



# BRIDGING COMMUNITIES

## FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

### **What is Bridging Communities?**

Bridging Communities is a program for high school students that provides a space for cross-cultural dialogue, community service, and personal growth. Through an examination of the similarities between the WWII incarceration experience of Japanese Americans and the post-9/11 experience of Muslim Americans, Bridging Communities builds solidarity between these two communities. The goal of Bridging Communities is to empower young people to speak up against prejudice and stereotypes and develop as active leaders within their communities and beyond.

### **When will the program take place?**

Bridging Communities takes place over the course of four weekends. The session dates are as follows:

Session 1: Saturday, March 14 — Identity & Community Building

Session 2: Saturday, March 21 — Muslim American History

Session 3: Friday, March 27 - Monday, March 30 — Japanese American History (Trip to Arkansas)

Session 4: Saturday, April 4 — Culmination

### **What will I do?**

Through interactive workshops and activities, participants will:

- Examine their sense of personal identity
- Learn strategies for speaking up against prejudice and stereotypes
- Explore the history of the Japanese American and Muslim American community
- Understand tools of activism to make a difference

### **Where will the program take place?**

Sessions 1 and 2 will be held at the CAIR-Chicago office located in downtown Chicago at 17 North State Street, #1500. The Japanese American History session will involve a trip to Arkansas to visit the former sites of Rohwer and Jerome War Relocation Centers. Session 4, the culmination, will take place at the Midwest Buddhist Temple (435 W. Menomonee St.).

**Can you tell me more about the Arkansas trip?**

Participants will depart Chicago the morning of Friday, March 27 and travel by bus Little Rock, AR. Saturday, March 28 will be spent in Little Rock, taking advantage of the many educational and historic resources available, including Little Rock Central High Historic Site, the Butler Center, Center for Arkansas History & Culture, and the MacArthur Museum of Military History. These tours and exhibits will explore the civil rights history of various groups, and allow participants to learn about and examine artifacts from the Rohwer and Jerome camps. Participants will also have the opportunity to speak with a former internee to gain a better understanding of the personal impacts of the incarceration.

On Sunday, March 29, participants will make a day trip to McGehee, Arkansas, and the former sites of the Rohwer and Jerome War Relocation Centers. Participants will visit the WWII Japanese American Internment Museum in McGehee, AR, and participate in a service project to help restore the historic cemetery at Rohwer.

We will return to Chicago by bus on Monday, March 30.

We will be staying at the Arkansas 4-H Center. Participants will be staying in camp-style rooms, separated by gender, and will be accompanied by five JACL and CAIR-Chicago staff members serving as chaperones.

**Who can participate?**

The program is open to any interested high school student who can commit to the full program.

**Are there any other requirements for participation?**

We ask that participants commit to attending all components of the program. This will ensure continuity between sessions, and maintain the quality of the program for all participants.

**What are the benefits?**

- Meet youth from communities throughout the Chicagoland area
- Engage in interfaith learning and cross-cultural dialogue
- Earn community service/service learning hours
- Take an educational trip to the Rohwer War Relocation Center in Arkansas

**How much will it cost?**

The program is free for all participants. Bridging Communities is funded by the National Park Service (NPS) Japanese American Confinement Sites Grant.

**Who is the program run by?**

Sessions will be facilitated by JACL and CAIR-Chicago staff members.

**How do I apply?**

Applications are available online here: [www.jaclchicago.org/programs/bridging-communities/apply](http://www.jaclchicago.org/programs/bridging-communities/apply)

Applications are due by 11:59 PM on Monday, February 16.

**What if I have more questions?**

Please contact Fatima Ahmed (CAIR-Chicago) at [fahmed@mylschicago.org](mailto:fahmed@mylschicago.org), or Christine Munteanu (JAACL) at [cmunteanu@jacl.org](mailto:cmunteanu@jacl.org).