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JACL Lor

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Project Community! Day Camp August 4–6, 11–13

see special insert for details

The Chicago Police and Asians as Foreigners

By William Yoshino, JACL Midwest Director

The recent disclosure that members of the Chicago Police Department physically and verbally abused an Asian American woman is deeply troubling. During a raid of a business in 2013, Jianqing "Jessie" Klyzek was manhandled and racially taunted by a Chicago police officer, which was captured by a surveillance camera.

In the video footage, a Chicago police officer can be seen striking Ms. Klyzek on the back of the head after she is handcuffed, subdued, and kneeling on the ground. Another officer is heard to shout at Ms. Klyzek that she is "not f--king American," and threatens to "put [her] in a UPS box and send [her] back to wherever the f--k [she] came from." Although Ms. Klyzek protested that she is a citizen, her response was met with additional taunts.

Asian Americans are currently the fastest-growing racial group in the United States, and have been part of the U.S. population since the mid-1840s. Yet, Asian Americans still face prejudice and discrimination. From being portrayed as limited, stereotypical caricatures to being the butt of racist jokes, the everyday reality of the Asian American experience belies the common stereotype of the "model minority" who has assimilated into white mainstream culture.

Instead, a common perception of Asians is akin to the behavior that Ms. Klyzek endured. It is the mythic notion that all Asians are foreigners, a stereotype that doomed Japanese Americans during World War II when even citizens were labeled as so-called "non-aliens" by our government to send a message that somehow we didn't belong here. In the case of Ms. Klyzek, the officer's threat of deportation reinforced the myth of Asians as "perpetual foreigners."

As a result, Asian Americans often experience racism in the form of microaggressions, the everyday insults, indignities, and demeaning messages sent by those who are unaware of the effects of their words or actions. It's the well-intentioned compliment in mentioning that you speak English so well, or the never-ending curiosity of being asked where you are from, followed by "where are you really from," or the not so well-intentioned mocking of accented speech.

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.

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

For More Information

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

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The Chicago Police continued

If you investigate the history of the Asian American experience, you'll find that the everyday indignities often gave way to blatant racism, even beyond the Japanese American incarceration in the 1940s. It began with discriminatory acts toward Chinese immigrants in the mid-1800s who were subjected to racial abuse and finally banned from further immigration with the passage of the Chinese Exclusion Acts. As each group of Asians immigrated, they faced laws that prohibited land ownership, segregated schools, anti-miscegenation laws, restrictive housing covenants, and the inability to become naturalized as citizens as recently as 1952.

There is something unsettling about being misperceived, misidentified, or even ignored in conversations about race in America. This may be a reason the police officer didn't regard Ms. Klezek as an American, which means more needs to be done to train police officers. However, there is no excuse for his behavior in hitting and racially taunting Ms. Klezek, which justifies an appropriate punishment or disciplinary action. 



HANDCUFFED AND KNEELING, JIANQING "JESSIE" KLYZEK WAS STRUCK IN THE HEAD AND VERBALLY THREATENED BY CHICAGO POLICE. SEE THE VIDEO AT:

<http://www.chicagotribune.com/news/local/breaking/chi-lawsuit-cop-hit-woman-as-she-kneels-handcuffed-20140519,0,5792948.story>

SAVE-THE-DATE
2014 Annual Nikkei Community Picnic
August 2, 2014
Bunker Hill – Grove #7
6800 N. Caldwell Ave., Chicago

Asian American Town Hall Forum

By Megan Nakano, JACL Chicago Chapter President

The JACL joins over 30 other Asian American serving organizations in protesting the verbal and physical abuse of Jianqing "Jessica" Klyzek by Chicago police officers during a raid last summer. Surveillance video captured a Chicago police officer hitting Ms. Klyzek in the head while she is handcuffed and kneeling. Another officer is heard berating her with racist affronts and threats of violence against her and her family while many other officers look on.

On June 7, 2014, after learning about the case from a piece that appeared in the Chicago SunTimes a few weeks earlier, over 100 Asian American community members gathered at the Japanese American Service Committee for an Asian American Town Hall Forum to express their outrage over the officers' actions to representatives from the Mayor's office, the Independent Police Review Authority (IPRA), and the Chicago Police Department.

Among the representatives speaking on behalf of the Asian American community was Bill Yoshino, JACL's Midwest Director, who leads our organization's efforts to respond to defamation and hate crimes and to advocate for legislation that protects

against such incidents. Mr. Yoshino explains, "Racial incidents are not simply attacks on individuals. They are attacks on an entire group, an entire community. The danger with these types of incidents is they make communities feel isolated and they make them feel vulnerable."

A list of demands was presented to the City of Chicago, including: a public statement from Mayor Emmanuel denouncing the conduct of the officers involved; discipline for the officers involved, including the firing of the two abusive officers; amending the city's sanctuary ordinance to prohibit any city employee from threatening deportation; collection and disclosure of data on complainants who are members of protected classes under the City of Chicago's current discrimination ordinances; and disclosure of data on hiring related to race and bilingual ability and specific languages spoken.

A debriefing on the forum was held on June 19, 2014 at Asian Americans Advancing Justice Chicago headquarters. Attendees reacted to the event and established working groups to research legal issues surrounding the case, educate the community on their rights, and to increase media coverage on the issue.

Those interested in getting involved are encouraged to contact JACL Chicago at 773.728.7171 or Chicago@jacl.org. 



JACL MIDWEST DIRECTOR, BILL YOSHINO, REMINDED THE 100+ AUDIENCE THAT THE JIANQING "JESSICA" KLYZEK INCIDENT COULD HAPPEN TO ANY ASIAN AMERICAN.



ABOVE: MAYOR EMMANUEL'S REPRESENTATIVE, JANEY ROUNDREE, ATTEMPTED TO REASSURE THE AUDIENCE THE MAYOR FOUND THE COMMENTS AND BEHAVIOR "DESPICABLE."
LEFT: C. W. CHEN TOLD THE AUDIENCE IT DOESN'T MATTER HOW MANY GENERATIONS ASIAN AMERICANS ARE IN THE UNITED STATES, THEY ARE OFTEN STILL VIEWED AS "FOREIGNERS."

CHIEF ADMINISTRATOR OF THE INDEPENDENT POLICE REVIEW AUTHORITY (IPRA), SCOTT ANDO, SAID AN INVESTIGATION IS BEING DONE, BUT COULD NOT GIVE THE AUDIENCE AN IDEA OF WHEN THE INVESTIGATION WOULD BE COMPLETED.

Photos: Robert Brown

JACL Chicago's 57th Annual Scholarship Luncheon

By Marisa Fujinaka, JACL Program Coordinator

JACL Chicago's 57th annual scholarship luncheon was held Sunday, May 18th at Maggiano's Little Italy Restaurant honoring eight 2014 scholarship recipients who received \$18,000 in total awards. Around 50 family members, scholarship donors, and Chicago Chapter members attended this year's event to celebrate the accomplishments of the talented awardees and to support one of the chapter's most recognized programs.

This year, new board member and Youth Chair, Lane Mita, emceed the successful luncheon. Lane spoke about his transformative experience through the Kansha Project and encouraged youth to apply. Christine Munteanu, JACL Assistant Program Director and scholarship recipient, also spoke in detail about the Kansha Project and introduced a video capturing participants' growth during and after the program.



CHAPTER PRESIDENT, MEGAN NAKANO, SHARED HER PERSONAL UNDERSTANDING OF BEING JAPANESE AMERICAN.

They engrained in me a pressure to be exemplary beyond reproach lest my shortcomings reflect poorly on my people and I was told I would have to work twice as hard to go half as far as my non-minority peers. This is both an onerous burden and a powerful motivating force."

Megan concluded that the scholarship recipients are encouraged to participate in JACL programming and other community activates to help them discover their own identity and to share that experience with others.

Chapter President, Megan Nakano provided the current JACL report and spoke passionately about the organizations role in helping individuals understand what it means to be Japanese American.

"My own Japanese American identity is constantly evolving. It is rooted in my parents and grandparents' WWII experience which resulted in feeling that our family was neither truly Japanese nor fully American.



LANE MITA EMCEEDED THE SCHOLARSHIP LUNCHEON.



2014 JACL CHICAGO SCHOLARSHIP WINNERS. BACK L-R: CHRISTINE MUNTEANU, KOJI NEGI TRAN, EIGEN AOKI, KIOTA AOKI. FRONT L-R: MARY COOMES, NORA KOBAYASHI, SHUSAKU ASAI, COLIN WONG

Photos: Robert Brown

JACL Chicago thanks Judy Tanaka for her continued leadership as Scholarship Committee Chair and her committee members, Marisa Fujinaka, Rosemary Lee, Brandon Mita, Joyce Morimoto, and Megan Nakano. The committee also thanks Bob Brown for photographing the event.

Special thank you to all scholarship donors. The JACL Chicago Scholarship program is possible though the generous donations of the scholarship sponsors and continuous support from individuals in the community. This program allows the future leaders of our community the chance to develop and enhance their skills through out their academic career. 

2014 JACL Chicago Scholarship Winners

Mitzi Shio Scheckman Memorial Scholarship:
Kiota Aoki (The School of Art Institute of Chicago)

Todd S. Tomiyama Scholarship:
Eigen Aoki (University of California Southern California)

JACL Chicago Chapter Scholarship:
Christine Munteanu (University of Illinois Chicago)

Yoshino Family Scholarship:
Shusaki Asai (University of Washington)

John Iwaoka Memorial Scholarship:
Mary Coomes (University of Chicago)

Mary Kurose Joichi Scholarship:
Nora Kobayashi (Loyola University)

Hank & Mary Sakai Memorial Scholarship:
Koji Negi Tran (University of Illinois Chicago)

Omachi Scholarship:
Colin Wong (Iowa State University)

Congressman Mike Honda Visits JACL Chicago

By Christine Munteanu, JACL Assistant Program Director

Congressman Mike Honda met with a small group of JACL members on May 10 at the JACL office. The congressman had been in Chicago to attend a campaign fundraising event the previous evening.

Honda addressed an array of issues raised by those in attendance. He first shared his thoughts on the findings of falsified records on wait times at VA hospitals, and the controversy surrounding Veteran Affairs Secretary General Shinseki.

Honda then discussed issues surrounding Asian American candidates running for public office. Josina Morita (recent candidate for the Metropolitan Water Reclamation Commission of Greater Chicago) observed that in Chicago, she had noticed that the few Asian Americans running for public office tend to run against each other. Honda himself is facing competition in his from another Asian American candidate. However, Honda stated that he felt that overall,

it is good to see more APA faces in government and public service.

Honda was also asked about a recent research report published by Princeton University and Northwestern University. The study found that the United States government functions not as a democracy, but as an oligarchy, in which monied interests such as wealthy individuals and large corporations have outsize influence on policy decisions, leaving individual citizens with little to no voice. When asked for his thoughts on his own role as a member of Congress in this type of system, Honda expressed optimism that the smaller, grassroots efforts of individuals and organizations still have the potential to effect change on a large scale. Honda also touched on campaign finance reform, a solution raised by an audience member, as a broader answer to this issue.

Honda is campaigning for his eighth term representing a district in the Bay Area of California that includes San Jose. In introducing the congressman, Bill Yoshino



Photo: Phyllis Tamada-Brown

CONGRESSMAN MIKE HONDA ANSWERS QUESTIONS ON MAY 10TH DURING A CASUAL "MEET & GREET" WITH MEMBERS AT THE JACL OFFICE.

outlined Honda's value to the Asian American and Japanese American communities as being one of the few members of Congress willing to advocate for important issues affecting those communities. An example given has been Honda's advocacy in funding a grant to the National Park Service to restore and maintain the World War II confinement sites of Japanese Americans.

Don't Get Too Comfortable

By Remy Hidaka, JACL Midwest Youth Council Representative

If anyone walking by the conference room in Tri-C, where the National Youth/ Student Council Youth Leadership Summit was held, they would have thought we were just having a party with all the catered food and colorful posters around the room. Despite the fun and games (that we did do later), the summit facilitators (Kota Mizutani, Christine Munteanu, and Stephanie Nitahara) and I challenged the participants to discuss racial identity, stereotypes, and discrimination within the Asian American community. We had workshops that identified stereotypes within media and everyday racism. During a different workshop, we posed some scenarios that had an underlying racist tone. Some of the scenarios posed were some situations that I have faced myself and because of my inability to stand up for myself, I have

probably encouraged certain stereotypes of Asian Americans. So even I, one of the facilitators, have been taught a valuable lesson from this youth summit, which is "Don't get too comfortable."

The title of the youth summit, "Don't Get Too Comfortable," means that one should not embrace stereotypes or go along with racist remarks; it means to stand up against everyday racism and discrimination. Unfortunately, there is still discrimination within the Asian American community and we, as a group, still need to combat against stereotypes such as model minority or the perpetual foreigner. I did not expect for this youth summit to become a life changing experience for any of the participants, nor did I expect them to immediately join protests or rallies. However, I did hope that this youth

summit would help these participants come up with ways to prevent everyday racism in their immediate surroundings such as amongst friends, classmates, or in school.

During the summit it was mentioned that one participant was offended by his former role in the school play because he was told to portray an Asian man with the stereotypical thick Asian accent. And while this participant talked to his teachers and his principal about his discomfort with the role, nothing was done about it. Upon hearing this, another participant (an alum of that same school) at the youth summit decided she wanted to involve herself in protesting against the play and to collaborate with the JACL Chicago Chapter to address this unpleasant event. Again while I knew this

Continued on page 7

KODOMO NO HI 2014

By Robert Mita, JACL Chicago Board Member

The second annual Kodomo No Hi Children's Day Festival was held on May 3, 2014. After five or six days of rain and overcast skies, it was a breath of fresh air to see the sun come peeking out. It actually turned out to be a gorgeous sunny and warm springtime day. This year different groups of people pitched in with a nice community effort which included the Japanese American Historical Society as host group and main sponsor, along with the Japanese American National Museum. Thank you to all the sponsors and especially to the Japanese American Citizens League—Chicago Chapter, The Chicago Nisei Post 1183, American Legion, and Barry Regent Cleaners.

This year the program was full of entertainment which included games, crafts, and Japanese food. It had a dozen vendors and a balloon artist, as well as raffles held throughout the day. The entertainment included three different Hawaiian singing and dancing groups, and the MBT Minyo Folk Dance Group had people dancing in the aisles to the strains of "Tanko Bushi." The Kokyo Taiko Group from the Buddhist Temple of Chicago gave a vigorous performance to thunderous applause, the Chicago Kitoh Shotokan Karate Dojo demonstrated empty-handed self defense, and finally the Northside College Prep HS Japan Club performed an enthusiastic rendition of "Soran Bushi."

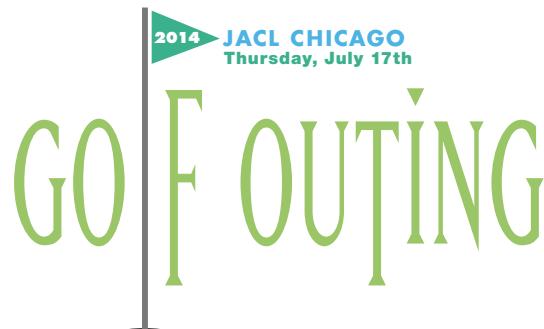
The real beauty of the festival was demonstrated by how well all of the workers and performers came together. The Asian community spirit was reflected by their working together towards a common goal. Everyone worked tirelessly; consequently, the festival turnout was enjoyed by all. Much of this success can be attributed to the tireless efforts of Sharon Hidaka, Jean Mishima, members of the Historical Society and the Festival Committee. The Kodomo No Hi Children's Festival is fast becoming a springtime tradition and a heck of a good time. ☺



KODOMO NO HI ENTERTAINMENT INCLUDED TOP
(CLOCKWISE): NA KUPUNA UKELELE CLUB, KOKYO TAIKO –
THE BUDDHIST TEMPLE OF CHICAGO, AND HALAU I KA
PONO – THE HULA SCHOOL OF CHICAGO.



Photos: Phyllis Tamada-Brown



**Thursday, July 17
GLENCOE Golf Club
621 Westley Rd.
\$85 per golfer**

Cost includes a round of golf with cart and lunch.

Please RVSP to the JACL office.
Phone: 773.728.7171
Email: chicago@jacl.org

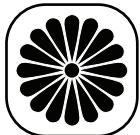
summit was not going to be life changing, I'm proud to say that out of this youth summit, one person immediately wanted to stand up against her alma mater because she did not want to get comfortable with the idea of racial discrimination against another member of her community.

Your action does not have to be as big as hers, but letting others know that stereotypes or comments are not acceptable to you is a sign that you are not comfortable with that racial profile. Stand up to everyday racism. Stand up for yourself and to your community. 

Thank You to Our Donors and Advertisers!

Due to technical difficulties, we were not able to access the donors information in time for this issue of the JACLER. We apologize for any inconvenience, and will print all donations in the September/October issue.

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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

July 9-12	JACL National Convention San Jose, California
Thursday, July 17 9 am	JACL Chicago Golf Tournament Glencoe Golf Club, 621 Westley Rd., Glencoe
Wednesday, July 23 7 pm	JACL Chicago Board Meeting JACL Chicago Office, 5415 North Clark Street
Saturday, August 2 11 am–Dusk	Annual Nikkei Picnic Bunker Hill, Grove #7, entrance on Harts Road, between Milwaukee and Caldwell
August 4–6, 11–13 10 am – Noon	Project Community Day Camp JACL Chicago Office, 5415 North Clark Street
August 8–10	Ginza Holiday Festival Midwest Buddhist Temple, 435 W. Menomonee St.
Wednesday, August 13 7 pm	JACL Chicago Board Meeting JACL Chicago Office, 5415 North Clark Street

JACL Project: Community!

DAY CAMP

August 4 - 13



JACL's free summer camp program for 7 to 9 year olds is back for 2014! Over six half-day sessions over two weeks, campers will learn about Japanese American culture and history, try different cultural activities and crafts, and learn the importance of tolerance and diversity.

DATES: August 4-6, 11-13

TIME: 10 AM to Noon

LOCATION: JACL Chicago Office
5415 N. Clark Street

CONTACT

Marisa Fujinaka, mfujinaka@jacl.org

Christine Munteanu, cmunteanu@jacl.org

773-728-7171

Send completed registration forms to: Project Community Day Camp, 5415 N. Clark St, Chicago, IL 60640

REGISTRATION FORM

Student's Name

Sex

Age

Grade in Fall

Parent/Legal Guardian

Cell Phone Number

Home Address

Email Address

Dietary/Physical Restrictions