept. Secretary Julie Su, Philadelphia News and Community Affairs Director Loraine Ballard Morrill of iHeartMedia, City Councilmember Nina Ahmad, Philadelphia JACLER and Japanese American Confinement Sites Consortium Executive Director Rob Buscher and JACL National President Larry Oda.

Next came a short walk inside the building to the opening reception, with some of the convention’s best food from local restaurateur Owen Kamihira, along with tea — lots of tea — courtesy of Ito En and music by violinist Erika Bar-David.

JACLers who hadn’t seen each other in person in who knows how long took the opportunity to catch up with one another while enjoying Kamihira’s sumptuous spread amidst the setting’s historic ambiance.

So, it was at the opening reception where JACLers visiting the City of Brotherly Love and Sisterly Affection were able to create an unintended but heartfelt mashup of the convention’s aforementioned theme with Philadelphia’s own disco-era recording act Sister Sledge and their biggest hit from another time: “We Are Family.” It was both fitting and true.



Larry Oda Welcomes JACLers



JACLers excited about the confab



Secretary/Treasurer Jonathan Okamoto



Delicious food provided by restaurateur Owen Kamihira



(From left) Linda Adams, Janice Faden and Carol Kawase



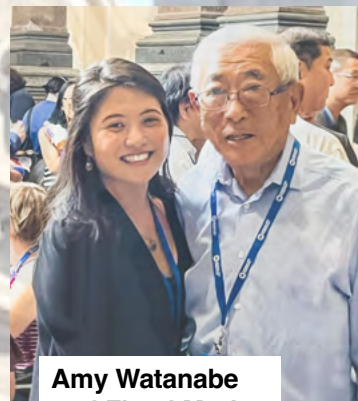
(From left) Larry Oda, Jason Chan, Julie Su, Loraine Ballard Morrill, Rob Buscher and David Inoue



Karen Horikawa and Ken Oye



EDC Gov. Paul Uyehara



Amy Watanabe and Floyd Mori



IDC Gov. Lisa Shiosaki Olsen and PNW Gov. Sheldon Arakaki



(From left) Lyra Paez, Mika Chan and Halle Sousa



PSW Gov. Ryan Yoshikawa (left) and Alexander Wing



Erika Bar-David



VP Public Affairs Seia Watanabe



Philadelphia City Council Member Nina Ahmad



JACLers at the NY/SC SPOC event

(From left) Twin Cities' Mia Westby, Zara Espinosa and Vinicius Taguchi



CANDID PHOTOS



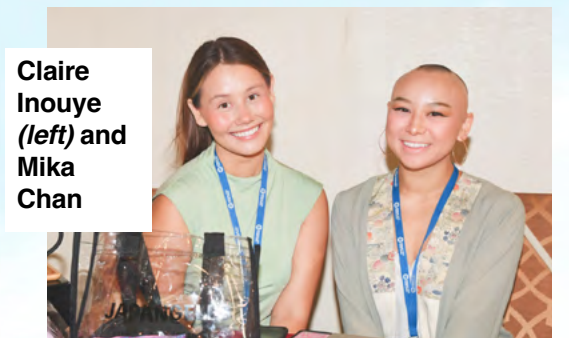
David and Akira Inoue at the Awards Luncheon



Jaclers sign Judge Johnny Gogo's incarceration memorial legacy project flag.



(From left) Kazuma Parkinson, Ben Nishimura, Elijah Nishimura, Jack Shimabukuro and Amy Hattori



Claire Inouye (left) and Mika Chan



Rep. Jill Tokuda (center) with newly installed JACL officers (from left) Jonathan Okamoto, Dominique Mashburn, Larry Oda and Ryan Yoshikawa



JACL D.C. chapter members



Remy Kageyama (left) and Emily Nishikimoto with NY/SC gift baskets



JACLERS arrive at the Shofuso Japanese House and Garden.



Chip Larouche raises his voting cards.



(From left) Stan Shikuma, Zara Espinosa, Steven Mitori and Don Hayashi at Bar-Ly



Looking into the Future Together



Conventiongoers at the Community Outreach Fair



JACLers enjoy time together at Bar-Ly

TOWN HALL » continued from page 2



Sen. Mazie Hirono (D-Hawaii) was one of many AANHPI politicians and community members who spoke at the event.

PHOTO: GIL ASAKAWA

As for negatives, they exist. In particular, for some Japanese Americans in California, Harris was a disappointment when she was the attorney general for not doing more to ameliorate the issues raised by the sale of the former Keiro senior care facilities to San Diego-based Pacifica Cos.

Also, the Israel-Hamas issue isn't going away. During her speech, she was interrupted on several occasions by pro-Palestinian supporters who had to be escorted by security from the premises. (The chants of dissent led to counterchants of "four more years," which brought a smile to Harris.)

In conclusion, having Harris speak at the Presidential Town Hall turned out to be fortuitously appropriate.

But no candidate is perfect, and voters know it. You have to accept candidates' pluses and minuses when voting.

Still, for women in general and for women of color in particular who'd like to see one of their own in the White House, she checks that box. For African Americans and Asian Americans, she checks that box. For Americans who don't want a convicted felon in the White House and want a more progressive agenda regarding anti-trust concerns, climate change, clean and renewable energy, reshoring American manufacturing, reinvesting in infrastructure and ensuring that the U.S. stands with European and Asian allies against annexation and conquest while standing for rule of international laws and treaties against tyrants and authoritarian strongmen, she (presumably) checks those boxes.

For now, put on your helmets and fasten your seatbelts. It's likely to be a bumpy ride between now and the first Tuesday of November.

(NOTE: The Presidential Town Hall can be viewed on YouTube at tinyurl.com/4m4uz4xd.)

NATIONAL » continued from page 5

With regard to the two resolutions that passed the National Council, R1 addressed, among other items, the JACL's concerns with the "humanitarian crisis in Palestine" while taking a stand against hate crimes and bias aimed at Arab Americans, Jewish Americans and Muslims in America, based on the JACL's longstanding support for the civil and human rights of all people; and called on President Joe Biden and Congress to "pressure Israel to implement a ceasefire" and allow "the sustained and free flow of humanitarian aid to Gaza and agree to negotiate a lasting peace agreement." (To read the entirety of R1, visit tinyurl.com/mvaxv78v.)

R2, meantime, which was in-

roduced late in the run-up to the convention as an emergency resolution due to last-minute occurrences, had to do with JACL taking a stand against the redevelopment and possible elimination by eminent domain of what remains of Salt Lake City's historic Japantown. Its wording in part reads: "National JACL supports this effort to preserve and revitalize the Japantown of Salt Lake City." (To read the entirety of R2, visit tinyurl.com/nharzy2d.)

The amendment to the JACL's Constitution and Bylaws, aka CBL-1, made changes to JACL membership tiers by, among other things, defining the rights, privileges and dues of active, associate, youth/student and National Premium and

Life Trust members. Also, with the retirement of the 1000 Club membership tier, the title of vp of 1000 Club, Membership and Services is now just vp of membership. It also detailed the process for filing vacancies for elective officers. (To read the entirety of CBL-1, visit tinyurl.com/spdn5khs.)

CBL-2, meantime, amended meetings of JACL's National Council from an annual basis to a biennial basis in even-numbered years, while keeping open the option for JACL National Conventions to occur on an annual basis. (To read the entirety of CBL-3, visit tinyurl.com/yyaeyuwk.)

Thus, the next National Council meeting will be at the 2026 JACL National Convention. The next National Board call will take place on Sept. 21 at 9 a.m.



JACL chapter delegates from across the nation voted on several issues during the business session.

PHOTO: GIL ASAKAWA

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SAYONARA, MALAISE? Sense of Normalcy Returns

Unlike 2022, there were candidates for most national offices.

For City of Brotherly Love (and Sisterly Affection, as City Councilmember Nina Ahmad was wont to remind visitors regarding the city's updated nickname) denizen Teresa Maebori, the JACL's 54th National Convention provided her two surprising and well-deserved parting gifts.

At the Sayonara Gala, held at the Sheraton Philadelphia Downtown's Independence Ballroom on July 13, longtime JACLers Maebori and Steve Okamoto (San Mateo Chapter) each received the organization's highest recognition for service: the Ruby Pin, presented by newly re-elected National JACL President Larry Oda.

On July 11, Maebori also received the JACL's JACLer of the Biennium prize at the confab's Awards Luncheon (see sidebar).

For both Maebori and Okamoto, service to the Japanese American community was handed down by their parents. As she noted at the Awards Luncheon, both of Maebori's parents served as president of the now-defunct White River Valley JACL Chapter. As for Okamoto, he said, "My dad was . . . the first president of the Japanese Culture and Community Center of Northern California. . . . My mom . . . was a president of the JACL in Alameda."

In contrast to 2022, the organization's last national election year when no one was running for any national office and Larry Oda, who served back-to-back terms as national president from 2006-10, made a last-minute bid to lead the organization by successfully running to again



Teresa Maebori and Steve Okamoto display their new JACL Ruby Pins.

PHOTO: KRIS IKEJIRI

lead the organization, 2024 offered a sense of normalcy for JACL, despite a concerning membership decline to below 8,000.

With Philadelphia news radio anchor (and former Southern Californian) Denise Nakano handling the master of ceremony role, the evening began with a rendition of the National Anthem by Bryant Car-

ter Jr., welcoming remarks from Oda and short speeches from guest speakers Razin Karu, executive director for the state's Governor's Advisory Commission on Asian American and Pacific Islander Affairs, and Jason Higashi, representing Diamond Sponsor State Farm.

For those in attendance, it was also an opportunity to sign a 48-star U.S. flag, a project started by Santa Clara County Judge Johnny Gogo to have Japanese Americans who were incarcerated in government-run prison camps during WWII — when there were only 48 states in the Union — to "take back the narrative" of experience. (See "The Signatures Say We Were Here," *Pacific Citizen*, March 4-17, 2022.)

Following dinner were remarks by Bret Perkins, senior vp of external and government affairs for Ruby Sponsor Comcast — and the announcement by JACL Executive Director David Inoue that former President Donald Trump had just survived an assassination attempt, also in Pennsylvania, more than 300 miles from Philadelphia in Butler, Pa.

Lightening the mood were National Youth/Student Council Chair Mika Chan and NY/SC Representative Claire Inouye, who conducted the NY/SC's opportunity drawing. The grand prize — a two-night stay at Caesar's Palace in Las Vegas — was won by Mariko Fujimoto, former JACL membership coordinator.

Next on the program and presided over by David Kawamoto were the presentations of the previously announced winners of the Japanese American of the Biennium Awards.

The 2024 JA of the Biennium recipients were Dr. Satsuki Ina, in the education/humanities category (received in her absence by Stan Shikuma); Dana Makoto Sabraw, chief judge for the U.S. Courts of the Southern District of California, in the politics/public affairs/law category; and Los Angeles-based telejournalist David Ono, in the arts/literature/communications category.

From a statement written by Ina, Shikuma read, in reference to a resolution passed by the JACL's National Council in 2019: "I would like to take this opportunity to urge members of the JACL today to revisit the promise of a sincere and reparative apology to the people who were held prisoners at the



Stan Shikuma accepts Dr. Satsuki Ina's JA of the Biennium Award on her behalf from National President Larry Oda.

PHOTO: KRIS IKEJIRI

Tulelake Segregation Center for acts of resistance and dissent . . ."

Declaring that it was neither a Republican nor Democratic issue, Sabraw, drawing a comparison to how President Franklin D. Roosevelt's Executive Order 9066 had direct, deleterious effects on ethnic Japanese during WWII, said his ruling ordering the cessation of the government's practice of separating families that were caught trying to illegally enter the United States at the southern border and to reunite the 2,500 children — "now about 5,000" — already separated from their families, said, "I found that it was unconstitutional. There



JA of the Biennium Award winner Dana Makoto Sabraw discusses his decision to stop the government from separating children of illegal immigrants from their parents.

PHOTO: GIL ASAKAWA

was no principled basis under the Fifth Amendment to do that. . . . It's one of the saddest chapters in the history of our country, along with the mass incarceration of Japanese Americans and of slavery."

Kawamoto then introduced Ono, whose long list of professional awards for his journalism underscored his "main goal to be a truth seeker." Regarding his dedication to sharing with wider audiences the story of Japanese American incarceration during WWII (see "Witness: The Legacy of Heart Mountain," *Pacific Citizen*, Aug. 8-21, 2014) and the valorous service of Nisei veterans who served in the 100th Battalion/442nd Regimental Combat Team and the Military Intelligence Service via "Defining Courage" (see "Nisei Vets' WWII Saga Goes Live and In Person," *Pacific Citizen*, Nov. 4-17, 2022), Ono said, "So many people have no idea on why this is an important story within America's

JA of the Biennium Award winner David Ono speaks after receiving his award.

PHOTO: GIL ASAKAWA

history and how it has been such a violation of our rights. They don't get it even to this day, 80 years after it happened." Ono also paid tribute to actress Tamlyn Tomita, who was in the audience, for serving as his guide over the decades regarding all things Japanese American.

Also part of the evening's program was a performance by Japanese musician Rino Aise, who sang a few traditional Japanese songs, accompanied by a sanshin, Okinawa's precursor variation of the shamisen. Accompanied by two taiko drummers, she would later sing and play the program to a close as audience members danced the tankō bushi.

Before that, however, there was a video produced by OCA National Summer intern Erika Braun titled "A Journey of Remembrance" honoring community members who had died since the 2023 convention.

The oath of office for the newly elected JACL officers, meantime, was administered by Rep. Jill Tokuda (D-Hawaii).

Another drawing, donated by IACE Travel, of a roundtrip ticket to anywhere in the world United Airlines flies, was won by Greg Suko, who also happened to be one of the point persons for next year's JACL National Convention in Albuquerque, N.M.

In his closing remarks, Oda, who was elected for an unprecedented in JACL's history fourth term as national president, thanked the Philadelphia chapter and all who helped with planning and executing the convention.

"We have had a very productive and efficient convention," Oda said. "Who would have thought that we would pass a budget in possibly record time?"

In his closing remarks, JACL Executive Director David Inoue said, "We passed some really significant

» See SAYONARA on page 12

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JOURNEY TO MEET A CONVENTION OF 'UNICORNS'

A JACL first-timer's eye-opening perspective of her Philadelphia experience.

By Gil Asakawa,
P.C. Contributor

Maya Suzuki is still excited from her trip to Philadelphia to attend the 2024 JACL National Convention, even though she's back at home now in Hicksville, which is located on Long Island, east of New York City. The 18-year-old is wearing a NY/SC T-shirt from the convention for our Zoom interview and is eager to share her recent experience.

The story she tells is that she went alone to Philadelphia to meet Japanese Americans and found a convention full of "unicorns" — creatures that are legendary and, for her, rare and hard to find.

That's because though Suzuki lived in Queens as an infant before her family moved to Long Island where she was raised by her Shin-Nisei dad and a Shin-Issei mom, Suzuki hasn't been around a lot of Japanese Americans like the members of JACL. The people of Japanese heritage she has known in her life have been Japanese immigrants or older Japanese Americans who, she says, speak with accents.

Well, everyone except for her great-uncle, Karl Takimoto, who lived in Northern California. Suzuki and her mom visited him before he passed away a few years ago, and she was fascinated to hear him speak — with no accent.

Suzuki observes that JAs like her great-uncle were raised on the West Coast in communities formed by waves of immigrants who arrived as farmers and laborers to escape poverty and famine, while many East Coast JAs, especially in New York City, came to the country more recently as *chuzai*, expats working for Japanese companies on temporary assignment.

Her mom, who came to America during Japan's go-go bubble economy of the 1980s, ended up meeting her dad and staying. After Suzuki was born, her mom spoke Japanese to her, and she can slip easily into native-level Japanese at the drop of a hat. She has also visited Japan eight times, so Suzuki is comfortable with both sides of her JA identity.

But her upbringing in suburban Long Island was not in a community of JAs. In fact, she knew only one other kid of Japanese heritage.

Suzuki thinks there are a host of differences between West Coast and East Coast JAs, a topic she'd like to study in college in order to become a professor of Japanese and Japanese American history one day. For now, Suzuki is planning on attending

Nassau Community College nearby and has her sights set on transferring to an Ivy League school.

Wanting to educate herself further about JAs, Suzuki Googled "Japanese Americans" and found organizations in New York. She also learned about JACL and realized that its ideals would be the organization for her. She also discovered that there was a national convention coming up in Philadelphia, but she couldn't afford the registration, so she signed up as a volunteer to attend it. She spent most of her shifts at the registration check-in table.

When she wasn't signing attendees in, she sat in on panels, board meetings and National Council sessions to learn how JACL works. And to meet people.

She was introduced to the vast national reach of the organization. She also learned about some of JACL's controversial past, including the support of wartime incarceration.

And she learned about the concentration camps, and she looks forward to someday going on a pilgrimage to a site. She also met people her age (OK, maybe a couple years older) who organized events for the National Youth/Student Council, a group that first formed in 1966 as the JACL National Youth Program for Sansei leadership development.

In a way, Suzuki has started her own development program by taking the initiative to dive into JACL. While at convention, she met members of the New York chapter, and she hopes to start attending meetings and events in the city.

Suzuki was thrilled to be at the convention because in part it was a tribute to the memory of her Great-Uncle Karl, who she considered a unicorn because he was the only elderly JA she had met who wasn't like New York JAs who spoke English with accents.

The convention was "very, very interesting — it was like meeting 1,000 unicorns," she said. "Like when I spoke to Karl, it was like, 'You're an older Asian guy with no accent. Oh, my God, like, oh, you're like a unicorn.'"

"I'd really only ever met one unicorn. And then I walked into this. It was all unicorns. And I was like,

whoa. It was meeting people of an ethnicity that I never meet in my daily life. And now I know so many. I show up to JACL and see two unicorns in the lobby over there, and then the National Board and National Council — all unicorns. I can't meet any where I live. So, it's so surreal, you know. I went to the convention to prove that they're real."

Yes, they are. And Maya Suzuki may soon find that she's a JACL unicorn herself.

This article was made possible by the Harry K. Honda Memorial Journalism Fund, which was established by JACL Redress Strategist Grant Ujifusa.



Maya Suzuki and Minister Masaru Sato of the Japanese Embassy in Washington, D.C.

PHOTOS: GIL ASAKAWA

AMERICAN HOLIDAY TRAVEL

2024 TOUR SCHEDULE

- PANA CONVENTION (COPANI)** Sep 5-8
Asuncion, Paraguay
- EASTERN CANADIAN CAPITALS HOLIDAY TOUR** (Carol Hida) Sep 18-26
Montreal, Via Rail Canada, Quebec, Ottawa, Toronto, Niagara Falls. **Waitlist**
- ICELAND HOLIDAY TOUR** (Carol Hida). Oct 2-8
Reykjavik, Blue Lagoon, Strokkur Geyser, Gullfoss/Golden Falls, Thingvellir National Park, Viking Ship Museum.

2025 TOUR SCHEDULE PREVIEW

- HOKKAIDO SNOW FESTIVALS HOLIDAY TOUR** (Ernest Hida) Feb 3-14
Abashiri, Sounkyo, Sapporo, Otaru, Lake Toya, Hakodate, Tokyo.
Hyobaku Ice Festival, Asahikawa Snow Festival, Sapporo Snow Festival, Hyoto Winter Festival.
- CLASSICAL JAPAN HOLIDAY TOUR** (Ernest Hida) Mar 16-27
Tokyo, Mt Fuji, Yamanashi, Shizuoka, Hiroshima, Kyoto.
- TREASURES OF IRELAND TOUR** (Carol Hida). Apr 7-15
Dublin, Limerick, Killarney, Blarney.
- KOREA HOLIDAY TOUR** (Ernest Hida) Apr 10-23
Seoul, Bullet Train, Gyeongju, Busan, Jeju Island, Jeonju, Daejeon, Nami Island, Seoul, DMZ, K-Drama sites.
- JAPAN SPRING COUNTRYSIDE HOLIDAY TOUR** (Ernest Hida) May 11-23
Tokyo, Ashikaga Flower Park, Yamagata, Sakata/Shonai, Akita, Morioka, Sanriku Railway coastal train ride, Hanamaki Onsen, Matsushima, Nikko/Kinugawa Onsen, Tokyo.
- MUSIC CITIES HOLIDAY TOUR** (Carol Hida). May 12-19
New Orleans, Memphis, Nashville.
- GRANDPARENTS-GRANDCHILDREN JAPAN TOUR** (Ernest Hida) Jun 15-25
Tokyo, Hakone/Atami, Hiroshima, Kyoto. Craftmaking hands-on experiences.
- HOKKAIDO SUMMER HOLIDAY TOUR** (Ernest Hida) Jul 13-25
Hakodate, Lake Toya, Noboribetsu, Otaru, Sapporo, Wakkanai, Rishiri Island, Asahikawa, Furano, Tokyo.
- DANUBE RIVER CRUISE** (Carol Hida) Aug 27-Sep 9
Pre-cruise in Budapest; Bratislava, Vienna, Weissenkirchen, Linz, Passau, Vilshofen; Post-cruise in Prague. **Bonus Discount - Limited Time Offer.**
- JAPAN AUTUMN COUNTRYSIDE HOLIDAY TOUR** (Ernest Hida) Oct 16-27
Tokyo, Sado Island, Kanazawa, Amanohashidate, Tottori, Matsue, Tamatsukuri Onsen, Hiroshima.
- KENYA WILDLIFE SAFARI HOLIDAY TOUR** (Carol Hida) Oct 15-29
Nairobi, Amboseli-Nakuru Lake-Masai Mara National Parks, Mt. Kenya Safari Club, Sweetwaters Tented Camp, Jane Goodall Chimpanzee Sanctuary.
- OKINAWA HOLIDAY TOUR** (Ernest Hida) Nov 13-23
Naha, Onnason, Islands of Ishigaki, Iriomote & Taketomi.

For more information and reservations, please contact:

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Tamlyn Tomita and Maya Suzuki

In MEMORIAM



Adachi, Eric Akio, 61, Chula Vista, CA, March 23.

Arakaki, Geraldine Itsumi, 76, Hilo, HI, Feb. 8.

Arakaki, Roy Nobuo, 79, Hilo, HI, Feb. 28.

Ishibashi, Tadao, 96, Los Angeles, CA, June 3.

Kikekawa, Nobuko, 45, Sierra Madre, CA, July 12.



Kobayashi, Barbara, 86, San Francisco, CA, June 6.

Kobayashi, Betty Sachiko, 85, Honolulu, HI, March 9.

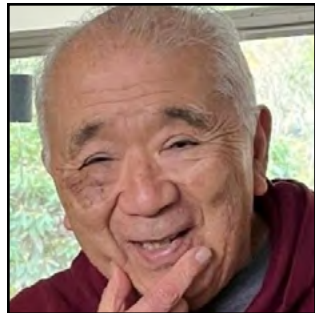
Matsunaga, Mabel Chin, 92, Clovis, CA, March 1.



Matsuura, Betty Hinako, 92, Sacramento, CA Feb. 28.

Mikami, Shirley, 79, Torrance, CA, May 8.

Mikuni, Betty, 91, Pasadena, CA, June 5.



Miura, Neal, 86, San Mateo, CA, April 25.

Miyamoto Jr., Thomas Akira, 41, Kahului, HI, Jan. 21.

Mukai, Shizue, 98, Fowler, CA, Jan. 28.

Morita, James Susumu, 93, Honolulu, HI, Feb. 9.

Nakagawa, Craig, 65, Hilo, HI, April 1.

Nakagawa, Maurice, 80, Cypress, CA, June 27.

Onishi, Katsuhiko, 79, Oakland, CA, Nov. 29, 2023; veteran, Navy (Vietnam); he is survived by his wife, Mieko Anne; son, Christopher (Jaclyn); gc: 2.

Otsuji, Elaine Keiko, San Diego, CA, May 15; she is survived by her husband, Dennis; brother, Dick Yamane (Judy); and many nieces and nephews, and other relatives.

Oye, Leah Kujubu, 70, Los Angeles, CA, March 9.



Shiba, Misayo, 99, Los Angeles, CA, Dec. 27, 2023.

Shiraiwa, Josephine, 89, Porter Ranch, CA, Dec. 27, 2023.

Suzuki, Arnold M. 'Bubba,' 71, Sheboygan, WI, Dec. 31, 2023.

Takahashi, Hiroko, 90, San Jose, CA, Jan. 19.

Takahata, Lucille Ruriko, 96, Redmond, WA.

Takeuchi, Bessie Shizuko, 92, Torrance, CA, March 31.

Taniguchi, Marie, Fresno, CA, March 13.

Tsuda, Christine, 94, Orange, CA, March, 13.

Yamada, Kelvin, 65, Sacramento, CA, April 26.

Yamamoto, Lorraine, 75, Willowick, OH, Dec. 15, 2023.

Rep. Sheila Jackson Lee of Texas Dies

By Associated Press and JACL

Longtime U.S. Rep. Sheila Jackson Lee of Texas, who helped lead federal efforts to protect women from domestic violence and recognize Juneteenth as a national holiday, has died. She was 74.

Lillie Conley, her chief of staff, confirmed that Jackson Lee, who had pancreatic cancer, died in Houston on July 19 with her family around her.

Jackson Lee was "a towering figure in our politics," President Joe Biden said in a statement Saturday. "Always fearless, she spoke truth to power and represented the power of the people of her district in Houston with dignity and grace."

In a joint statement, the National JACL and the JACL Houston chapter stated being "deeply saddened" to learn of Jackson Lee's death.

JACL worked most closely with the Jackson Lee on the issue of Black reparations, specifically with

regard to HR40, which seeks to establish a commission to study reparation proposals for descendants of formerly enslaved Americans of African heritage.

"Congresswoman Lee was a very strong advocate, champion and leader for the people of Houston for many, many years, particularly communities of color and the marginalized. She will be very much missed," stated JACL Houston Chapter President Colleen Morimoto. "Regarding JACL Houston, Congresswoman Lee was always very gracious, expressing her appreciation for JACL standing by the Black community through HR40."

Jackson Lee graduated from Yale and earned her law degree at the University of Virginia. She was a judge in Houston before she was elected to Houston City Council in 1989, then ran for Congress in 1994. (To read the JACL's statement regarding Jackson Lee's death, visit tinyurl.com/3p2ewmhx.)

SJSU Judoka Yoshihiro Uchida Dies at 104

By P.C. Staff

Yosh Uchida died June 27 at his home in Saratoga, Calif., about 13 miles San Jose State University, where he put his mark on American sports — and where in 1997 SJSU feted the 10th-dan judo sensei by naming a building after him: Yoshihiro Uchida Hall. He was 104.

Some press reports listed his height as 5 feet, 2 inches. Others added three more inches. It almost doesn't matter: By any yardstick, Yosh Uchida was a sequoia, judo's Japanese American Johnny Appleseed, a San Jose community businessman-turned-benefactor, and a much-honored icon.

Uchida was born April 1, 1920, in Calexico, Calif., to Suye and Shikazo Uchida. Like the chili peppers, lettuce and tomatoes his farm family cultivated on leased land, he grew up Garden Grove, Calif. At his parents' insistence, he and his brothers began training in judo.

After completing high school, Uchida attended Fullerton Junior College, transferring in 1940 to San Jose State College to study chemical engineering and help coach the school's judo students. He would also receive his draft notice prior to his nation's Dec. 8, 1941, declaration of war on his parent's homeland following Japan's attack on Pearl Harbor. In the Army, Uchida would eventually be assigned to Fort Meade, S.D., where he trained to become a medical lab tech.

After serving, Uchida rematriculated to SJSU and earned a degree in biology in 1947. He also returned to judo, now as a coach. But before he could begin his push to have the Amateur Athletic Union to recognize judo as a collegiate sport, he needed a job.

Enter San Jose wrestling coach Sam Della Maggiore — later a City

of San Jose councilman and Santa Clara County supervisor — who helped him land a job at a local hospital. That would lead to him later becoming San Jose Hospital's manager of medical technology — and by 1956, set the stage for his wife and he to found what would become Laboratory Services Inc. In 1989, the Uchidas sold it for \$30 million.

In 1964, when Japan was the host nation for the Summer Olympic Games and judo was introduced as an Olympic sport, Uchida coached the U.S. team, a duty he would repeat on several more occasions.

Uchida's judo résumé led to several honors, including entry into the San Jose Sports Authority Hall of Fame and SJSU's Legends Hall of Fame, the Tower Award — SJSU's highest award — for his decades of service to SJSU and from the Japanese government, the Order of the Sacred Treasure with Gold Rays with Neck Ribbon.

The sale of Uchida's Laboratory Services Inc. led to him forming with other investors the San Jose Nihonmachi Corp., which went on to develop housing and commercial buildings in a drive to revitalize San Jose's Japantown.

In addition to being predeceased by his wife, he was also predeceased by daughter Janice Uchida and siblings Isamu (Sam), Suehiro (Henry), Shikao (George) and Kazuko. He is survived by daughters Lydia Uchida Sakai (Steve Sakai), Aileen Uchida (Steven Shimizu), grandsons Michael Sakai and Kyle Sakai (Anh Thu Tran) and granddaughter Amelia The Sakai, many nieces and nephews and grandnieces and grand-nephews, as well as judo students, alumni and friends.

A public memorial is being scheduled for early fall. To view a video about Uchida, visit tinyurl.com/4bx7z4vp.

TRIBUTE

VIOLET TANAKA

Violet "Vi" Tanaka passed away peacefully in July 2024 at the age of 97 in Los Angeles.

After being interned at Tule Lake during WWII, she settled in San Francisco, where she lived for over 50 years. Vi loved dancing, baking, dining with friends and family and frequenting casinos. She cherished playing cards with friends and was a longtime member of the Buddhist Church and The Center.

Preceded in death by her husband, Minoru "Min," and son, Steven, Vi is survived by her daughter, Diana. In lieu of koden or flowers, donations can be made to "The Center" at jccnc.org in Vi's memory.

A celebration of her life will be held later this year at The Center in San Francisco. Vi's kindness, generosity and Bishop's Bread will be missed by all who knew her.

PLACE A TRIBUTE

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

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SAYONARA » continued from page 9

resolutions and CBL amendments,” noting that people in Gaza also have “the right to life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness.

“We affirmed the importance of cultural districts, whether it’s the local Chinatown here in Philadelphia or the historic Salt Lake City Japan-town,” Inoue continued. “Also, we revised our membership policies and how we meet every year as an organization. And I hope these changes help us as an organization to better serve you, our members.”

In addition to Diamond Sponsor State Farm and Ruby Sponsors AT&T and Comcast, other convention sponsors included Sapphire Sponsors AARP and Verizon; Platinum Sponsors Major League Baseball, T-Mobile, the Motion Picture Association and US Bank; Gold Sponsors Caesars Entertainment, IW Group, National JACL Credit Union, Sheldon Arakaki and David and Carol Kawamoto; Silver Sponsors Japanese American National Museum and Keiro; and Bronze Sponsors Compassion & Choice, Toji Law and CBL Wine Co. LLC. ■

AWARDS LUNCHEON: Maebori, Houston Chapter Win

JACLER of the Biennium, Inagaki Chapter honors reward individual dedication, collective efforts.

By P.C. Staff

For Teresa Maebori, the July 11 National JACL Awards Luncheon provided “a complete shock” when JACL National President Larry Oda announced she was the JACLER of the Biennium. It was a preview of more to come: On July 13, she was surprised yet again when she was awarded the JACL’s Ruby Pin, along with Steve Okamoto.

“I thought the highlight of this convention was going to be the baseball game,” Maebori said after accepting the award, referring to the match attended by conventiongoers at which the Philadelphia Phillies defeated the L.A. Dodgers.

Maebori also recalled getting recruited into the JACL by the late Grayce Uyehara, one of the main engines of the Japanese American redress movement, and later becoming chapter president, Eastern District governor and National Education chair. “JACL’s been in my life blood,” she said.

The luncheon’s other recognition was for the George J. Inagaki Chapter Citizenship Award. The announcement was made by John Saito Jr., *Pacific Citizen* Editorial Board chair and president of the Venice-West Los Angeles JACL chapter, which is the award’s sponsor.

“It is my pleasure to announce that the 2024

George J. Inagaki Chapter Citizenship Award goes to the Houston JACL,” he said, adding, “Its most noteworthy achievement has been its efforts in collaborating with elected officials and community organizations last year to oppose the passage of bills in the state legislature that were similar to the alien land laws of the early 1900s that prohibited immigrants from Japan from owning land in the U.S.”

Gary Nakamura, a past Houston JACL Chapter president who was present at the convention for his role as vp of planning and development, accepted the award on behalf of the chapter’s current president, Colleen Morimoto.

“Wow, what an honor because just two years ago, we almost went under,” he revealed, referring to internal chapter turmoil that threatened the existence of the state of Texas’ only JACL chapter. “I want to humbly accept this award on behalf of our Houston JACL board members.”

Continuing, Nakamura said, “I have to give a lot of credit and thanks to (executive director) David Inoue and Jeffrey Moy, former president, for sticking by me and Colleen.” He also called out several other chapter members for their behind-the-scenes work, including Dr. George Hirasaki, emeritus professor at Rice University, who “recruited me 15 years ago.”



PHOTO: GIL ASAKAWA PHOTO: KRIS IKEJIRI
(From left) Houston JACL’s Gary Nakamura with the George J. Inagaki Chapter Citizenship Award and Teresa Maebori with her JACLER of the Biennium Award; David Lin with his Sapphire Pin from Larry Oda.

Also during the luncheon, Michelle Amano recognized Brent Seto as the Mike M. Masaka Congressional Fellow. “This fellowship is named in honor of my grandpa,” Amano said. “And in looking back, the fact that this fellowship was established in 1988 is so poignant. My grandfather was so thrilled when the Civil Liberties Act of 1988 was passed and signed by President Ronald Reagan.”

Seto, a University of Washington graduate, was placed in the office of Sen. Patty Murray (D-Wash.) under the fellowship. “I’m thrilled to announce that in the fall, I’ll be joining the office of Rep. Judy Chu as a legislative policy fellow,” he added.

Serving as co-masters of ceremony for the luncheon were Nicole Inouye and Alex Shinkawa. ■

Advertorial

Memory Loss That Disrupts Daily Life, Misplacing items, Confusion with Time or Place? Recognizing Alzheimer’s Disease Early and Getting Treatment Helps Families and Patients Improve Quality of Life

By Wynnelena Canio, MD, AGSF

Geriatrician (IM) and Psychiatrist, Regional Dementia Care Clinical Lead, Kaiser Permanente Northern California

My grandma was diagnosed with dementia when I was in college. She started mixing up the stories she had told me growing up. Her doctor gave her medication and told her it may or may not help.

Over the years, as a family, we suffered ambiguous loss as grandma was losing her ability to cook, move independently, shower on her own, control her bladder, amongst other things. Like most Asian families, we took turns helping her with these increasing disabilities, while learning how to communicate in her disease/stage-appropriate language. One day, as I was helping her bathe, she cried and said, “why are you helping me with this, I bathed you.” I responded, “you’re right you did, so now it’s my turn.”

When grandma’s paid caregiver moved, my mom decided to retire early to take care of her at home. Given how emotionally and physically draining as it was, mom often said “I’ll die before her.” I’d give mom a break and I’d take grandma to spend one week at a time with us in Petaluma.

This was an extremely arduous journey for us, the progression of the disease revealing new challenges at every turn, which required us to learn and adapt. This is a journey not unlike every caregiver and family with a loved one suffering from dementia.

While caring for our elders is a cultural touchstone for many AAPI communities, the challenge of older adult care and managing a multigenerational household can be overwhelming for anyone. When a parent, grandparent or other loved one begins to show a new pattern of forgetfulness, lost items or confusion with time – possible early signs of Alzheimer’s Disease and Related Dementias (ADRDs) – the stress for caregivers is compounded. The loved one, often aware of their increasing lapses may also fear their loss of control and the stigma of aging and becoming a burden to their family.

Now, the State of California is helping people meet these challenges through the *Take on Alzheimer’s* campaign. The first-ever statewide campaign of its kind, it aims to shift perceptions and reduce stigma around Alzheimer’s.

For Asian American and Pacific Islander (AAPI) populations the message is critical. We know that almost half (46%) of Asian Americans say that they are concerned about developing Alzheimer’s or dementia and 90% worry about being a burden on their family if they develop Alzheimer’s disease. Moreover, we know that stigma can play a role in limiting the help families receive. Too often AAPI families experience shame that deters them from seeking information, assistance, or a formal diagnosis, until the disease has progressed to later stages.

Honest and empathetic conversations with friends, loved ones or a clinician can be critical to improving outcomes. The earlier ADRDs are diagnosed, the better it is for the loved one with the disease and their caregivers. *Take on Alzheimer’s* hopes to make conversations about symptoms, diagnosis, and caregiving commonplace. We want people to know that first and foremost, there are things we can do to take care of our brain health before and after diagnosis. We also want to shift perceptions so that people understand that Alzheimer’s is a neurological disorder and not a psychiatric disorder. There are new treatments and considerable research in this area, and we expect care and therapies to get even better.

Why is California taking on Alzheimer’s now? According to the 2024 California State of Public Health report, Alzheimer’s is now the second leading cause of death in California, affecting over 690,000 individuals across the state. California is expecting the number of residents living with Alzheimer’s to double by 2040.

By identifying when memory loss disrupts your loved one’s daily life or tasks, you can discuss symptoms with a doctor and take action. It’s ok to be afraid at this step, but open communication leads to better outcomes and increased support for the affected loved one.

California’s *Take on Alzheimer’s* campaign hopes that by fighting the stigma associated with Alzheimer’s, people can get the resources and assistance they need sooner. Especially in the early stages, eating a balanced diet, exercising, getting good sleep, and staying socially connected help preserve quality of life.

With early screening and detection, people with ADRD, along with their family members, have the chance to make the choices that are right for them. Families can also take critical steps to create the necessary legal and financial plans for their affected loved one. While these conversations may be difficult to start, they are critically important to ensuring your loved one’s needs and wishes are met.

Ready to start the conversation? Visit [TakeOnAlz.com](https://www.TakeOnAlz.com) for information, tips and resources.

Dr. Canio is the Regional Dementia Care Clinical Lead for Kaiser Permanente of Northern California.

