

JACL *en*

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2016 Day of Remembrance February 21st

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Japanese Americans and the U.S./Japan Relationship

By Bill Yoshino, Midwest Regional Director

This past year marked the 70th anniversary of the post-war relationship between the U.S. and Japan. JACL's participation in a recent symposium on the U.S./Japan relationship held at Northwestern University signaled an interest by Chicago-area Japanese Americans in discovering whether there may be a role for Japanese Americans to play in this relationship.

For many years there has been a level of cordiality between Japanese Americans and the Japanese Consulate in Chicago. The prospect for even greater involvement is possible, but it's important that we share a deeper understanding of our history with our Japanese counterparts in order to discern what our future participation may be.

Aside from the fact that U.S./Japan relations is a concern between sovereign powers, there may have been a reluctance among Japanese Americans to become involved because of historic reasons that affected our community. This, of course, means Pearl Harbor and how that event immediately affected Japanese Americans and affirmed with clarity the racism in this country that had preceded it. Anti-Japanese sentiment didn't begin with Pearl Harbor as witnessed by the Alien Land laws in California, the Cable Act in 1922, and the Japanese Exclusion Act of 1924.

We often speak of the trauma associated with the WWII incarceration; of how this trauma caused many to turn away from their cultural heritage. Many in our *Nisei* generation came of age during this period, and like all second-generation Americans, they were saddled with the internal conflicts of their cultural upbringing and their desire to express their Americanism. Out of this came the remarkable accomplishments of the *Nisei* veterans, as well as the courageous stand by the resisters of conscience at Heart Mountain and elsewhere.

Following WWII, Japanese Americans embarked on campaigns to dismantle discriminatory barriers. We pushed for passage of the Soldier's Brides Act so that foreign brides from Japan could enter the U.S. We advocated for an amendment to the Walter-McCarren Act, which eliminated race as a consideration in immigration and provided naturalization rights for our *Issei*. We fought for elimination of alien land laws.

Continued on page 2

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 2/19/16.

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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U.S./Japan Relationship continued

In local communities, we challenged racial restrictions of where we could live or be buried. In the 1980s, we achieved a political miracle by challenging our government to provide remedies for the WWII incarceration with passage of the Civil Liberties Act of 1988. During the height of economic tensions with Japan in the 1980s and 1990s, we confronted the rise of "Japan-bashing" that caused an increase in incidents of defamation and hate crimes directed at Asian Americans. Through these efforts, it can be said that Japanese Americans paved the way in America for all Japanese who would follow.

As much as we want the Japanese to understand our history, we also need to understand theirs. Japan's WWII history with their Asian neighbors has the potential of affecting interactions with our Asian American counterparts from those communities. Difficult issues such as this serve as an opportunity to deepen the dialogue between Japan and us, as well as with other Asian American communities.

Increased participation by Japanese Americans in the U.S./Japan relationship is inevitable. Old stigmas that may have caused us to be defensive about interacting with Japan have dissipated.

The photos are from a symposium held at Northwestern University on November 21, 2015. The symposium, U.S. - Japan Relations: 70 Years and Beyond, explored the Japanese American role in the U.S. Japan relationship. The forum was sponsored by the Consulate General of Japan in Chicago, Chicago Japanese American Citizens League, Chicago Japanese American Historical Society, Japanese Chamber of Commerce and Industry of Chicago, Japan America Society of Chicago, Chicago Japanese American Council, Japanese American National Museum, UIC Asian American Studies Program, DePaul Asian American Studies Program.

Our diverse population that consists of ever-increasing numbers of *Shin-Issei* and *Shin-Nisei* will help move us in that direction. Joint programs have already begun. National JACL is involved in a student visitation program offered through the Japanese Foreign Ministry, and there are other Japanese American delegations that regularly visit Japan.

Prominent Japanese Americans have been involved in aspects of the U.S./Japan relationship for many years where the Japanese have sought their counsel and influence. Undoubtedly, that level of involvement will grow in the coming years with participation from more individuals across a wider range of disciplines. However, in viewing the relationship from a Chicago perspective, there remains a great deal of room for growth. The recent Symposium at Northwestern was a step in the right direction because Japanese Americans and the Consulate joined together in investing resources in the project. Growth along these lines is important, and perhaps there will come a time when even Japanese companies participate by increasing their contributions in making the Japanese American community more robust. 🇺🇸



ABOVE: TOSHIYUKI IWADO, CONSUL GENERAL OF JAPAN. RIGHT: DR. RICHARD MORIMOTO



Meet Mari, our new AmeriCorps VISTA!

By Mari Yamagiwa

I began working at the JACL Chicago as an AmeriCorps VISTA in November. Over the next year, I will be doing work with civic engagement along with the other JACL Midwest District chapters, as well as supporting various functions of the Chicago chapter such as archival projects, youth programming, and grant writing.

As a little background, I am a Chicagoan through and through. I love that even though I've lived here for what feels like forever, there are always new places to explore, different foods to try, and people to meet. For college, I attended the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign (UIUC) where I studied psychology and Asian American Studies. It was during my time at college that I became more aware of various forms of injustice in this world, from the depravity of racism throughout Asian American history to the brokenness of the poverty cycle. These eye-opening experiences gave me a whole new perspective of the world. I made a commitment to doing work that would impact people in a positive way. Following undergrad, I pursued a Masters of Social Work at UIUC.

In 2014, I had the privilege of participating in the Kansha Project. Though I grew up knowing about the incarceration of Japanese Americans during WWII and wrote papers on the subject for school, this particular program had a deeper impact on me. Being at Manzanar, in the space where thousands of people's civil rights were denied, walking on the very ground that my

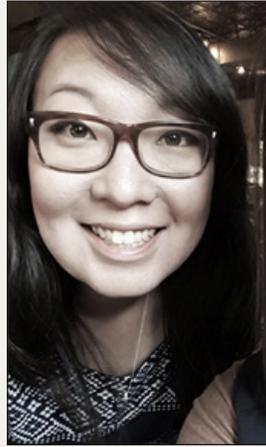


Photo courtesy of Mari Yamagiwa

MARI YAMAGIWA IS JACL CHICAGO'S AMERICORPS VISTA.

grandpa walked 72 years earlier, was more powerful than I could have anticipated. Even now, I am still trying to wrap my mind around the reality of it all. If I was alive during that time, I too would be incarcerated and treated as an enemy in a place that I call home.

During the Symposium on U.S.-Japan Relations that took place in November, Dr. Greg Kimura of JANM explained that the WWII incarceration experience sensitizes Japanese Americans to the discrimination of other groups. This statement struck me. As a community, we *have* witnessed and experienced the violation of basic rights.

So when U.S. politicians propose the same kind of racial profiling and discrimination of other groups, when basic social services are denied to the most vulnerable for the sake of political games, when it takes a grassroots effort to call out corrupt systems of government — I believe we can empathize. The Japanese American community is in a unique position to speak into these issues.

It is because of these reasons that I am especially excited to be at JACL Chicago this year. It is a critical time in the history of our city and of our country. I am so grateful for this opportunity to both serve and learn. I hope that I can play a part in strengthening our JA community here, so that we may continue supporting and empowering other marginalized communities. 🇺🇸



CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT: SESSION IV, THE ROLE OF JAPANESE AMERICANS IN U.S. - JAPAN RELATIONS, L TO R: DR. RICHARD MORIMOTO, IRENE HIRANO-INOUE, DAYNE KONO, LISA SAKAI, TOSHIKI MASAKI.



MIDDLE: SESSION III, JAPANESE AMERICANS IN THE PAN-ASIAN MOVEMENT, L TO R: BILL YOSHINO, INHE CHOI, ROSS HARANO. RIGHT: BRANDON MITA, PANELIST IN SESSION II, THE ISSUES THAT AFFECT AND CONCERN THE JA COMMUNITY.



BOTTOM: SESSION I, THE HISTORY AND CULTURE THAT SHAPED THE CHICAGO JA COMMUNITY, L TO R: JASON MATSUMOTO, RYAN YOKOTA, MEGAN NAKANO, KENJI NEGI-TRAN.

2015 Annual Meeting Recaps Exciting Year

By Christine Munteanu, Assistant Program Director

JACL Chicago held its 2015 Annual Meeting on Wednesday, November 18 at the Midwest Buddhist Temple. Close to fifty community and chapter members attended to hear about the chapter's successful past year and learn more about new programs and events for 2016.

Here are some highlights from 2015:

- JACL Chicago was the lead organization for the 2015 Day of Remembrance, where featured speaker Peggy Nagae highlighted the contributions of Japanese American "Women Warriors" to the Redress Movement.
- The 2015 Inaugural and Fundraiser, the Spring Shake dance, raised over \$5,000 for chapter youth programs like the Kansha Project.
- JACL Chicago received a capacity-building grant from the Asian Giving Circle to launch the Kansha Project Alumni Leadership Board. 14 alumni of the Kansha Project are working to plan and take ownership of the Kansha Project for 2016. The goal of the Alumni Leadership Board is to ensure the sustainability of the Kansha Project by providing a structure for young people to move from one-time program recipients to active partners in shaping the future of this program.
- In September, a group of 50 mostly Japanese Americans from Chicago headed to Los Angeles to experience JACL Chicago's highly anticipated Kansha, Too! program. The itinerary included a reception at the Japanese American National

Museum; tours of the historic Little Tokyo neighborhood; workshops exploring different aspects of the incarceration experience; and a day trip to Manzanar.

- Mari Yamagiwa, JACL Chicago's new Americorps VISTA, began working at the office full-time in November to add capacity to the chapter.

In 2016, the chapter looks forward to building on the work done by board members and volunteers this past year by growing its membership base to become the largest chapter in the country, grow its online and social media presence, and continue to expand its youth programming.

The Annual Meeting concluded with the election of board members. The board members elected for a two-year term expiring 12/31/17 were: Bryan Hara, Marisa Fujinaka, Jeanne Harrell, Megan Nakano, Michael Oshita, Lisa Sloan, Phyllis Tamada-Brown, Judy Tanaka, Pat Yuzawa-Rubin. Board members whose term expires at the end of 2016 are Tonko Doi, Glenn Inouye, Robert Mita, Lane Mita, Rebecca Ozaki, Tad Tanaka, Tom Yatabe, Cary Wong, and Ron Yoshino.

JACL Chicago will continue to pursue its mission of securing and maintaining the rights of Japanese Americans and all those who are victimized by injustice and bigotry. We look forward to your continued support and involvement in 2016. 🌸



1 CHAPTER PRESIDENT, BRYAN HARA. **2** ELECTED BOARD MEMBERS: PAT YUZAWA-RUBIN, LISA SLOAN, MICHAEL OSHITA, PHYLLIS TAMADA-BROWN, JEANNIE HARRELL, JUDY TANAKA, MEGAN NAKANO. **3** YOUTH CO-CHAIRS, REBECCA OZAKI AND LANE MITA.

4 BOARD TREASURER, RON YOSHINO. **5** OPERATIONS CHAIR, CARY WONG. **6** COMMUNICATIONS CO-CHAIR, MICHAEL OSHITA. **7** COMMUNITY OUTREACH CO-CHAIR, ROBERT MITA. **8** BOARD MEMBER, PAT YUZAWA-RUBIN. **9** BUILDING CHAIR, GLENN INOUE.

JACL Chicago Committees and Chairs

Communications Committee

Co-Chairs: Tom Yatabe and Michael Oshita
Responsibilities Include: JACLer newsletter, chapter website, social media presence.

Community Outreach Committee

Co-Chairs: Robert Mita and Jeannie Harrell
Responsibilities Include: Chapter representation and/or participation in community events such as Day of Remembrance, Ginza, Nikkei Picnic, and Holiday Delight.

Development Committee

Chair: Tonko Doi
Responsibilities Include: Fundraising and membership.

Operations Committee

Chair: Cary Wong
Responsibilities Include: Building, finance, legal, and accounting.

Youth Development Committee

Co-Chairs: Lane Mita and Rebecca Ozaki
Responsibilities Include: Scholarship program, Next Generation Nikkei, Kansha Project, and Day Camp.

If you are interested in joining a committee or would like to find out more, please email chicago@jacl.org or call 773.728.7171.

Membership Announcement:

Did you know JACL Chicago is currently JACL's second largest chapter in the country? We are trailing slightly behind the Portland chapter, which has 280 members. Help us get to 300 members in 2016 to become JACL's largest chapter! You can renew a lapsed membership, encourage friends and family to join, or gift a membership to a young person.

Help us become number one!



Achieving the Impossible Dream: How Japanese Americans Obtained Redress

**Sunday, February 21, 2016 • 2:00 - 4:00 PM
Chicago History Museum • 1601 N. Clark St.**

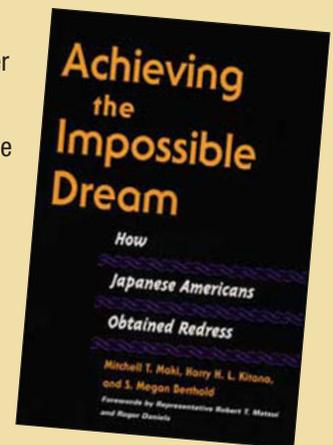
Every year, the Japanese American community in the Chicago area comes together to commemorate the signing of Executive Order 9066. Signed by President Franklin D. Roosevelt on February 19, 1942, Executive Order 9066 gave the U.S. Army the authority to remove civilians from the military zones of Washington, Oregon and California. This led to the forced removal and incarceration of some 120,000 Americans of Japanese ancestry during World War II.

The Japanese American community continues to remember and commemorate EO9066 as a reminder of the fragility of civil liberties in times of crisis, and the importance of remaining vigilant in protecting the rights and freedoms of all.

This year's Day of Remembrance features Mitchell T. Maki, co-author of the book *Achieving the Impossible Dream: How Japanese Americans Obtained Redress*, with an in-depth discussion of this struggle for justice. Dr. Maki is the Vice Provost of Academic Affairs at California State University, a licensed clinical social worker, and one of the leading scholars on the Japanese American redress movement.

This event is sponsored by the Chicago Japanese American Council, the Chicago Japanese American Historical Society, the Japanese American Citizens League – Chicago Chapter, the Japanese American Service Committee, and the Japanese Mutual Aid Society of Chicago.

THE PROGRAM IS FREE AND OPEN TO THE PUBLIC.



2016 AACC Lunar New Year Celebration Japanese American Community Service Awardee, Kayoko Kay Kawaguchi

In her own self-effacing way, Kay Kawaguchi has devoted most of her working life in Chicago to the preservation of Japanese cultural traditions. She is active behind the scenes of the Fujima Ryu of Chicago school of Japanese classical dance, and lends her assistance to the Tsukasa Taiko drummers as well. As coordinator of cultural classes at the Japanese American Service Committee (JASC), she organizes ongoing classes in Japanese language, flower arranging (*ikebana*), ink painting (*sumi-e*), and cooking. Formerly a writer, photographer, and Japanese-language editor at the *Chicago Shimpō*, Kay continues to contribute content to the newspaper and other local Japanese-language publications.



KAY KAWAGUCHI

In addition, both through the JASC and in her free time, Kay has helped many older Japanese nationals navigate social service programs in Chicago and other locations. Her friendly and compassionate manner, along with her fluency in both Japanese and English, make her a sensitive translator-interpreter, winning the confidence of all parties involved.

Born in wartime Japan, Kay knew as a schoolgirl that she wanted to become a writer. After completing high school, she secured a position as a reporter for a newsletter for fans of the famed Takarazuka theater troupe. After a number of years on the job, Kay decided to make an extended visit to the US.

Although she initially did not speak English, Kay immediately felt comfortable in the US. In time she met and married Frank Kawaguchi, and they made a life together in Chicago. After concentrating on family for several years, Kay resumed her writing career at the *Chicago Shimpō*, and added editorial duties soon thereafter. In all, she spent 13 years at the newspaper.

In 1999, Kay became a staff member at the JASC, where she works today, handling a broad range of duties, including cultural classes, translations, and community events.

When asked to name the person she most admires, Kay named the late Iva Toguri, who unwillingly became one of the radio broadcasters collectively known as “Tokyo Rose” during World War II. Upon her return to the US, Iva was tried and convicted of treason on false evidence. Throughout, she steadfastly maintained her innocence, and eventually won a Presidential pardon in 1977. Kay cites Iva Toguri’s strength of character, persistence, and refusal to indulge in self-pity as qualities she admires.

With generosity and grace, Kay Kawaguchi demonstrates her own strength of character on a daily basis, devoting her time and energy to programs and organizations that bring meaning and richness to community life. 🌸

2016 AACC Lunar New Year Celebration Japanese American Community Youth Who Excels Awardee, Lane Sawa Mita



LANE MITA

I have been a member of the Japanese American Citizens League (JACL) for seven years. I have been a board member of JACL Chicago for the past two years, and I am the co-chair of the youth committee. I am also a member of

the Native American Support Program at the University of Illinois at Chicago. I have volunteered for the JACL for their Scholarship Luncheon as the Emcee speaker, and as the Chicago Day of Remembrance emcee. I have volunteered for events for the Japanese American

Service Committee, Christ Church of Chicago, and the Midwest Buddhist Temple. I am the youngest of three brothers, Brandon and Scott, and the son of Robert and Janice. I am a fourth generation Japanese American, I have a lot of gratitude and thankfulness for my great grandparents and grandparents to have endured incarceration in the internment camps during World War II. My family background is what drives my involvement in the Japanese American Community, and why I want to give back to the community.

The most important person in my life in high school is my late friend Nathan Palma. Nathan and I had grown up together, going to the same school together, and we shared a friendship that I knew could have lasted a life time. Nathan passed away in my senior year in high school and the cause was due to an

autoimmune disease known as Lupus. In the span of our friendship, I did not know that he was diagnosed with this disease because he had never complained about it or even showed any of the pain that he had to endure. Ever since he passed away I have had a different outlook on life because it made me realize that life is really short, which was clearly evident in his passing at such a young age. The lesson I learned from Nathan’s passing is to live life to the fullest. 🌸

Asian American Coalition of Chicago
(AACC)

Annual Lunar New Year Celebration

February 6, 2016 • 5:30 – 9:00 pm

HYATT REGENCY CHICAGO

More info: <http://2016lunarnewyear.com>

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Scholarship

Derek Obayashi

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Arlene Hayn
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In memory of Sam Ozaki

Stacy Flannery

Jean Fujii

Sharon Harada

Emily Kawano

Marina Ozaki

Mike Takada

James Teraji

Lily Teraji

Joy Yamasaki

Thomas Yatabe

Kansha Project

Lisa Sakai
(in memory of Sam Ozaki)

Annual Giving

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(in memory of Alice Esaki)

David Igasaki

Grace Igasaki
(in memory of Masao Igasaki)

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(in memory of Tokuo Azeka)

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Christine Sato

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(in memory of George and
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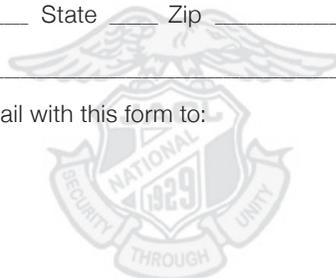
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Japanese American Citizens League

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

Wednesday, January 13
7–9 PM

JACL Chicago Board Meeting
JACL Chicago Office, 5415 N. Clark Street, Chicago

Saturday, February 6
5–9 PM

Asian American Coalition of Chicago – 33rd Annual Lunar New Year Festival
Hyatt Regency Chicago, 151 East Wacker Drive, Chicago

Wednesday, February 10
7–9 PM

JACL Chicago Board Meeting
JACL Chicago Office, 5415 N. Clark Street, Chicago

Sunday, February 21
2–4 PM

Day of Remembrance
Chicago History Museum, 1601 North Clark Street, Chicago

Tuesday, March 1, 2016

JACL Chicago Scholarship DEADLINE
Download applications from the JACL Chicago website (www.jaclchicago.org)

Tuesday, March 1, 2016

2016 Kansha Project Application DEADLINE
New ONLINE application available at www.jaclchicago.org