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JACL National Convention Recap

by Ron Sakai

The JACL National Convention took place this summer from Wednesday, July 10, through Saturday, July 13, in Philadelphia. There were approximately 250 people representing 70+ chapters from across the country.

Each chapter sends delegates to vote on the business of the JACL as the National Council. Chicago sent two delegates, Jennifer Brown and Ben Nishimura, and two alternate delegates, Lisa Doi and Ron Sakai, to represent our chapter at the Convention.

This year, there were some joint events and workshops with the OCA and APIAVote who were also holding their conferences at the same hotel. The workshops were on a broad array of topics, from *Moving Reparations Forward for Black Americans* and *Navigating DEI in Corporate Discourse and Practice* (Co-hosted with OCA) to *Imagining a Collective Future:*

Japanese American Confinement Sites Descriptions. There were also strategy sessions about saving Cultural Districts; fighting Alien Land Laws and the importance of AAPI Studies/Curriculum at the college level.

The Convention had a variety of voices speaking to our members. The highlight of the Convention was the *APIAVote Voters Forum* which featured Vice President Kamala Harris

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CHICAGO DELEGATES BEN NISHIMURA AND JENNIFER BROWN

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 November 1st, 2024.

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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JACL National Convention continued

and actress/activist Tamlyn Tomita among other distinguished speakers (replay available on APIAVote YouTube channel). During other convention events, we had the Secretary of

Labor, Judy Su; Member of Congress, Judy Chu (D-CA); Senior Advisor for Public Engagement and primary liaison to the AANHPI community, Kota Mizutani; Executive Director of

Governor's Advisory Commission on Asian Pacific American Affairs, Razin M Karu; and Philadelphia Council Member at Large, Nina Ahmed speak to attendees.



ACTRESS/ACTIVIST TAMLYN TOMITA AND VICE PRESIDENT KAMALA HARRIS AT THE APIAVOTE VOTERS FORUM



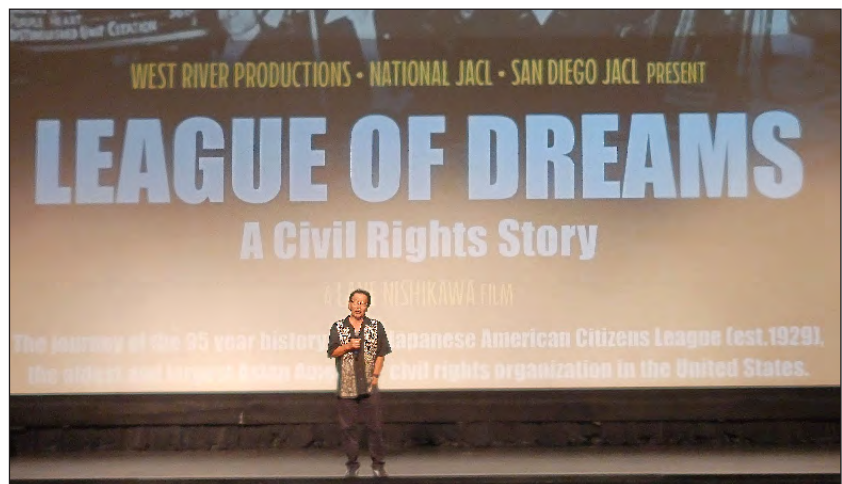
Attendees

were also treated to Lane Nishikawa previewing his latest film about the legacy of JACL. The film, *League of Dreams – A Civil Rights Story*, features interviews with JACL members and staff including Chicago's own Tom Yatabe! *League of Dreams* will be touring the country in the coming year.

The Washington, DC chapter promoted a new graphic novel, *But, Where Are You REALLY From?* written by members of their chapter. It will be used in 5th grade US History curriculums in Montgomery county, MD, public schools. More information is available at <https://jacl-dc.org>.

Finally, the Houston chapter worked with the Nisei Baseball Research Project to develop a traveling exhibit about issei and nisei baseball teams. The inaugural showing was at Texas Stadium during All-Star Week.

Next year, the Convention will be held in Albuquerque, New Mexico. 🇺🇸



LANE NISHIKAWA DISCUSSING HIS FILM, *LEAGUE OF DREAMS*

Asian American Action Day: Advocating for Equity and Access

By Jennifer Brown

As May marked Asian American and Pacific Islander (AAPI) Heritage Month, the 11th annual Asian American Action Day (AAA Day) was held by Asian Americans Advancing Justice | Chicago and the Pan Asian Voter Empowerment (PAVE) Coalition. The event took place on May 1, 2024, in Springfield, Illinois, under the theme “Our Voice Our Power” and the tagline “Building Bridges to Equity.” The aim was to advocate for policies promoting equity and access for the AAPI community.

The PAVE Coalition, which includes 18 Asian American organizations from the Chicagoland area including JACL Chicago, has been a driving force for civic participation and policy change for Asian Americans since 2011. AAA Day, established in 2012, allows community members to share their stories and policy demands with elected officials directly.

This year's AAA Day emphasized several legislative priorities, notably the Language Equity and Access Act (LEAA, HB 5387 | SB 3762). This legislation aims to improve language access within state agencies by requiring the Governor's Office of New Americans to develop a statewide language access policy. It mandates timely oral interpretation and written translation services for languages spoken by at least 1,000 limited English proficient individuals.

Other legislative priorities included funding immigrant services, implementing inclusive AAPI history curricula in schools, and establishing progressive revenue streams. The Inclusive History Implementation initiative, building on the Teaching Equitable Asian American Community History (TEAACH) Act, seeks specific funding to ensure diverse histories are taught in schools.

Over 300 Asian American participants from across Illinois traveled to Springfield, many using bus transportation organized by PAVE. AAA Day provided a platform for sharing personal stories and legislative demands with elected officials, humanizing policy issues



COMMUNITY MEMBERS GATHERED IN SPRINGFIELD, ILLINOIS ON ASIAN AMERICAN ACTION DAY, MAY 1, 2024, TO ADVOCATE FOR THE PASSAGE OF THE LANGUAGE EQUITY AND ACCESS ACT. CREDIT: PROVIDED/RAY RIVERA, ASIAN AMERICANS ADVANCING JUSTICE | CHICAGO

and highlighting the real-life impacts of legislative decisions. This mobilization effort demonstrated the AAPI community's commitment to civic engagement and policy advocacy.

Four weeks later, after almost two years of PAVE advocacy and the massive turnout for AAA Day 2024 demanding action, Illinois lawmakers passed the Language Equity and Access Act on May 23, 2024. This was a major victory for our community, and we eagerly await Governor Pritzker's signing of the bill into law.

AAA Day amplified our AAPI community's voices, shared their experiences, and advocated for meaningful change. The event's multi-year success, reflected in the passing of the TEAACH Act in 2021 and LEAA this year, demonstrates the growing political influence of Asian Americans in Illinois and our pivotal role in shaping the state's legislative landscape.

The impact of AAA Day extends beyond the event itself, fostering ongoing dialogue



between the AAPI community and state legislators. The collective efforts of PAVE and the Japanese American Citizens League are crucial in advancing the rights and well-being of Asian Americans in Illinois and beyond.

We hope you will join us next year for Asian American Action Day, where we will support more critical bills and demonstrate the power of Japanese Americans and all AAPI communities in this state. 🌸

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2024 Scholarship Luncheon: The Future of JACL Chicago

by Lisa Sakai

On Sunday, May 19, 2024, JACL Chicago hosted its annual Scholarship Luncheon at Maggiano's Old Orchard. The Chapter's scholarships are a way for the JACL to support younger members in the pursuit of their educational goals. By recognizing outstanding students in the community, the JACL acknowledges the importance of keeping these members engaged in the JACL and its mission.

The Scholarships used to be the only outreach to younger members for the JACL. However, now they are just one of the

many programs the JACL offers. Ben Nishimura, a Kansha alum and current Youth Chair of JACL Chicago, reported on what the Chapter's younger members have been doing to stay engaged. The Kansha alumni Board showcased several of their culmination projects at Day of Remembrance in February and held a fundraiser at the Nisei Lounge in May. Next Gen Nikkei worked with Nikkei Uprising and held a weekend retreat called Camp Daikon in 2023, which held workshops and activities pertaining to activism and identity. Next Gen Nikkei also worked with the Mutual Aid Society to deliver bento boxes to seniors, hosted intergenerational discussion groups, and held workshops showcasing the arts and skills of our members. The success of these popular programs and events, as measured by the growing number of participants, is a testament to the commitment and hard work of the program's leaders.

In her opening remarks, Christine Munteanu, Chair of the Scholarship Committee, quoted Asian American civil rights activist Grace Lee Boggs: "You

cannot change any society unless you take responsibility for it, unless you



ABOVE: JACL CHICAGO BOARD MEMBER BEN NISHIMURA DELIVERING A YOUTH PROGRAMS REPORT
LEFT: JACL CHICAGO BOARD MEMBER LISA SAKAI AWARDING THE NAKAGAWA SCHOLARSHIP TO ELI NISHIMURA

see yourself as belonging to it and responsible for changing it." Christine commented on how inspiring it was to see today's scholarship winners with that strong sense of responsibility "not just in JACL Chicago but in their respective fields and in society."

The Tomiyama Family Scholarship was awarded to Jaclyn Chiou. This is the second time that Jaclyn has been awarded the Tomiyama Scholarship, the first time in 2021. Jaclyn is a senior at the University of Texas-Austin studying Mechanical Engineering. She has visited Amache, Rohwer and Manzanar incarceration camps and her experiences there inspired her to carry on the lessons into her future workspace. "I want to create an Asian American employee resource group within a company with a mission to dismantle Asian stereotypes to help breakthrough the bamboo ceiling."

Brandon Takahashi received the John Iwaoka Memorial Scholarship. Brandon

is a junior studying Environmental Policy and Culture at Northwestern University. He views the intersectionality of environmental studies and social justice as a way to engage young Asian Americans. "With JACL I can create intergenerational bridges through the education of young Japanese Americans and provide more opportunities for youth to engage with the Japanese American community, better preparing the next generation of changemakers for the challenges they will face."

The Miyasaki Family Scholarship was awarded to Ryan Chiou. Ryan is a medical student at Albany Medical College and will graduate in 2025. His ongoing volunteer work and service in the JA community instilled in him a desire to advocate for his community on a professional level. "By drawing on my cultural heritage and personal experiences, I plan to create a more inclusive and equitable health care system that serves the needs of all patients, regardless of background or identity."

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2024 SCHOLARSHIP RECIPIENTS: (FRONT ROW, LEFT TO RIGHT) JACLYN CHIOU, KATIE HILL, DANIEL SANJI; (BACK ROW, LEFT TO RIGHT) RYAN CHIOU, ELI NISHIMURA, BRANDON TAKAHASHI

Daniel Sanji received the Yoshino Family Scholarship. Daniel is pursuing a Ph.D. in Psychology at Northwestern University where he will study the social and psychological factors underlying racial inequality. As a community organizer living in the Midwest, he became aware of the lack of social justice resources available to Asian Americans. "The scarcity of these resources instilled a deep desire to advance research in underrepresented minority groups in the field of social psychology."

The Mas Nakagawa Memorial Scholarship was awarded to Eli Nishimura. Eli is a

sophomore at DePaul University pursuing a Bachelor of Fine Arts in Animation. Through programs like Kansha and Camp Daikon, the JACL has given Eli a sense of community. "Before JACL I had a challenging time figuring out who I was or who I wanted to be... JACL has aided in shaping my identity because I am finally able to be in a community of people that can understand and relate to my Japanese American identity."

Katie Hill received the Chiye Tomihiro Memorial Scholarship. She also received the Tomihiro Scholarship last year while she was at Valparaiso University. This fall,

Katie will be pursuing a Masters degree in Museum Studies at the University of Oklahoma. Her visits to Heart Mountain and Manzanar, as well as undergraduate research projects, led to her graduate study focus. "Witnessing the physical remnants of history and actively participating in preserving these sites emphasized the importance of cultural preservation."

Congratulations to the Scholarship recipients, the future of JACL Chicago! 🍀

Reflections from the Kansha Project 2024

By Gabi Senno

At Manzanar National Historic Site, Park Ranger Sarah handed me and other descendents of incarcerated of the WWII Incarceration of Japanese Americans stuffed Department of Interior folders. Inside were ship manifests, camp rosters, newspaper clippings, and photographs of my grandfather at the Jerome and Gila River Relocation Centers. I was in awe of this information. Despite a trip to the Jerome and Rohwer Relocation Centers in 2021, I had never seen many of these images and documents before. Even though only three of Kansha Project participants had familial connections to incarceration, the program's pillars of legacy, gratitude, and remembrance brought all participants together, binding us in our interest to learn more about the incarceration and in our experiences as Japanese American youth.

After we were introduced to the site, Sarah and her colleague gave us a guided tour, showcasing the Japanese American



GABI SENNO'S GRANDFATHER, ROBERT MASATOSHI HAYASHIDA, SITTING IN THE CHAIR IN THE CENTER OF THE IMAGE

experience at Manzanar and the individuals who helped develop its foundations as a historic site. Wind whipping through the mountain ranges and past our ears, we walked barrack to barrack, diving into camp life. At the living quarters, the desert heat hung heavy. I saw the mattresses made of straw and I thought of my grandfather and the unbearable living conditions he endured. Throughout the tour, we also learned about Sue Kunitomi, an activist and incarcerated at Manzanar pivotal in designating it a National Historic Site. Each of us read a paragraph from her oral history out loud, recounting her incarceration and resettlement in Chicago. I could not bring myself to do so, mildly afraid I would reveal the grief, disgust, and rage boiling within my consciousness. Although Sue's words were challenging to process, I valued hearing directly from survivors, via their oral histories or in person.

Prior to our trip to Manzanar, we visited the Japanese American National Museum and participated in a tour by Mas Yamashita, learning both from material objects related to Japanese American history and from Mr. Yamashita's reflections from his incarceration at Topaz Relocation Center. I could tell the cohort was enthralled, lingering at an object or



JAPANESE AMERICAN NATIONAL MUSEUM DOCENT MAS YAMASHITA GIVING KANSHA PROJECT PARTICIPANTS A TOUR OF THE COMMON GROUND EXHIBIT

hanging onto each of Mr. Yamashita's words, catching his memories as he spoke them. Here, I wondered what my grandfather would have told me—if anything—about his incarceration. To

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my relief, from the information I received in my folder, it seemed he may have had fun in his church group or as a member of a drama club. As we moved from each gallery, we picked up other JANM visitors, highlighting the power and depth of Mr. Yamashita's knowledge. As a Curatorial Assistant at the Museum of the City of New York, I appreciated that we engaged with Mr. Yamashita and how JANM provides a platform for the community that it seeks to reflect. Relatedly, as a Japanese American from the Midwest, where there is no ethnic enclave, it was an honor to enter physical spaces such as JANM that work to define and uplift the people of Little Tokyo.

Although there were different points during the trip that I witnessed the cohort coming together, I felt we truly connected during our service project at Merritt Park, the Japanese garden incarcerated created at Manzanar. During breaks from weeding the rose bushes, we sat in the tea house and told stories about our upbringings and lives in Chicago and beyond, bonding over shared teachers, our love of the arts, and silly noticings of the geckos and wildlife in the park surrounding us. From then on, we

continued to learn more deeply about one another, showing vulnerability while wandering throughout the Visitor Center and in workshops led by community organizers the following day. From these interactions, combined with those in the tours, as well as those over meals in local restaurants, it became clear that our common ground extended across time, from 1942 to 2024, from our ancestors' incarceration to our everyday lived experiences as contemporary Japanese Americans. 🍵



KANSHA PROJECT PARTICIPANTS AND FACILITATORS TAKING A BREAK IN THE TEA HOUSE DURING A SERVICE PROJECT AT MERRITT PARK IN THE MANZANAR HISTORIC SITE

Memorial Day Morning

by Tom Yatabe

By 1934, when Chicago's Japanese population had grown to about 300, there was a disproportionate number of cases of single persons, particularly among the many restaurant workers, who died without relatives or funds. Between 1920 and



JAPANESE MUTUAL AID SOCIETY PRESIDENT GARY SHIMOMURA SHARING OPENING REMARKS

1934, eighty percent of those who passed were without family or means and needed assistance with their final expenses and burials. Due to discrimination, graves were scattered in various cemeteries, many untraceable. Concerned Japanese restaurant owners began a movement to raise funds for proper end-of-life services. In 1934, a small number gathered, an event which gave

birth to the establishment of the formal organization. The group appealed to the Japanese community to become paid members of the new organization, aptly named the Japanese Mutual Aid Society of Chicago (JMAS). The society's purpose was threefold: to purchase centrally located cemetery lots, to help pay for final expenses of those who died without family or funds, and to provide necessary social services to the Japanese community.

The organization was formally launched in January 1935 with the election of board members and the purchase of lots in Montrose Cemetery at a cost of \$600, some of which had been donated by Japan's Ambassador to the United States, Hiroshi Saito. Mr. Saito later wrote the inscription now seen on the Mausoleum at Montrose Cemetery designating it as the Japanese Mausoleum. These lots formed the nucleus of the Japanese section of the cemetery. Plans to construct the Japanese Mausoleum began in 1936, and with the accumulation of \$2400 in donations by May 1937, the Mausoleum was completed. An unveiling ceremony was held on Memorial Day, 1938, the first official Japanese American Memorial Day service in Chicago. The JMAS became a focal point of activity in the Japanese community by making visitations to the sick, arranging for—and frequently paying for—medical and legal aid, and assisting in establishing a Japanese language school. It continued its work until the outbreak of World War II when ordered to cease all activities, not to collect dues, and not to congregate in groups larger than three. In 1943, members of the Society opened a hostel where many JA evacuees relocating to the Chicago area were able to stay until they found permanent residences. By 1946 the JMAS

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largely reverted to its original function, but continues a scholarship program in conjunction with JACL Chicago, supports the Nikkei Picnic, and continues to host the annual Memorial Day Service, which begins with a cleanup a few days prior.

The annual Memorial Day Service is an opportunity for the Nikkei community to pay their respects and to honor our Japanese American veterans who gave their lives to an ideal from which they were often excluded. 2024's ceremony was MC'd by JMAS President Gary Shimomura. The colors were posted and retired by the Steinmetz College Prep JROTC Color Guard, and scriptures, readings, hymns, and chants were provided by both Christian, Tenrikyo, and Buddhist Church representatives, some in both English and Japanese. Nineteen Nikkei organizations, including JACL Chicago, participated in the presentation of flowers ceremony, a beautiful, quiet, solemn, and thoughtful act. Japan's Consul-General, Jun Yanagi, offered what were perhaps the most poignant remarks when he reminded that those killed-in-action and laid to rest in Montrose Cemetery, died defending freedom and that those defenses are still, and necessarily, being brought to bear. Memorial Day is not just about remembering, but also about being thankful. 🌸

SAVE THE DATE

JACL Chicago Annual Fundraiser

Wednesday, September 4, 2024
6pm–9pm

Celebrating the flavors of
India and Japan

Chefs Margaret Pak (THATTU) and
Kelly Ijichi (MOM'S)
at 2601 W Fletcher St, Chicago

RSVP @ [BIT.LY/JACL2024](https://bit.ly/JACL2024)

Kansha Project Culmination 2024

By Lauren Cannon

This year's Kansha Project Culmination took place on Saturday, June 29, at Midwest Buddhist Temple. The Kansha Project saw eleven young adults from across the Chicagoland and the greater Midwest area travel together to the Little Tokyo neighborhood of Los Angeles and to Manzanar National Historic Site on an immersive cultural experience. Upon their return, participants are tasked with creating an art project via any medium that reflects their experience from the trip, their connection to their Japanese American identity, or more broadly, the JA community.

Two participants showcased their projects live in the Hondo (the main hall at MBT). Emiko Akiyama-Tahara (any pronouns) kicked off the presentations with a video they created with footage collected on the trip. As a yonsei with incarceration history, learning their own history empowered them to move forward within the Nikkei community despite all the emotions and baggage that comes with "being a descendant of grief". Mia Combs (ze/zir/they/them) read a personal essay reflecting on the definition of "The American Way", a phrase Ronald Reagan used during his speech delivered before he signed the Japanese American Compensation Bill (HR442) into Law in 1988, which provided reparations to survivors and descendants of the Japanese American incarceration during World War II. Reflecting on these words over 30 years later and in our current

political and economic climate, their essay answers the question: what does "The American Way" mean to a young, trans, queer shin-Nikkei?

The remaining participants displayed their projects in a gallery-style downstairs in the Social Hall. Amy Do (she/her) taught



KANSHA PROJECT PARTICIPANTS; (FRONT ROW, LEFT TO RIGHT) YUKIKO NAKANO, GABI SENNO, AMY DO, MIA COMBS, MARIKO DOWLING, EMIKO AKIYAMA TAHARA (BACK ROW, LEFT TO RIGHT) HARUKA YUKIOKA, KEI SMITH, CONAL ABATANGELO, SAI CLAYTON

herself the art of linocut and used her skills to craft prints of some memories from her time at Manzanar touring the site and cleaning up Merritt Park. Haruka Yukioka (they/them) was struck by the way incarcerated used their limited resources to decorate their barracks, repair clothing, and create art. They also taught themselves to make linocut art and used it to create postcards. Additionally, they hand sewed a skirt which heightened their appreciation of JA women in the camps because it was so time and labor intensive.

Kei Smith (she/her) took inspiration from the Japanese festival of Tanabata where wishes are written on slips of paper and tied to bamboo trees to symbolize hope and aspirations for the future. In a twist on the normal tradition, she designed and printed family name tags—like those

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used at relocation centers to label people and their possessions with an assigned family number—and used real names of incarcerated families to honor their memories. On the backside of the slip, attendees were asked to write a hope for the future of the JA community and hang it as part of the installation.

Gabi Senno (she/her) had the unique experience of having already visited two other camp locations while she was completing her undergraduate degree: Jerome and Rowher. She said those locations had no park rangers or visitor centers and contrasted greatly with her experience at Manzanar. What was particularly special this year compared to past years, is that one of the park rangers stationed at Manzanar is a Japanese American woman, so she had relevant personal experience she was able to share with the whole Kansha group.

Conal Abatangelo (he/him) compiled visual and written media with the aim to show how stories can “shape public perception and opinion for better or for worse.” The main subjects of his display are the Japanese American wartime experience (one could consider this the example of “for worse”) and the famous American author and cartoonist known as Dr. Seuss (an example of a bad person remembered as good). His project asks the question: what does it mean that some of our most shameful moments and individuals in history can be forgiven and/or forgotten?

Sai Clayton (she/her) wrote a piece titled “Between Two Mountains”, inspired by her experience at Manzanar being surrounded by mountains. In addition to the experience on the Kansha trip, she goes into the history of Owens Valley and its use by Native Americans throughout history. She then asks the reader to imagine being taken from their home and being placed in the desert landscape of Manzanar, not only confined by barbed wire fences and guards with weapons, but also the mountains on every side. She concludes by proclaiming Japanese American people as resilient and opines on her pride in her community.



SAI CLAYTON PREPARING HER SILK SCREEN CULMINATION PROJECT
“BETWEEN TWO MOUNTAINS”

Two individuals took particular inspiration from the walking tour the group did in Little Tokyo in Los Angeles. Sophia Saito (she/her) presented a mixed-media piece that overlaid drawings of Little Tokyo and Manzanar as they were in the WWII era and photographs from her trip of those same places today. Her aim was to “bridge the gap between then and now, highlighting the enduring spirit and cultural heritage that continue to define these iconic locations.” Similarly, Mariko Dowling (she/they) created a painting that is divided into twenty rows to symbolize twenty decades of the JA community in America (1880-2080) as she saw on the striated sidewalk in Little Tokyo which symbolized different decades in history. Her painting also included a quote from Ranger Sarah Bone of the Manzanar National Historic Site: “It’s not that I know a lot, it’s that I’ve had the chance to talk to a lot of people,” which Dowling thinks encapsulates what it takes for the JA community to thrive in the future. She encourages us to tell the stories of our community and listen to other stories—communication being the lifeblood of our culture.

Yukiko Nakano (she/her) set up a photo gallery, and her artist statement dives into how for her, the only connection she had to her Japanese identity growing up was her family, and particularly her two sisters. After moving to Chicago last year and her recent Kansha experience, she has grown to appreciate and feel comfortable participating in the JA community and reflects on her new sense of purpose: “to contribute to and uphold the legacy of this vibrant, resilient community”.

A unique feature of this year’s Kansha Project was how many shin-Nikkei participants there were in comparison to years past. With Japanese immigration in the post war era becoming more common especially through the ’90s and beyond, there is a new generation of JA young adults and children being raised in America with a strong connection to Japan via one

parent or more, and no incarceration history. More than one participant this year expressed discomfort with attending the Kansha trip initially, having no family connection to Manzanar or any of the other camps, but their worries seemed to be alleviated as they dove into the Kansha experience which include deep dives and conversations revolving around identity, sharing personal stories, and connecting with the group.

I was amazed by the variety of projects we saw this year. There was a lot of creativity on display and you could tell a large amount of physical and emotional effort went into this year’s projects. As a past Kansha participant myself, I can say that this year’s group, like in years past, have clearly bonded and found community with each other. Many participants spoke on the confidence and empowerment they gained from their Kansha experience and new relationships with their peers. It’s common that a young adult’s first experience with JACL is either through their family or through the Kansha Project, and we hope that the connections formed and ideas shared will motivate them to continue to be active members of our community at JACL Chicago.

If you’d like to read the artist statements, they are available here: <http://jaclchicago.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/07/2024-Culmination-Projects-Artist-Statements-w-Projects-3.pdf> 📄

66th Annual Ginza Festival

By Megan Nakano

The 66th Annual Ginza Holiday Festival was held July 26 through 28, 2024, at the Midwest Buddhist Temple (MBT), 435 W. Menomonee Street in Chicago's historic Old Town. The Japanese cultural festival featured handmade crafts, food, and entertainment. Ginza was held earlier in the summer than usual to avoid conflicting with other events like the Air and Water Show, Lollapalooza and the Democratic National Convention.

Each year, Ginza showcases artisans from The Waza in Japan. The Waza is a federation of artisans dedicated to the continuation of traditional crafts handed down generation to generation dating back to Japan's Edo period 300 years ago. Ginza visitors have the unique opportunity to purchase the Waza masters' handmade works made using ancient techniques developed and refined over a span of centuries.

Representing The Waza this year were ceramist Eiji Kinoshita from Kyushu's Oita prefecture; Masahiro Kawakami, a third-generation maker of tenugui (hand-painted cotton cloth) from Asakusa in Tokyo prefecture; Yuzo Mori, a third-generation bamboo craftsman also from Oita prefecture; and second-generation papier-mache artist Shunsuke Igarashi from Kasukabe in Saitama prefecture.

Ginza also featured the following local artisans: Ariyama Studio, Sansei Artisans, Origami Only, SNLDesignz, Sumofish, Flying



KANSHA ALUMNI BOARD MEMBER, HANNAH ARATA AND KANSHA COHORT 2024 MEMBER, MARIKO DOWLING AT THE JACL CHICAGO BOOTH

Plumtree Studio, Kimono Japon SAC, Lisa L Ceramics, Shinsen, and Art Towata Ceramics. The Chicago Japanese Club brought a kiddie pool for playing kingyo-sukui, where visitors attempted to scoop up toy goldfish and rubber balls with a delicate paper scooper.

An abundance of traditional Japanese cuisine was offered, including MBT's famous grilled Chicken Teriyaki dinner served with gohan (white rice) and coleslaw, udon noodles, grilled corn on the cob, Hawaiian shave ice, kintoki (Japanese snow cone topped with sweet azuki beans), and Japanese beer.

There were ongoing stage performances featuring taiko drumming by the Ho Etsu and MBT Taiko groups, folk dancing by the MBT Minyo Group, Martial Arts demonstrations by the Choyokan Kendo Dojo and Chicago Aikikai, and musical performances by the Chicago Koto Group and the Na Kapuna Ukulele Club of Chicago.

The MBT chapel was open for visitors interested in observing the place of worship and learning the basics of Shin Buddhism.

Many JACLers volunteered to help produce this year's Ginza and JACL Chicago had a booth to promote our programs and recruit new and returning members. Mariko Dowling, who manned the JACL booth all weekend with other members, said, "Since going on the Kansha trip this summer, I wanted to become more involved in Chicago's Nikkei community. Volunteering with the JACL at Ginza was a wonderful opportunity to connect with folks! I got to reunite with some of my Kansha cohort, meet new people, and bring friends from outside the Nikkei community to enjoy our culture through food, performance, and art."

See you at Ginza next year! 🍡

KANSHA *too!*
SEPTEMBER 12-15, 2024

WHAT IS KANSHA, TOO!

Kansha, Too! is an adapted version of JACL Chicago's Kansha Project. Kansha, Too! explores the history of the Japanese American WWII incarceration and its continued impact and ongoing legacy in the Japanese American community. The program consists of a trip to Los Angeles' historic Little Tokyo neighborhood and a day-trip to Manzanar National Historic Site. This program is for everyone who's asked, "Can I go on Kansha, too?"

MORE INFORMATION AT:
JACLCHICAGO.ORG/PROGRAMS/KANSHA-TOO/
OR SCAN QR CODE

QUESTIONS? EMAIL REBECCA@JACLCHICAGO.ORG

APPLICATIONS AVAILABLE JULY 1
\$450 (MEMBERS) | \$550 (NON-MEMBERS)

WEDNESDAY,
SEPTEMBER 4TH

6PM - 9PM

RSVP @ [BIT.LY/JACL2024](https://bit.ly/JACL2024)

JACL CHICAGO ANNUAL FUNDRAISER

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CELEBRATING THE FLAVORS OF
INDIA & JAPAN BY CHEFS
MARGARET PAK (THATTU) AND
KELLY IJICHI (MOM'S)



INTERGENERATIONAL CONVERSATIONS: RIPPLES OF THE PAST



"To be able to have these
discussions with an
intergenerational group
was healing in ways that I
didn't know I needed."

Intergenerational Conversations: Ripples of the Past is a community led program for all ages that brings Chicago-area Nikkei (people of Japanese ancestry) together to connect and process the trauma of WWII forced displacement and incarceration through personal story sharing.

Visit <https://jaclchicago.org/programs/intergenerational-conversations/>

USE QR CODE TO
LEARN MORE



Join or Donate to the JACL 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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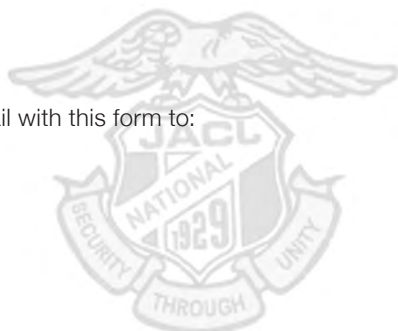
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Please make check payable to **JACL** and mail with this form to:

JACL Chicago
Attn: Membership
5415 N. Clark St.
Chicago, IL 60640



Membership

Fee

☐ Individual	\$75.00
☐ Couple/Family	\$125.00
☐ Student/Youth	\$35.00
☐ 1000 Club	\$200.00
☐ Century Club	\$350.00
☐ 1000/Century Spouse	\$50.00
☐ Millennium	\$1,000.00

Please support the JACL with a Donation!

- ☐ In my name Amount: \$ _____
- ☐ Anonymous
- ☐ In memory of _____

Thank You to Our Generous Donors!

(4.4.24–7.31.24)

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Paul Doi & in honor of Ron &
Joyce Yoshino*

Pat Yuzawa-Rubin

*In memory of Donna Ogura &
Paul Doi & in honor of Ron &
Joyce Yoshino*

This holiday season and every day...



MEGAN NAKANO
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Asian American Chamber of Commerce of Illinois
Megan@AACCIL.org | www.AACCIL.org

KANSHA too!

SEPTEMBER 12-15, 2024

"For me, it was like going home, to understand where I came from, to say thank you to my parents and grandparents, and to realize my responsibility to pass on what I have learned. I found the names of my family members and others who were in the camp. They are now etched forever in stone and in records at the exhibit and in the museum. What they lost will not be forgotten."

-Roy Yamamoto, 2015 Kansha, Too! Participant

MORE INFORMATION AT:
JACLCHICAGO.ORG/PROGRAMS/KANSHA-TOO/ OR SCAN QR CODE

QUESTIONS?
EMAIL REBECCA@JACLCHICAGO.ORG

APPLICATIONS AVAILABLE NOW
\$450 (MEMBERS) | \$550 (NON-MEMBERS)



Japanese American Citizens League

CHICAGO CHAPTER

5415 North Clark Street
Chicago, Illinois 60640-1294
p: 773.728.7171
f: 773.728.7231
e: info@jaclchicago.org
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

Wednesday, September 4, 2024 6-9pm	JACL Chicago Annual Fundraiser featuring Thattu x Mom's Chicago 2601 W Fletcher St. Chicago, IL 60618 Register at bit.ly/JACL2024
Wednesday, September 11, 2024 7-9pm	JACL Chicago Board Meeting JACL Chicago Office, 5415 N. Clark St., Chicago, IL 60640
September 12-15, 2024	Kansha, Too! Little Tokyo, Los Angeles & Manzanar Historic Site Learn more at https://jaclchicago.org/programs/kansha-too/
Tuesday, October 1, 2024	Kansha Alumni Leadership Board Application opens
Wednesday, October 9, 2024 7-9pm	JACL Chicago Board Meeting JACL Chicago Office, 5415 N. Clark St., Chicago, IL 60640
Wednesday, November 13, 2024 7-9pm	JACL Chicago Board Meeting JACL Chicago Office, 5415 N. Clark St., Chicago, IL 60640
Wednesday, December 11, 2024 6-8:30pm	JACL Chicago Annual Member Meeting Location TBA
December 2024	Scholarship Application opens