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JACL

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Asian American Action Day

by Pat Rubin-Yuzawa

On May 9th, Asian Americans Advancing Justice | Chicago and the Pan-Asian Voter Empowerment Coalition (PAVE) hosted its 10th annual Asian American Action Day (AAA Day) in Springfield. Approximately 300 Asian American community members boarded buses in the early morning hour to meet with legislators and to join in a rally at the capital's rotunda. The theme for this year's AAA Day was "Raising Our Voices, Building Our Power" with the tagline "Language Justice for All". All participants attended a Lobby Day 101 training in order to participate.



JACL CHICAGO PAST AND PRESENT BOARD MEMBERS LEFT TO RIGHT:
BRANDON LEE, PAT YUZAWA-RUBIN, BRYAN HARA, AND
JENNIFER BROWN

The PAVE Coalition, of which JACL Chicago is a member, consists of 16 Asian American advocacy and direct service organizations in the Chicagoland area. Founded in 2011, PAVE held the first Asian American Advocacy Day and launched the Asian American Caucus in Springfield. PAVE focuses on increasing voter turnout and civic participation among Asian Americans and improving the lives of Asian Americans through advocacy and policy change.

AAA Day gave our community the opportunity to share personal stories with elected officials and bring our demands to them personally. State Representatives Theresa Mah (2nd District) and Dagmara "Dee" Avelar (85th District) and State Senator Ram Villivalam (8th District) warmly welcomed the group at the rally.

Community members addressed PAVE's agenda with our legislators. The bills included:

- Language Justice Campaign (HB 3222)
- Inclusive History Implementation

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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 August 11, 2023.

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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Asian American Action Day continued

- Pro-Immigrant State Budget of \$53 Million
- Faith Behind Bars (HB 5455)
- Faith by Plate (HB 1574)
- Driver's Licenses for ALL (HB 3882)
- Eliminate Medical Debt (HB 2719 & SB 2080), and
- Health Care Cultural Competency (HB 4654)

JACL Chicago past and present board members in attendance were Jennifer Brown, Bryan Hara, Brandon Lee, and Pat Yuzawa-Rubin. See you next year! 🍀

2023 JACL Chicago Scholarship Luncheon

by Christine Munteanu, JACL Chicago Scholarship Committee Chair



JACL CHICAGO CHAPTER PRESIDENT LISA DOI PROVIDED UPDATES ON CHAPTER ACTIVITIES.

After a four-year hiatus due to the COVID-19 pandemic, we were thrilled to host the 2023 JACL Chicago Scholarship Luncheon on Sunday, May 21, in our traditional luncheon format. There were over 60 people in attendance, including proud family members and supporters, generous donors, engaged community members, and our six accomplished scholarship winners.

JACL Chicago Chapter President Lisa Doi provided updates on our chapter's activities, including introducing Rebecca Ozaki, who was recently hired by the chapter as a Program Director and has provided much needed stability and support as many of the chapter's programs begin reactivating. We were also very lucky to be joined by Phill Ozaki, Director of Development and Membership

at JACL National, who gave keynote remarks sharing reflections on his journey through JACL.

This year's event was a true family affair: 3 of the 6 scholarship winners had older siblings who were past JACL Chicago scholarship recipients (2020 Iwaoka awardee Eriko Darcy; 2020 Miyasaki awardee Lily Ng; and 2020 Nakagawa awardee Sam Nishimura), and Sam and Lily joined their younger siblings at this year's luncheon.

In addition, our featured speaker, Phill Ozaki, is the older sibling of our chapter's new Program Director, Becky Ozaki. Phill was also a recipient of the Noboru Honda Memorial Scholarship in 2005, and Mr. Honda's granddaughter and great-granddaughter were also in attendance. Phill spoke movingly about his own grandfather, Sam Ozaki, and how Sam's legacy inspired and continues to motivate Phill's own involvement in JACL and in fighting for civil rights and social justice for all.

As always, the highlight of the program was the presentation of the scholarship awards. Each of the scholarships are either donated directly by, or continue to be funded in memory of, past community leaders, many of whom are survivors of the WWII Japanese American incarceration. Our scholarship program embodies their enduring legacy, strength, and resilience, and each presentation



PHILL OZAKI, JACL NATIONAL DIRECTOR OF DEVELOPMENT AND MEMBERSHIP, SHARED REFLECTIONS ON HIS JOURNEY THROUGH JACL.

was an opportunity to reflect upon the connections between the Nikkei incarceration experience and the social justice issues that our young scholarship winners are engaged with today.

The Yoshino Family Scholarship was presented by Ron Yoshino, in memory of his parents, to **Anisa Bin-Walid**, a graduate of John Hersey High School who will be attending the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign in the fall.

The Miyasaki Family Scholarship was presented by Gary Shimomura, on behalf of the Japanese Mutual Aid Society and in honor and memory of Aki and John Miyasaki, to **Eli Nishimura**, a graduate of Glenbard South High School who will be attending DePaul University in the fall.

The Tomiyama Family Scholarship was presented by Lisa Tomiyama in memory of her father, Tak Tomiyama, and brother, Todd Tomiyama, to **Kimiko Darcy**, a graduate of The Latin School of Chicago who will be attending Emory University in the fall.

Two John Iwaoka Memorial Scholarships were presented by Megan Nakano, past JACL Chicago Chapter President and current Treasurer, in memory of John Iwaoka. The first was to **Ella Ng**, a graduate of Evanston Township High School who will be attending the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign



2023 SCHOLARSHIP WINNERS. CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT: ELJAH NISHIMURA, KATIE HILL, ELLA NG, KIMIKO DARCY, AND ANISA BIN-WALID. NOT SHOWN: KESHAV GHANDI.

in the fall, and the second to **Keshav Ghandi**, a rising junior at the University of Illinois at Chicago.

The Chiye Tomihiro Memorial Scholarship was presented by Rebecca Ozaki, a past Tomihiro scholarship recipient, in memory of Chiye Tomihiro, to **Katie Hill**, a rising senior at Valparaiso University.

For more details on each of our scholarships and this year's winners, please visit our website.

The JACL Chicago Scholarship Program is organized and run by a dedicated committee of volunteers: Cheryl Inoue-Jue, Kelly Iwanaga-Becker, Corinne Kodama, Alec Ozawa, and Judy Tanaka.

And of course, the program would not be possible without our donors: Ron, Bill, and Larry Yoshino, Lary Schectman, Lisa Tomiyama, Aki Miyasaki and the Japanese Mutual Aid Society, our chapter board who act as stewards for our restricted and endowed scholarships that have been set up over

the years, as well as many chapter members who donate in support of this important program. Thank you for your continued care and support. 🙏



THE MIYASAKI FAMILY SCHOLARSHIP IS IN HONOR OF AKI MIYASAKI (SHOWN HERE), AND IN MEMORY OF HER HUSBAND, JOHN MIYASAKI.

KANSHA CULMINATION

Saturday, June 24th 2-5pm

Church of Christ Presbyterian
5846 N. Spaulding Ave
Chicago, IL 60659



RSVP here: <https://kanshaculmination2023.eventbrite.com>



JACL
Japanese American Citizens League
CHICAGO CHAPTER

From Rice & Gravy to Rice 'N Bread: A Brief History of Hamburger King

By Erik Matsunaga



PARTICIPANTS OF THE @WINDYCITYNIKKEI 2019 HISTORIC JAPANTOWN WALKING TOUR, CO-SPONSORED BY CHICAGO JACL, GATHER IN FRONT OF RICE'N BREAD

Founded in the mid-1950s by Thomas Yamauchi, Hamburger King was a longtime standout of Japanese American-style diner food in Chicago. Colloquially known for a time as “Chester’s,” after Chester Joichi who worked there in the ‘70s, in 1986 a Korean American purchased “the King” from Yamauchi and the newly nicknamed “Sonia’s” added a few Korean dishes. In 2013, the restaurant was sold to another Korean American, who updated the decor, menu, and changed the name to Rice’N Bread: An American Diner with a Korean Twist.

The original location was a six-stool counter on the triangle formed by Clark and Sheffield, a block south of Wrigley Field. Requiring more space as business grew, in 1968 Yamauchi relocated across the street to its current home at 3435 N. Sheffield, in the Links Hall building then owned by Chester’s brother and sister-in-law Rowland and May Joichi. Other Nikkei tenants of Links Hall were Newport Cleaners, Kimura Sushi, and Nisei Lounge.

Although a diverse neighborhood populated by many ethnic groups, from the 1950s through the 1990s Japanese Americans—the majority being WWII-era

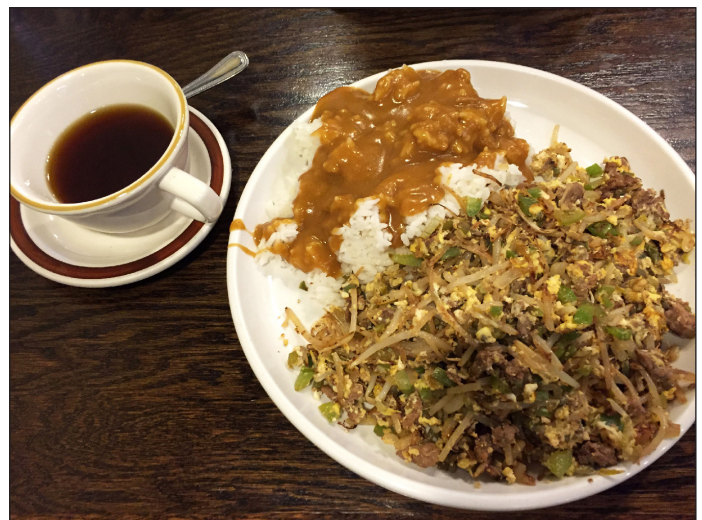
resettlers—were highly visible in Lakeview in terms of their commercial, cultural, and residential presence, particularly along Clark Street from Belmont to Sheffield. Although Nikkei residents began dispersing as they migrated further toward city limits or into the suburbs, many businesses remained in the old neighborhood into the latter half of the 1990s.

Among the less than handful of legacy institutions remaining today are Rice’N Bread and Nisei Lounge, both still located in the Links Hall building. While neither are any longer Nikkei-owned, each pays homage to their founding history: Nisei Lounge by remaining the last neighborhood tavern in Wrigleyville with its mostly original interior and support of JA community functions; and Rice’N Bread by maintaining original menu items such as rice & gravy, the Akutagawa, and

Yet Ca Mein, as well as continuing to be a neighborhood gathering place full of regulars.

According to founder Thomas Yamauchi’s son Paul, “For me, both the Hamburger King and Nisei Lounge (they were connected together by a common door!) played important cultural and social roles for the Japanese American community in Chicago from the 1950s until the 1990s. Lots of friendships and social activities sprang from the duo!”

For anyone who has pondered the provenance of the peculiarly named “Akutagawa,” this special menu item was a favorite of regular George Akutagawa in the 1960s. It caught on and was subsequently added, bearing his name, to the permanent menu. It’s a mix of scrambled eggs, green peppers, onions, and bean sprouts—with your choice of



THE AKUTAGAWA

meat or not—cooked on a flat top grill and served with gravy-smothered rice. Nearly five decades later, Akutagawa’s name remains etched in local lexicon at Rice’N Bread as well as in variants of both spelling and ingredients such as the “Octogawa Scramble” at Noon Hour Grill in Rogers Park and the currently off-menu but still served “Atakawa” at Fullerton Restaurant in Logan Square. 🍴

In Memory of Rick Okabe

By Carol Yoshino

JACL Chicago recently lost a long-time member who began his JACL "career" way back in the '60s as a Junior JACLeR. Richard Okabe—then known as "Rich"—joined the Junior JACL while attending Lane Tech High School, and then proceeded to Northwestern University from which he graduated. Throughout high school and college, Rich actively participated in the youth program as the local Junior JACL chapter president and as chairperson of the Midwest District Youth Council. Rich attended his first National Junior JACL Convention in 1966. These were the formative years where Rich learned and sharpened his leadership skills.



In the 1990s, Rich left the Bay Area for Salt Lake City to marry Karen Suzuki, another former Chicago Junior JACLeR. During his years in Salt Lake City, he was known as "Rick."

Over the years, Rick dedicated himself to working with his local JA community, including being a charter member of the Topaz Committee which successfully built the Topaz Museum in Delta, Utah. He also was a volunteer of Salt Lake's Nihon Matsuri. Rick was a valued member of JACL Chicago's 2010 and JACL Seattle's 2012 National Convention organizing committees where he was in charge of all logistics and facilities.

Rick Okabe passed away on April 22 in Salt Lake City, following a brief illness. He is survived by his beloved wife, Karen, stepchildren Todd Hashimoto and Brooke Hashimoto (Gregg Kirchhoff), grandson Alex Kirchhoff, sisters Elaine Kaneshiro (Darrell), Jan Andersen (Mark), nephews Jason Andersen (Tiffany), Michael Andersen (Melissa), Ben Andersen (Vanessa), Craig Kaneshiro (Stephanie Nitahara), and grandnieces/nephews, Dylan, Mabel, Nora, Daniel, and Aria Andersen and Kiyoshi Kaneshiro.

Rick's kindness, leadership and love of his family and community was admired and will be missed.

Donations in Rick's memory can be made to the Topaz Museum (<https://topazmuseum.org>) or to Nihon Matsuri (<https://www.nihonmatsuri.com>). 🍀

Join or Donate to JACL Chicago Today!

The JACL is a community organization that ensures the protection of your rights. Help us continue to be a strong voice for you and your family by supporting us with your membership or a donation.

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Chicago, IL 60640



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Thank You to Our Generous Donors!

(As of 3/9/23 – 5/26/23)

John Adachi	Ryan Nishimoto
Betsy Applebaum	Ruth Nishimura
Andrea Boris	Martin O'Connell
Desiree Bote	Kenneth Oba
Deborah and Erwin Buscato	Steve Arima & Elaine Ogawa <i>In memory of Tom Arima</i>
Clay Cerny	Leanne Okazaki
Taylor Chandler	James Onoda <i>In memory of Chieko Onoda</i>
Wilson & Phyllis Chow <i>In honor of Lucille Prosise</i>	Kristen Osakada
Carolyn Cline	Alexandra Othman
Lisa Doi	Cam Rodriguez
Mary Doi	Ron Sakai
Tonko & Paul Doi	Mary Sampson
Samuel Dunn	Lindsay Szeto
Daniel Egan	Benjamin Tani
Chinoree T. & Kimiyo Enta	Richard and Ann Tani <i>In memory of Rose Tani</i>
Patricia & Albert Hara <i>In memory of Tyree Momii</i>	Keith Uchima
Yvonne & Michael Harada	Peggy Wallace <i>In honor of Calvin Manshio</i>
Ivan Hobbs	Gary Yamagiwa
Michell Hokin	Thomas & Jean Yang
Roxanne Hori	Grace Yoshiba
David Igasaki	Carol & Bill Yoshino <i>In memory of Richard Okabe</i>
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Neil & Karen Kanemoto <i>In memory of Yutaka Kanemoto</i>	
Robin Kanemoto	
Elaine & Darrell Kaneshiro	
Grace Kido <i>In honor of SJ Cave-Doi</i>	
JoAnn King	
Brandon Lee	
Ted Raichel & Donna Melkonian <i>In memory of Richard Okabe</i>	
Cindy Moy	
Christine Munteanu	
Yasuko Munteanu	
Carolyn Nakamura <i>In memory of Kay & Lillie Nakamura</i>	

Organizations

Chicago Community Trust





Japanese American Citizens League

CHICAGO CHAPTER

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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

Saturday, June 24th, 2023 2:00 – 5:00pm	Kansha Project Culmination Christ Church Presbyterian, 5846 N. Spaulding Avenue, Chicago, IL 60659 https://kanshaculmination2023.eventbrite.com/
Saturday, June 24th, 2023 5:30 – 7:30pm	Kansha Alumni Reunion Alarmist Brewing & Taproom, 4055 W. Peterson Ave (Suite Rear), Chicago, IL 60646
Wednesday, July 12th, 2023	JACL Chicago Board Meeting (in-person) JACL Chicago Office, 5415 N. Clark St., Chicago, IL 60640
Thursday, July 19th – Sunday, July 23rd, 2023	JACL National Convention Little Tokyo, LA https://jacl.org/2023-jacl-national-convention
Saturday, July 29th – Sunday, July 30th, 2023	Camp Daikon Japanese American Service Committee, 4427 N. Clark Street, Chicago, IL 60640 https://bit.ly/campdaikon2023
Saturday, August 5th, 2023 11:00am – 6:00pm	Japanese Community Picnic LaBagh Woods Grove #1, West Foster Avenue, N Cicero Ave, Chicago, IL 60630
Friday, August 11th – Sunday, August 13th, 2023	Ginza Festival Midwest Buddhist Temple, 435 W. Menomonee St., Chicago, Illinois 60614 https://ginzaholiday.com