

JACL *en*

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SECRETARY MINETA DELIVERING THE ADMIRAL WEBER LECTURE AT NORTHWESTERN UNIVERSITY.

Secretary Norman Y. Mineta Visits NU

By Lisa Doi, Kansha Alumni Leadership Board Member

In early October, the Honorable Norman Mineta visited Northwestern University. In talks across two days, Mr. Mineta shared his personal story of incarceration, traced genealogies of the contemporary national security moment, and articulated a role for the Japanese American community in Chicago within a larger Japanese American community.

In the immediate aftermath of incarceration, Mr. Mineta and his family moved to Evanston, one of over 15,000 Japanese Americans who moved to Chicago and the suburbs. From Evanston, Mr. Mineta moved on to a lifetime of public service including his instrumental role in passing H. R. 442, serving as Secretary of Commerce in the Clinton administration, and serving as Secretary of Transportation in the second Bush administration.

As a *Yonsei* attending his talks, I was struck by the legacy of Japanese American public service that Mr. Mineta embodies and inspired by the future work we can take on. Mr. Mineta is one of the last *Nisei* politicians, including Spark Matsunaga, Norman Mineta, Bob Matsui, and Patsy Sakai, who championed Japanese Americans rights and lobbied for redress.

It was inspiring to hear him speak to the Japanese American community in Chicago. At the same time, it left me with questions about the future of Japanese American political leadership: will we ever have the same kind of political representation? That question rests in the hands of me and my peers. But in the short term, we must take up the work of democracy that Mr. Mineta set forward. Whether that means voting on November 8th, supporting Asian American politicians and coalitions, or advocating for an issue that matters to you, Mr. Mineta reminded us that democracy is a verb and the first step is showing up. 🗳️

JACL

Japanese American Citizens League

CHICAGO CHAPTER

Securing and maintaining the civil rights of Japanese Americans and all others who are victimized by injustice and bigotry.

Article submission deadline for our next issue is 12/12/16.

The JACLER is published by the JACL Chicago Chapter for its members, supporters, and friends. We welcome your comments, suggestions, and article submissions.

For More Information

For information about the JACL Chicago Chapter, call 773.728.7171, or visit www.jaclchicago.org

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Please join us November 16th for the **2016 JACL Chicago**

Annual Meeting & dinner

Dinner & Meeting 7pm • Midwest Buddhist Temple • 435 W Menomonee St
Please rsvp: staff@jaclchicago.org or 773-728-7171

Civic Engagement

By Mari Yamagiwa, AmeriCorps VISTA

Over the past year, JACL Chicago has been participating in civic engagement efforts including voter registration, voter education, and Get Out the Vote work. There has been a lot of buzz and media coverage concerning the upcoming presidential election. There are several factors that make this year's election a particularly important one. We find that it is increasingly important to encourage people in our community to exercise their right to vote and to ensure that issues affecting us are being addressed.

In the weeks leading up to the election, the Chicago chapter has engaged in a debate watch party and phone banking to encourage folks to vote. We were excited to partner with the Japanese American Service Committee (JASC) and



Photo courtesy of Mari Yamagiwa

JACL CHICAGO, JASC, AND ASIAN AMERICANS ADVANCING JUSTICE|CHICAGO VOLUNTEERS PARTNER TOGETHER TO PHONE BANK ASIAN AMERICAN COMMUNITY MEMBERS.

Asian Americans Advancing Justice|Chicago for these phone banks. It has been great to do this work in partnership with other community organizations. While it isn't easy to cold call strangers and encourage them to vote, it was much easier to do it with friends. I have found this experience to be very rewarding and hope to continue to do this work in the future.

It is essential for our community to go out to the polls on, or before, November 8th to vote and ensure that our voice is being heard! If you're not sure where you can vote, you can just Google your address and the words "polling location." To easily access information on the offices up for election in your area, as well as information on (most of) the candidates' biography/education, endorsements, and stance on different issues – check out www.ballotready.org.

If you have questions on voting, please feel free to contact me at staff@jaclchicago.org or 773-728-7171. I would be happy to help you in any way I can! 🙌

Midwest District Council Meeting

Phyllis Tamada-Brown, JACL Chicago Board Member

The Midwest District Council (MDC) Fall Meeting was hosted by the Detroit Chapter on October 14–16. Representatives from the Detroit, Chicago, Cincinnati, Dayton, Hoosier, St. Louis, Twin Cities, and Omaha chapters were present.

During Saturday's business session, National JACL staff member, Bill Yoshino, gave summaries and updates on national programs including:

- Two very successful weeklong teacher workshops titled *Civil Liberties in Times of Crisis: The Japanese American Incarceration* sponsored through a \$165,000 grant from the National Endowment for the Humanities [see *JACLer*, No. 117, September/October 2016],
- E.O. 9066 Smithsonian Exhibit due to open in 2017, the 75th anniversary of the signing by President Roosevelt, and
- The 2017 National Convention will be held in Washington D.C. July 6-7 at the Omni Hotel D.C. Events in connection with the E.O. 9066 Smithsonian Exhibit are expected.

The success of the teacher workshops was so inspiring that Dayton representative, Ron Katsuyama, spearheaded a resolution to the National Board to try to sustain the teacher workshop program.

Soh Suzuki, Detroit Host Chapter President and MDC representative, arranged a reception invitation Saturday evening for the JACL Midwest District Council and the National Youth/Student Council at the Japanese Consul General's residence. It was a very nice event.

The next MDC meeting will be held in the spring of 2017. Omaha will host the meeting. 🍄

Remodeling the Model Minority: Japanese Americans and Black Liberation

During the JACL Midwest District Council meeting in mid-October, there was a one-day youth summit that "critically examined the history, role, and future of the relationship between the Nikkei community and the black community." The following is a recap of the event from one of the organizers, Kenji Kuramitsu. Kenji is a JACL Chicago member, and he is on the Kansha Alumni Leadership Board and the JACL National Youth/Student Council.

There were about 20 youth attendees, and we had conversations on Saturday about Remodeling the Model Minority, using selective readings, discussions, and group and creative/reflective activities to think critically about the relationship between the Japanese American community and the black liberation movement. We had youth representing indigenous, African American, mixed Nikkei, other East Asian, and Latin American ethnic communities represented.

During our joint afternoon session with the MDC meeting, we had local Asian American organizers Shane Bernardo and Soh

Suzuki (Detroit JACL chapter President) present on their experiences and histories living in the city, working with Grace Lee Boggs and other Asian Americans alongside black Americans in that city to further community justice, and the two facilitators invited youth and MDC participants into multigenerational conversation

around our work, history with JACL and social justice, and relevant personal and familial timelines.

We concluded the day with the youth again discussing what Japanese American allyship could look like, and revisiting the premises and promises for the day. 🍄



Photo: Robert Brown

MDC AND NY/SC SHARED A JOINT SESSION OF MULTIGENERATIONAL CONVERSATIONS ON TOPICS OF WORK, JACL HISTORY, SOCIAL JUSTICE, AND FAMILIAL TIMELINES.

2017 KANSHA Project

For more information go to www.jaclchicago.org

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2017 JACL Chicago Scholarship Program Guidelines



5415 N. Clark Street Chicago, IL 60640
www.jaclchicago.org

GENERAL INFORMATION

The Japanese American Citizens League (JACL) is the nation's oldest and largest Asian American civil rights organization whose mission is to advance social justice and promote the legacy and cultural heritage of the Japanese American community.

The Chicago Chapter of JACL offers scholarships ranging from \$1,500 to \$10,000 to entering freshman, undergraduate, and graduate students. Scholarships are funded by generous donations from JACL Chicago members and the greater Chicago Japanese American community. The mission of the JACL Chicago Scholarship Program is to encourage youth involvement in local initiatives that advance JACL's mission, including social justice advocacy, leadership and education, and Japanese American community involvement.

To learn more about JACL Chicago, visit www.jaclchicago.org.

ELIGIBILITY

- **JACL Membership:** Applicants must be members of JACL Chicago at the time of application. Student/youth, individual, or family membership will meet this requirement.
- **Enrollment Status:** Applicants must be full-time students at an accredited college, university, or other institution of higher learning in the United States for the fall of 2017. Students deferring enrollment will not qualify for the 2017 scholarship program. All awards are contingent on proof of enrollment.
- **Residency:**
 - Entering freshman applicants must be residents of the State of Illinois for at least one year prior to graduation, OR graduate from an accredited Illinois high school.
 - Undergraduate and graduate applicants must be residents of the State of Illinois (although attendance at schools outside of Illinois is permissible) OR actively enrolled in an accredited Illinois university, college, or institution of higher learning at the time of application.

- **Limits:** JACL Chicago scholarship winners are limited to receiving a total of two (2) awards in their lifetime.
- **Scholarship Luncheon:** All scholarship winners are required to attend the Scholarship Luncheon on Sunday, May 21, 2017. Awards will be distributed on this date. Any awardee who does not attend without prior approval from the scholarship committee will forfeit their award.

HOW TO APPLY

- Application forms will be available at www.jaclchicago.org or the JACL Chicago office by November 2016.
- All application materials, including application form and supplemental pages, official transcripts, ACT/SAT scores (for entering freshman), and recommendation letters must be included in one complete application packet. Do not submit materials separately. Incomplete applications will not be considered.
- Do not staple the application or materials. Use a binder clip or paper clip.
- Applications must be received or postmarked by Wednesday, March 1, 2017. Late applications will not be considered. Electronic submissions will not be accepted. Send complete application packet to:
JACL Chicago Scholarship Committee
5415 N. Clark St.
Chicago, IL 60640
- Applicants will be notified of the Scholarship Committee's decision in April 2017. All decisions of the Scholarship Committee are final.

For questions or more information, contact Judy Tanaka, JACL Chicago Scholarship Committee chair, at scholarships2017@jaclchicago.org.

NOTE: The Japanese American Citizens League administers a National Scholarship Program that is separate and independent from the JACL Chicago Scholarship Program. For information about the JACL National Scholarship Program, please visit: www.jacl.org/jacl-national-scholarship-program.

Next Generation Nikkei Launch

Lane Mita, Youth Co-Chair and Mari Yamagiwa, AmeriCorps VISTA

On September the 22nd, the Next Generation Nikkei held a launch party to get the young leaders in the community together and communicate our goals for the group moving forward. It was a great night. The launch party was held at Fat Cat Bar on Broadway. About 35 people came out with several of them being brand new to the group. It was so fun to catch up with old friends and to meet other Japanese Americans in the area.

We want to be consistent in holding monthly social events give the chance for young adult Japanese Americans to build their network and get to know others in the community. One of our recent events was in October when the Next Gen Nikkei got together to



Photos courtesy of Lane Mita

ABOVE: REBECCA OZAKI, YOUTH COMMITTEE CO-CHAIR AND ALB MEMBER, WELCOME THE ATTENDEES TO THE NEXT GENERATION NIKKEI LAUNCH PARTY.

LEFT: ABOUT 35 PEOPLE ENJOYED CATCHING UP WITH OLD FRIENDS AND MEETING OTHER JAPANESE AMERICANS IN THE CHICAGO AREA.

phone bank Asian American community members with JASC and Asian Americans Advancing Justice|Chicago. And after the phone bank, we went to karaoke together! We plan to continue holding monthly social events as well as periodic workshops and volunteer opportunities. If you or someone you know is interested in joining us, please let us know at staff@jaclchicago.org – we'll be sure to add you to the email list! 🍷

History and Peace: A Reflection on the Hiroshima-Nagasaki Exhibition

Greg Kimura, JAACL Chicago member

I take off my shoes and enter the *Aikido dojo* which has been transformed into a seating area and stage for the opening ceremony. Looking around, I see people of all ages and can hear conversations in both Japanese and English. The quiet scuffle and the subdued conversation between old friends and acquaintances stops as the host announces the opening program. They invited speakers from the inside the community and from Japan, to speak about the exhibition and the events that surrounded it. Within the opening ceremony were demonstrations on the Japanese tea ceremony, calligraphy, and *Aikido*; each demonstration told a story of healing, peace, and history of the Japanese people. The Japanese Culture Center did wonderfully to present a story and appropriately integrate Japanese culture within the program.

As the opening program comes to an end, we are invited upstairs to the viewing area for the exhibition. I walk to the second floor and into the viewing area; everyone is moving much slower and quietly reading the passages on the boards that are displayed along the perimeter of the space. There are graphic images of injuries caused by the bombs, the aftereffects of the radiation, and stories of the people affected by the bombs. There are display cases showing artifacts and often heart wrenching descriptions of each one. One of the display cases had the crane that Barack Obama created on his visit to the Hiroshima Peace Park. At the physical end of the exhibit, there was a little station

where participants could create paper cranes. This area was a bright moment within the exhibit; of learning, playfulness, and healing. The conversations of reflection among visitors, and moments of teaching and learning created by this crane making station, were refreshing and something I appreciated very much about the exhibit.

The stories of peace, pain, and movement toward the future created various moments of self reflection. Seeing the images of the destruction, and damage caused by the bombs was powerful. The exhibit affected me profoundly; in the way that I think about the past, present, and future of my place in the Japanese American community. I failed to notice the great pain that the bombs had caused. By hearing the stories and knowing more, I can also be a part of the healing process. Everyone who participated in the exhibit was a part of the healing. By talking, learning, feeling, and sharing experiences, we all are connected to these events. I will be sure to continue to share what I can and tell the stories that deserve more light. I thank the organizers and participants of the exhibition for creating and nurturing the space for healing. 🍷

The Hiroshima-Nagasaki Atomic Bomb Exhibition is open through October 29th. The Japanese Culture Center is located at 1016 W. Belmont Ave. www.japaneseculturecenter.com

Go For Broke National Education Center Contest Reflection

James Ozaki, JACL Chicago Member

I'm proud to represent Chicago and the midwest in receiving 1st place in the Go For Broke National Education Center Essay, Poetry and Video Contest (GFBNEC), and credit this community with providing me the strength and foundation in my Japanese American (JA) identity to be able to write this poem. From hearing my grandpa's tantalizing stories, and participating in the Kansha and Kakehashi projects, this identity has grown to become vibrant, full of color and emotion. And I'm grateful be able to express that through the opportunity this contest has given me. If entering this contest has taught me anything, it's that in order to make impact on society through any art, you have to be willing to put yourself and your work out there even if you don't think it's good enough, even if you don't get anything out of it immediately, and even if you get hurt. However, you must believe that someone out there will think it's good and be moved by it.

The goal of this contest is "to educate and inspire character and equality through the virtue and valor of our World War II American veterans of Japanese ancestry." GFBNEC encourages contestants to do research on WWII JA Veterans, and on their website, have an archive of recorded interviews with veterans, where I found my Uncle, Yoji Ozaki. I thought it would be cool to listen to his interview, and take pieces of his story and combine with the firsthand accounts I had heard from my grandpa, Sam. It was two men from the same family, who shared some similar experiences, but developed into distinctly different people both with great character. I wanted to use their stories to weave a narrative that would connect the past,



Photo courtesy of James Ozaki

FIRST PLACE WINNERS OF THE GO FOR BROKE NATIONAL EDUCATION CENTER ESSAY, POETRY AND VIDEO CONTEST ATTEND THE EVENING OF ALOHA GALA DINNER IN LA. JAMES OZAKI IS SECOND FROM THE RIGHT.

present and future, mainly how their valor has impacted our future and inspires a rising generation.

I attended the Evening of Aloha Gala in downtown Los Angeles, traveling all the way from Champaign, Illinois. There was a separate reception for all the contest winners and finalists, where we were commended for putting in the work and research, as well as contributing to preserving the legacy of Japanese American WWII Veterans. The night was followed by a lovely banquet MCed by David Ono, fancy food, keynote speaker: Norman Mineta, and good music. My sister and I stayed in a small hostel in Little Tokyo and got a good bowl of ramen. It was my first time back there since going on the Kansha Project in 2015. Since then, it seems that the community has expanded with new shops and restaurants. I'm always in awe of the strong JA community in LA and even more so by the bustling excitement of being there. Nonetheless, it reminds me of my identity being from the midwest JA community and the unique perspective that comes with it. On my way home from LA, I am more inspired to try and create more works of art representing our community and the larger Asian American community as well, letting go of

my own harsh judgments on my work and believing in potential impact, nothing to lose, go for broke.

To read James Ozaki's award winning poem go to www.jaclchicago.org.

JACL Chicago Scholarship Program

Don't miss the opportunity to win a JACL Chicago scholarship.

(See 2017 guidelines page 4.)

Applications coming soon! Visit jaclchicago.org for more information

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JACL

Japanese American Citizens League

CHICAGO CHAPTER

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w: jaclchicago.org



The Japanese American Citizens League is a non-profit human and civil rights organization dedicated to preserving the civil liberties of Japanese Americans and of all Americans.

We welcome your participation.

Go Green! Receive the JACler newsletter (in full color), news and updates via email. See page 2

Calendar of Events

Tuesday, November 8	Election Day Get Out & Vote!
Saturday, November 12 10am – 4pm	JASC's Holiday Delight JASC, 4427 N. Clark Street, Chicago
Wednesday, November 16 7pm	JACL Chicago Annual Meeting Midwest Buddhist Temple, 435 W. Menomonee St, Chicago
Wednesday, December 12 7 pm – 9pm	JACL Chicago Board Meeting JACL Chicago Office, 5415 N. Clark Street, Chicago
Wednesday, January 11 7pm – 9pm	JACL Chicago Board Meeting JACL Chicago Office, 5415 N. Clark Street, Chicago