

JACL *en*

In this Issue:

- page 1 2016 JACL Chicago Annual Meeting
- page 3 We must . . .
- page 4 Pearl Harbor Day Press Conference
- page 5 Osh's Corner: Seasons greetings everyone!!
- page 5 Josina Morita Elected to County-wide Office!
- page 6 Greetings from the JACL Midwest Office
- page 6 Pauline & Tonko's Throwback Sunday
- page 7 Thank You to Our Donors and Advertisers
- page 8 Calendar of Events



Photo Tom Yatabe

YOUTH COMMITTEE CO-CHAIR, LANE MITA, GAVE THE YOUTH COMMITTEE REPORT AT THE ANNUAL MEETING IN NOVEMBER.

2016 JACL Chicago Annual Meeting

Lisa Sloan, JACL Chicago Board Member

The Chicago chapter of the JACL held its annual meeting on Wednesday November 16, 2016 at the Midwest Buddhist Temple. Approximately thirty-five members and friends came out to hear about what has been happening in the past year, as well as plans for 2017. While enjoying a delicious dinner of Chinese dishes, we heard about the following highlights:

- President Bryan Hara opened the meeting by reminding us of the Chicago JACL's mission statement — "to secure and maintain the civil rights of Japanese Americans and all others who are victimized by injustice and bigotry." We were reminded that our country has seen a rise in hateful, divisive and violent behavior and it is important to remember the significant role we play in protecting the freedoms and rights of all.
- We are maintaining our membership numbers with hopes to increase in the future. The Chicago chapter is still ranked second in total members. Youth membership has increased from 35 to 50 due to the efforts of Lane Mita, Rebecca Ozaki and Mari Yamagiwa of the Youth committee.

Continued on page 2

**2017 Kansha Project
Applications
Available Online**

Go to www.jaclchicago.org

**JACL Chicago Inaugural
March 18th**

More information soon!

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 2/10/17.

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

Contact Us

JACL Chicago Chapter
5415 North Clark Street
Chicago, Illinois 60640-1294

Phone: 773.728.7171
Fax: 773.728.7231
Email: info@jaclchicago.org
Web: www.jaclchicago.org

Go Green!

If you would like to receive a copy of this newsletter electronically, and receive JACL news and updates via email, please email info@jaclchicago.org and let us know you'd like to be added to our electronic mailing list!

Advertise in the JACLER!

Go to www.jaclchicago.org for details on how to place your ad today.

- Affordable Rates
- Targeted Community Audience
- Support JACL Chicago



Follow us on Facebook!
www.facebook.com/JACLChicago

- In 2017, the Chicago chapter will underwrite a performance by The Grateful Crane, a non-profit, Japanese American theatre ensemble originating from the west coast. There will be two performances. The profits from this venture will go toward the Kansha Project.
- There were 10 participants in the 2016 Kansha Project. This year there was a one day orientation, the trip to Little Tokyo and Manzanar, and the culmination event. At the culmination gathering, the participants were able to summarize their experience through an art form of their choosing instead of the former video suggestion.
- The Kansha Alumni Leadership Board has six returning members plus four new members participating. They reached their \$15,000 fund raising goal through events such as the Nisei Lounge kick-off, Lou Malnati's fundraiser, sale of Heart Mountain DVD's, Kansha Project T-shirts, and other donations.
- The Next Generation Nikkei group wishes to revitalize their network of college graduate age (and other age-groups) in the community.
- There were six scholarships (\$21,000 total) awarded this year. 50 people attended the scholarship luncheon. The deadline for the next scholarship applications is March 1, 2017.
- Mari Yamagiwa is our continuing AmeriCorps, She is currently working on organizing civic engagements, grant writing and youth activities. This past year, the chapter received grants from Asian Giving Circle and JACL Legacy Fund Grant, and JACL National for civic engagement work.

Eight board members were up for nomination through December 31, 2018. A motion was made and unanimously passed for these members. Lisa Sakai has also joined the board this term.

Special thanks went out to Ron Yoshino and Marisa Fujinaka who have retired from the board. Also, much love and appreciation to Christine Munteanu who has left her post at National JACL, but continues her support and involvement with the Chicago chapter. 🍀



2017 JACL Chicago Scholarship Program

Apply for a JACL Chicago Scholarship!

Scholarships range from \$1,500 to \$5,000+ and are open to entering first-year, continuing undergraduate, and graduate students.

Deadline: March 1, 2017

Visit our website for more information:
<http://jaclchicago.org/programs/scholarship-program>

We must . . .

By Bryan Hara, JACL Chicago President

Below is the message given by Bryan Hara, JACL Chicago Chapter President, to the JACL Chicago membership at our annual meeting in November

It is JACL Chicago's mission to secure and maintain the civil rights of Japanese Americans and all others who are victimized by injustice and bigotry. I want everyone to think about that for a second.

This year we have seen our new President-Elect campaign using rhetoric that is hateful and divisive. A country that is supposed to be built on inclusiveness, equality, and individual rights has taken a big step backwards. I am not talking about partisan politics here. It doesn't matter if you are Republican, Democrat, Conservative, or Liberal. What I am talking about is the fact that our new President-Elect, who is now going to be the face of this country, the biggest representative of our country, has advocated for violence towards others during his campaign, selected a Vice President-Elect that believes gay and lesbian individuals need conversion therapy, disregards and disrespects women and their rights, advocates for hate against Muslims and Latinos, was 100% supported by leaders of the KKK, and thinks climate change is a hoax created by China. Racism, bigotry, and xenophobia were just a few of the things that he perpetuated during his campaign. Having a President-Elect with these values, whether you like it or not, sends a message to the country that actions of hate and discrimination are acceptable. **TO US, THIS IS NOT ACCEPTABLE.**

This is the reason we are here and this is the reason that JACL exists. The indescribable experiences that our families had to go through in the incarceration camps **MUST NOT BE FORGOTTEN. We must remember and teach.** What each of our parents, grandparents, and great grandparents that came to this country have worked for to give us opportunity in this country **MUST NOT BE FORGOTTEN. We must advocate and fight for our rights.** The racism and stereotypes that each of us has experienced throughout our lives **MUST NOT BE FORGOTTEN. We must support and protect others that face this.** When our families were in the incarceration camps, there were very few groups and people that stood on our side. **We must now be the people that our families didn't have during WWII for others groups and individuals that face the same discrimination.**

Right now, it is even more important and imperative that we as an organization and as individuals understand the significant role we play in protecting the freedoms and rights of all. It is our organization's mission and our duty to uphold the rights of everyone. Not only the Asian American community, but the black community, Latino community, LGBTQ community, physically disabled community, Muslim community, and all women in this country. We must be representatives of true justice, freedom, and equity.

The Commission on Wartime Relocation and Internment of Civilians concluded that **"race prejudice, war hysteria, and a failure of political leadership"** was the cause of the imprisonment of over 120,000 Japanese Americans during WWII. Think about those factors, and what we have seen during the election campaigning of our President-Elect. Sadly, the United States of America has a very short memory of its mistakes in history, so we must be the ones to reteach and educate. Each of us can make sure this does not happen again.

Through JACL Chicago's programs we seek to do this. Our Kansha Project program connects young leaders to their identity, helps them learn the history of the camps, and empowers them to fight for social justice. Our scholarship program gives young Asian Americans the opportunity to access higher education to break through the barriers of being a young person of color. Our community outreach seeks to share our culture with others so they understand and can accept the beauty of diversity in this country. Our Next Generation Nikkei program gives our leaders a space to grow and support each other in their fight to advocate for the civil rights of all.

I want to thank everyone for being a part of JACL Chicago and for your continuous support of the organization. I also want to give a deep and heartfelt thank you to the rest of the JACL Chicago Board for all their passion and efforts in this work. Without each and everyone one of you, we would not have been able to make such a huge impact over the years, and we will need your support more than ever in the coming years. 🙏

SAVE-THE-DATE
JACL Chicago Inaugural
Saturday, March 18, 2017
More info coming soon!

2017 Kansha Project
Applications Available!
Go to www.jaclchicago.org

Like Us on Facebook! www.facebook.com/JACLChicago

Pearl Harbor Day Press Conference

Christine Munteanu, JACL Chicago Member

On the 75th anniversary of the Japanese military attack on Pearl Harbor, JACL Chicago joined with other community organizations to host a press conference warning of the dangers of allowing war hysteria and fear to lead to the violation of civil liberties. Speakers highlighted the parallels between the targeting of Japanese Americans following Pearl Harbor, and current Islamophobic rhetoric against the Muslim American community, and expressed solidarity in working to prevent repeating the mistakes of history.

On the panel were:

Chiyoko Omachi, a former detainee at Poston War Relocation Center; Sufyan Sohel, Deputy Director and Counsel for the Council on American-Islamic Relations-Chicago; Sandra Yamate and Anthony Becknek from the Chicago Bar Association; Brant Rosen, Midwest Regional Director of the American Friends Service Committee; and Rebecca Ozaki, Youth Co-Chair of JACL Chicago. The event received coverage from several media outlets, including ABC, CBS, Chicago Shimpo, DNA Info, and WBEZ. Representatives from sponsoring organizations, including Asian Americans Advancing Justice-Chicago, the Chicago Japanese American Historical Society, Japanese American Service Committee, and Midwest Buddhist Temple, as well as members of the community, were also in attendance.

Chiyoko Omachi, 90-year-old Japanese American who was living on Terminal Island in 1941, spoke of how her family, along with the other families living on the island were given 48 hours to leave their homes following the Pearl Harbor attack. 2 months later, with the signing of Executive Order 9066, her family was forced to relocate again, this time to Poston War Relocation Center in Arizona, where they were incarcerated without due process.

Sufyan Sohel, Deputy Director of Council on American-Islamic Relations — Chicago, noted the alarming increase of hate crimes directed against the Muslim American community in the past year. “My community is afraid,” stated Sohel. “Afraid that America will repeat the injustice faced by our Japanese American brothers and sisters... So, on this day, where 75 years ago, the attack by a foreign country led to the forced internment of over 100,000 Americans, let us pray that we don’t repeat the mistakes of our past.”

Sandra Yamate and Anthony Becknek from the Chicago Bar Association provided a legal perspective debunking the use of the Japanese American incarceration as precedent for modern-day targeting of the Muslim American community. Becknek cited the

1983 report issued by the Commission on Wartime Relocation and Internment of Civilians, which “established that the internment was unjustified and unconstitutional, the result of ‘race prejudice, war hysteria, and a failure of political leadership.’” Added Yamate, “The notion that Korematsu and other law related to Japanese American internment establish a legal precedent for a modern-day equivalent



PANELISTS L TO R: REBECCA OZAKI, YOUTH CO-CHAIR, JACL CHICAGO; BRANT ROSEN, MIDWEST REGIONAL DIRECTOR, AMERICAN FRIENDS SERVICE COMMITTEE; ANTHONY BECKNEK, CHICAGO BAR ASSOCIATION; SANDRA YAMATE, CHICAGO BAR ASSOCIATION; SUFYAN SOHEL, DEPUTY DIRECTOR AND COUNSEL, COUNCIL ON AMERICAN-ISLAMIC RELATIONS-CHICAGO; CHIYOKO OMACHI, FORMER DETAINEE, POSTON WAR RELOCATION CENTER; AND CHRISTINE MUNTEANU, PANEL MODERATOR.

Photo: Robert Mita

against any group based on their race, religion, or national origin is to ignore history... It is alarming to us as lawyers and as citizens to think that anyone would even consider actions premised upon law that has been found to be so based upon false and deliberately misleading evidence and so thoroughly repudiated.”

Brant Rosen, Midwest Regional Director of the American Friends Service Committee, also warned against repeating the mistakes of the past. He stated, “Anniversaries such as this offer us not only an occasion to look back and reflect — they present us with an imperative to act meaningfully and impactfully in the present so that we may all enjoy a future of justice and peace.” The American Friends Service Committee was the only national organization at the time that spoke out against the incarceration of Japanese Americans during WWII.

Rebecca Ozaki, Youth Co-Chair of JACL Chicago, spoke of her grandfather’s experience following the Pearl Harbor attack: having his father taken away by the FBI, forced to live in horse stalls in Santa Anita Racetrack, volunteering to fight for his country in order to prove his loyalty to a country that imprisoned his family. Ozaki reflected on her own sense of obligation to ensure that her grandfather’s experience is never forgotten: “As a fourth-generation Japanese American, I hope to build upon his legacy to fight for equity and do everything in my power to ensure never let the injustice that he and the Japanese American community faced happen again.”

On a day that is filled with much pain for the Japanese American community, the press conference offered a moving and visible representation of solidarity between communities, as well as for Japanese Americans to tell their own story. Commemorations such as this open the opportunity for to build broad coalitions to strengthen JACL’s Chicago’s fight for social justice and to protect the civil liberties of all. 🇺🇸



fastest man in Rio, and the Pokémon Go app allowed people all over the world to explore new areas albeit while trying to catch em all.

Americans and everyone else around the world had to endure much heartbreak as well. The attack on Pulse nightclub in Orlando, the tragedy on Bastille day in Nice, France, and the shooting in Munich just to name a few. So many lives lost. The world mourned.

We also mourned the deaths of political activists like Muhammad Ali, entertainers like David Bowie and Prince, and celebrated the life of actors Gene Wilder, Florence Henderson and director Garry Marshall. Not to mention American hero John Glenn and golfing legend Arnold Palmer. While we may have lost them here on earth, heaven has gained a new batch of angels.

The older I get, the more I understand that life is a gift. Appreciate and cherish every single day. Live each day as if it were your last with no regrets. I'm reminded of a quote from my favorite holiday movie, *It's A Wonderful Life*. Whenever I'm feeling down, I think back to that scene. You know the one; the one at the end of the movie. When the citizens of Great Falls pitch in to save George Bailey after he thinks the world would be better if he was never born. As he's opening up a book, he sees an inscription from his guardian angel Clarence. That inscription reads: "Dear George, remember no man is a failure who has friends." It's important that we remember that as well. No matter how bad life may seem, that is when we rely on those we covet most to help us get through it.

And just like that, we get ready to turn the page on another year. Goodbye 2016, hello 2017. I can't wait to see what you have in store for us. 🍷

Seasons greetings everyone!! From my family to yours, I wish you a happy holiday season and a Happy New Year.

For me, the holidays are all about family and friends; getting together and spending time with the ones you love. Sharing a meal, a good laugh and just being together; that is what the season is all about. And while you may not see everyone as much as you like, the love for each other will always be there. That is what really makes this the most wonderful time of the year.

2016 was a year unlike any other. For the first time in this nation's history, Hillary Rodham Clinton was chosen as the first woman to be nominated for President by a major US political party. Although she lost the election to Donald Trump, she inspired millions of girls across the country to never give up on their dreams and know that anything is achievable. Michael Phelps won his 23rd gold medal, Usain Bolt repeated as the world's

Josina Morita Elected to County-wide Office!

By Carol Yoshino, JAACL Chicago Member

On November 6, 2016, history was made! On that day, Josina Morita was elected to the Metropolitan Water Reclamation District of Cook County, receiving 890,000 votes. Josina is the first Asian American elected to a county-wide office. She was sworn into office on December 6.

Have you met Josina yet? Chances are if you've attended any of the Asian American and Japanese American community events over the past 18 months, you have. Her youthful appearance is deceiving — she could pass for a college student, but in reality she is a first class public policy wonk!

Here's a bit of info on Josina: She's a Chinese/Japanese American, born and raised in the Bay Area (but her mom is Barbara Morita, a Chicagoan), educated at Pitzer College receiving a BA in Sociology AND International Relations. It gets better. She also earned a Masters in Urban Planning and Public Policy from the University of Illinois at Chicago. This makes Josina perfectly suited to address issues facing one of our most important natural resources — our water — bringing knowledge in



AT JOSINA'S SWEARING IN CELEBRATION (L TO R): LISA SAKAI, CAROL YOSHINO, JOSINA MORITA, AND JOYCE MORIMOTO.

Photo courtesy of Carol Yoshino

regional development, land use and infrastructure planning. Her relationship in working on grass roots endeavors and community education will help her engage with communities to seek local solutions for water preservation, protection from home flooding and protect Lake Michigan and our rivers from contamination.

So when you see Josina around town, take a second to congratulate her on this big victory. Chances are this is just the beginning. 🍷

Greetings from the JACL Midwest Office

This past year was important for JACL in focusing on programs that brought educational awareness to the public about the history of Japanese Americans and, as well, our programming brought a greater understanding about this same history and Japanese American culture to young Japanese Americans.

Through a grant from the National Endowment for the Humanities, JACL presented a comprehensive workshop on the Japanese American incarceration for 72 teachers from throughout the United States including several from the Chicago-area.

The workshops consisted of sessions with guest speakers at the Japanese American National Museum and the Go For Broke Museum in Los Angeles, with visits to Santa Anita Park, which served as a detention facility during WWII, and a visit to the Manzanar concentration camp.

In addition, the JACL Chicago continues with its Kansha Project that provides an opportunity for college students to explore their personal identity and their historic legacy of the WWII camps through an annual visit to Manzanar. The national JACL also conducted the Kakehashi Program where in 2016 and 2017, 200 college students spend a week visiting Japan to learn about its economics, politics, and the culture and history of Japan.

JACL's focus on educating the public about our history is important because those lessons remain relevant today. Think about the aftermath of September 11th and its parallels to December 7th; think about the plight of Syrian refugees and the fear and suspicion that they are instruments of terror; or about the detention facilities constructed along the Texas border for Central American women and children fleeing violence and

seeking asylum in the United States; or about privacy issues in the face of government intrusion; and think about the larger themes of the consequences of hysteria during times of crisis; about due process and equal protection, and unwarranted searches and seizures, and about the right to be brought before a court rather than having to rot in confinement.

All of this resonates today in light of public discussions about using the incarceration as a "precedent" to create a Muslim registry even though we know the decision in the Korematsu case has been thoroughly repudiated by historians and legal scholars. As a precedent, the Korematsu case demonstrated governmental wrongdoing where evidence bearing on the loyalty of Japanese Americans was deliberately withheld from the Supreme Court and where subsequent actions such as the rescission of Executive Order 9066 by President Gerald Ford, the dismissal of Korematsu's conviction by a federal court in 1983, and the issuance of a report by the Commission on Wartime Relocation and Internment of Civilians declaring the wrongfulness of the incarceration have rendered it as one of the worst decisions ever handed down by the Court.

Unfortunately, a bad legal ruling may not deter ideologues who trade in fear and suspicion from pursuing dubious remedies that undermine liberties. JACL and others will continue to be watchful over the rights of vulnerable groups in America. It's a special obligation that we and all Japanese Americans have based on the legacy of our own history in the United States.

Best wishes in the New Year,
Bill Yoshino
Midwest Director, Japanese American Citizens League

Pauline and Tonko's Throwback Sunday

By Tonko Doi, JACL Chicago Board Member

A group of Chicagoland folks got together on Sunday afternoon, October 30, at the JASC and looked back to a time when life was much less complicated. When they went to school at Lake View, Waller, Senn, Hyde Park, Wells, Lane, or the University of Illinois at Navy Pier. When they marched with the Nisei Ambassadors Drum and Bugle Corps or played in the Chicago Nisei Athletic Association. When they eagerly anticipated their annual visits to Scout camp at Owasippe or Philmont.

Pauline and Tonko's Throwback Sunday was open to all, especially those who grew up in Chicago's Japanese American community and participated in its clubs, teams, schools, and organizations. Admission was free, but there were contributions of desserts and snacks to share in abundance.

Jane Hidaka brought albums, yearbooks and other memorabilia from her collection.

The Chicago Japanese American Historical Society brought a photographic display featuring the history of the CNAA.

Ryan Yokota, of the JASC's Legacy Center, presented a visual display of archived Chicago Shimpō publications. If you wanted

to see a particular date, he pulled it up on his computer, showed it on the large television screen and printed it out for you. Mary Kambara was able to view and print the announcement for her wedding that her father had placed in the Japanese section of the paper. Reading an announcement of a recital by Alice Mayeda's piano students, Joyce Yoshino recalled an incident from her teen years when an 8-year-old schooled her in a performance of "Für Elise."

Group photos were taken of people who attended Chicago high schools, as well as Navy Pier alumni.

We spent an afternoon eating delicious food and swapping memories and laughs with friends.

A commentator on the CBS Sunday News, discussing the concert in Palm Desert with performers over the age of 70, like Mick Jagger and Paul McCartney, said:

"Listening to the music of our youth, for an hour or two, we are not getting older. Time will not touch us. The best days are still here.

We are alive and we are together."

I think that pretty much sums up why we came together that day. 🍷

Thank You to Our Donors and Advertisers!

(Donors as of 12/20/16)

Annual Giving

John Adachi
 Takako Day
 Roy Esaki
 Pat Harada and Tom Rowland
 David Igasaki
 Marion Ishii
 Shu Miyazaki
 Rick and Joyce Morimoto
 Linda Murakishi-Whitted
 Ruth Nishimura
 Dale Nomura
 Linda Ogawa
 Christine Sato
 (in memory of Hideo Saiki)

Lisa Sloan
 Tadashi and Takako Tanaka
 Cary Wong and Judy Tanaka
 Masao Yamaji
 (in memory of Gayle Yamaji)
 Carol and Bill Yoshino
 (in memory of Mary and Jack
 Nakagawa, Misako and
 Maurice Yoshino)

General

Anonymous
 Ruth Kumata
 Christine Munteanu
 Hiroshi Okano



KANSHA Project T-shirts

\$15 plus shipping

**Call the JACL Chicago office for details.
 773.728.7171**

HOME & AUTO · BUSINESS · HEALTH · LIFE



THE ROBERT T. MITA AGENCY

ROBERT T. MITA
 AGENT

5432 MAIN STREET SKOKIE, IL 60077
 m 847.899.7065 f 847.966.0982
 e robertmita@gmail.com

Advertise in the JACLER Today!

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.

Name(s)

Address

City

State

Zip

Email

Phone

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!

Amount: \$ _____

In my name:

Anonymous

In memory of:

Please make check payable to **JACL** and mail with this form to:

JACL Chicago

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

JACL

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, January 11 7pm – 9pm	JACL Chicago Board Meeting JACL Chicago Office, 5415 N. Clark Street, Chicago
Tuesday, January 31	2017 Kansha Project Download application from the JACL Chicago website (www.jaclchicago.org)
Wednesday, February 8 7pm – 9pm	JACL Chicago Board Meeting JACL Chicago Office, 5415 N. Clark Street, Chicago
Sunday, February 19 2pm – 4:30pm	Day of Remembrance Chicago History Museum, 1601 N. Clark Street, Chicago
Wednesday, March 1	JACL Chicago Scholarship Deadline Download application from the JACL Chicago website (www.jaclchicago.org)
Wednesday, March 1	Kansha Project Application Deadline Link to application is available on the JACL Chicago website (www.jaclchicago.org)
Saturday, March 11	Asian American Coalition of Chicago – 34th Annual Lunar New Year Banquet Hilton Chicago, 720 S. Michigan Ave., Chicago