Day of Remembrance 2017: Healing Through Storytelling and Art
By Greg Kimura, Kansha Alumni Leadership Board Member

Day of Remembrance was held at the Chicago History Museum on Sunday February 19, 2017 commemorating the 75th anniversary of the signing of Executive Order 9066. I was fortunate enough to be a part of organizing the Day of Remembrance Youth Program, and a volunteer for the main program. The Youth Program had 15-20 youth participants while parents sat in the background as the room eventually filled. Local author, Karen Su read her children’s “book to-be” titled I am Yuki, a true story of a young Japanese American girl’s journey through the camp experience and the hardships of resettlement. After the reading, we encouraged the youth to participate in a collaborative art making by collaging over images of the incarceration camps. In the end we had 3 complete pieces which were displayed in the reception area for the community to view. It was exciting to engage the younger generation in the history of the past generations of Japanese Americans, and the people that came before us. There was a sublime moment where I stood back and saw the youth of the community innocently adding color and life to the dull images of the photos of the camp experience. Each piece carefully and slowly being added, and in the end, what started off as a colorless image, became transformed into something completely different, intensely colorful, and beautiful.

The main program featured screenings of two short films “The Orange Story”, and “A Song for Manzanar”, and a reading by local poet Dwight Okita, and with a panel

Continued on page 2
Day of Remembrance 2017 continued

discussion featuring Jason Matsumoto, Erika Street Hopman, Kazuko Golden, Dwight Okita, and moderated by Richard Morimoto. It was incredible seeing how many people came to the main program; the auditorium was quickly filled and organizers had to fill other parts of the museum in order to accommodate the intense turnout. The films were shown to an estimated 700 attendees! The turnout was more than double that of the previous year. I am inspired by the leadership and incredible dedication to the effort to remember and share the stories of the Japanese American community. The stories that we remember as a community are important and I felt that more than ever during this program. With continuing interest in what the camp experience means for the existing Japanese American community and for America at large makes our stories more important than ever to share and remember. I am incredibly happy that there was such a high turnout to the Day of Remembrance events and look forward to sharing the stories of the community in the future. 🌴
Weekend of Remembrance:  
Deru Kugi wa Utareru  
Christine Munteanu, JACL Chicago Member

As part of a weekend commemorating the 75th anniversary of the signing of Executive Order 9066, the Mary and Leigh Block Museum of Art in Evanston hosted a Day of Remembrance program on Saturday, February 18. An intergenerational, diverse audience of about 200 people gathered for an interactive program commemorating this historic anniversary, and explored the urgency and relevancy of understanding the Japanese American incarceration in the present day.

The event highlighted an installation by Japanese American artist Kristine Aono, entitled “Deru Kugi wa Utareru: The Nail that Sticks Up the Farthest...” Aono’s piece commemorates the Japanese American incarceration by representing each internee with a nail hole pounded into the wall, forming an image of an American flag. The walls are papered with copies of letters from Aono’s grandfather as well as testimony from the CWRIC hearings. Visitors are encouraged to add nails to the wall in memory of or to honor those who were incarcerated.

Aono’s work is part of a larger exhibition entitled “If You Remember, I’ll Remember,” which gathers various works that reflect on the past while contemplating the present and explores themes of love, mourning, war, relocation, internment, resistance, and civil rights in 19th and 20th century North America. The exhibition, including Aono’s work, will be on display at the Block Museum through June 18, 2017.

During the program, several Northwestern students and JACL Chicago Next Generation Nikkei members facilitated small group discussions with former incarcerated individuals, including Jim Mita, Merry Oya, Yuki Hiyama, Jane Hidaka, Enoch Kanaya, and Jean Mishima.

The program also included a screening of the short film “History and Memory: For Akiko and Takashige” by Rea Tajiri, which explores the filmmaker’s family experiences of incarceration alongside the concepts of collective memory and recorded history. The event was jointly hosted by the Block Museum, Northwestern Multicultural Student Affairs, Japanese American Student Association, Asian Pacific American Coalition, Sustained Dialogue, and the member organizations of the Chicago Day of Remembrance Planning Committee.

Group discussions with former incarcerated were facilitated by Northwestern students and JACL Chicago Next Generation Nikkei members.

Photo: Amy Chow

EXHIBIT VISITORS PUT NAILS INTO KRISTINE AONO’S ART INSTALLATION IN MEMORY OF OR TO HONOR THOSE WHO WERE INCARCERATED.

SAVE-THE-DATE

2017 JACL Chicago Scholarship Luncheon

Saturday, March 18, 2017
6:30 – 9:30 pm
Amron Hall • 6421 Hamlin Ave, Lincolnwood
Tickets: $30 (Students $20)
JACLChicagoInaugural2017.eventbrite.com or
RSVP to Mari Yamagiwa 872.222.9383

Like Us on Facebook! www.facebook.com/JACLChicago
I’ve seen much during my years with JACL, and I’ve had the opportunity of participating in some of its hallmark projects such as the Redress campaign during the 1980s and the efforts to respond to defamation and hate crimes since the killing of Vincent Chin. These programs were noteworthy and important, however, the most enduring and perhaps the most important program initiative during my years with JACL has been its continuing effort to educate the public about the legacy and lessons of incarceration.

There hasn’t always been clarity of purpose about JACL’s program priorities. Now, more than ever, when our staff and financial resources must be optimized and when we are trying to appeal to a changing Japanese American demographic for membership, our identity and our purpose must be clear.

It’s important for JACL to focus in program areas that demonstrate our strength, where we can be a leader. For JACL, that program area is Education, and more specifically it’s telling and retelling the story about the wrongdoing of incarceration.

This may be an old story, but its lessons are as important today as they ever were. 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. And think about the larger themes such as privacy in the face of government intrusion or about the consequences of hysteria during times of crisis or about due process and equal protection.

JACL can be a leader and tell this story because it’s our story. Who better to tell this story by repeating and reinforcing the voices and experiences within our community. JACL can and must do this. We have curriculum materials and we have experience in presenting workshops for teachers as we’ve been doing for over 20 years. In the past three years, we’ve presented training workshops for approximately 300 teachers through a grant from the National Park Service. Last summer, utilizing a grant from the National Endowment for the Humanities, we provided workshops for 70 teachers from throughout the United States, who in turn will teach units on incarceration to their students.

Education also encompasses our youth where JACL provides programs that seek to connect them with their personal identity, their historic legacy, and their cultural ancestry. JACL addresses this through its Kakehashi program and the soon-to-be Japanese American Youth Legacy Project, funded by the National Park Service that will provide an opportunity for our youth to visit Manzanar and other Japanese American historic sites.

But we need to do more. What separates JACL from other Japanese American organizations in telling this story is that we’re a national organization with a national reach. JACL can involve our chapters from around the country to engage in the work of connecting with schools and teachers so they will include units about incarceration in their classrooms. JACL chapters can also identify youth to participate in our youth education programs. Imagine if we empower our chapters with resources and instruction so they can be even more effective in providing workshops for teachers in their local areas.

Our focus on education coincides with much of our public policy agenda about promoting diversity and protecting the rights of vulnerable groups. This is true in the current climate with public pronouncements 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. Nevertheless, we must be prepared for those who trade in fear and suspicion from pursuing dubious policies that undermine liberties.

JACL’s future must be invested in core programs that reflect our competency of conveying our unique story. It serves as the basis for speaking out on the issues of the day, especially on profiling, stereotyping, negative media portrayals, racial slurs, and attacks on the value of diversity. Prioritizing education will hasten the day when our story is truly seen by all as a lesson in American history.

---

**Women’s Rally and March**

January 21, 2017
Grant Park, Chicago
250,000 Participants

---

iration: Daniel Brown
What Really Makes America Great?

Most of you that read this column, know how much of a huge sports fan I am. Sports has consumed by life ever since I was a child growing up in Cincinnati. However, with everything going on in the world currently, I decided this column would be different. This one would be about appreciating the life we have, even if we are in unprecedented times when it comes to our government. As Americans and citizens of this great country we call the United States, it’s important we take time and appreciate what it is that really makes this country great. Ruth Bader Ginsburg, Supreme Court Justice of the United States, was recently interviewed on February 23rd on the current state of America. In that interview, she preached the importance of free speech and “the idea of our nation being receptive to all people, welcoming all people. Those are our ideals, our treasured First Amendment and the nation that in our nation we are many and yet we are one.”

It’s not often that you find a member of the highest court speaking on the current state of the country. This interview comes months after Ginsburg criticized the President. I applaud her comments because for me, as much as we may or may not like the current state of the country now, Justice Ginsberg reminded us of how lucky we are to be a citizen of this country. No matter what side of the political fence you are on, remember, the fact is at the end of the day we are still citizens. Sure we may have different opinions on everything, and that’s what makes us great. The ability to express those opinions and to come together to voice them are all things provided to us as a member of this country. Too many times we think to ourselves that perhaps moving is the solution to all of our problems. But also think of all of those refugees, who come to America for a chance to create a better life for themselves. For them, America represents the fulfillment of a dream and a chance to tell their children they can do anything they set their mind to. We really do live in a wonderful place. It’s time we stop and smell the roses from time to time.

2017 Kansha Kick Off

By Mari Yamagiwa, Kansha Alumni Leadership Board Member

On Thursday, February 23, the Kansha Project Alumni Leadership Board (ALB) kicked off its 2017 fundraising campaign at the Nisei Lounge in Wrigleyville. Many alumni, family, and friends came out to support the Kansha Project. (The Kansha Project is a JACL Chicago program that connects young Japanese Americans to the continuing legacy of the Japanese American community’s incarceration during WWII.)

Several alumni of the program and a few special community members took turns guest bartending. It was a great time of connecting with one another and sharing a few drinks! Last year when we hosted the Kansha Kick Off fundraiser at Nisei Lounge, we raised about $800. And this year, thanks to our generous supporters, we raised $1,700 for this impactful program! The ALB is so grateful for the support we’ve received from the community. The Kansha Project has been an incredibly meaningful experience for us and it’s important to us that others are able to have this opportunity as well.

The 2017 Kansha Project will bring 10 more Japanese Americans to LA’s Little Tokyo and Manzanar National Historic Site on June 15 – 18. We hope to see you on Saturday, June 24th for the Kansha Project Culmination where participants will showcase projects expressing their experiences and reflections from the trip. Mark your calendars and stay tuned for more details!
The Way I See It ... Celebrating My Birthday with 500,000
By Jeannie Harrell, JACL Board Member

The thing about birthdays is that they happen at the same time every year. My birthday is January 21, which means every four years, my birthday falls around Inauguration Day. The day after Donald Trump’s election in November, this struck me like lightning in my mind. How was I going to celebrate? How could I bring myself to, immediately after such a dark day? I thought of shutting myself in with a couple of friends, some takeout, ice cream, and booze. But within days, when the Women’s March on Washington was announced, I got a text from my friend Kate:

> Yo we going to this women’s march in DC or what
> you know that’s my bday right???
> I know :)
> BDAY TRIP???

Kate and I went to college together, and became close as a pair of design students with mouths too smart (and loud) for our own good. She now lives in Portland, OR, and when we exchanged those texts I hadn’t seen her in several years. Within a week, we had booked our flights and an Airbnb.

On Friday, January 20, I arrived at O’Hare Airport with my carry-on luggage and the signature pink hat, hand-knitted by a friend from Massachusetts. I got through security two hours early for my flight and just in time for the inaugural proceedings to begin on TV, so I hid in a booth at a Chili’s Too and focused my attention on a stale salad and two screwdrivers. Had I looked around, maybe I would have realized that I wasn’t so alone. On my flight from Chicago to DC, all but two of the economy class passengers were women on their way to the march, swapping stories, taking pictures, and upon arriving in DC, chanting, “Fired up! Ready to go!”

The day of the march, Kate and I headed over about an hour ahead of time. I was somewhat anxious with my hat and neon-colored signs (I wore “Misogyny Kills” and “White Supremacy Kills” around my torso, and carried “Corporate Greed Kills” and “Eat the Rich”) that we would draw attention to ourselves, but we were part of a rising tide of enthusiastic marchers all the way from the neighborhood of our Airbnb, through the Metro, and all the way down to the National Mall. By the time we reached the mall, the crowds were already so thick that we would certainly not make it anywhere near the main stage. Kate and I eventually found ourselves in the crowd outside of the National Museum of the American Indian, at the east end of the national mall.

There we stood from 10AM to 2PM, barely able to move in the crowd, let alone get cell phone reception and check for event updates. We in the crowd relied on each other for reinforcement. Kate and I made friends with a group of women living in DC who happened to be standing by us. We took turns boosting each other up onto a pylon outside of the museum to observe the crowd. This was an unmoving, tightly-packed crowd stretching in every direction as far as the eye could see—easily the biggest crowd I’ve ever been a part of, and I’m from Tokyo!

The Women’s March on Washington ended up hosting 500,000 people—the largest protest of a newly inaugurated president in American history (even before counting the sister marches in every state and across the globe). For the majority of the crowd, this seemed to be their first rally. I understand that everyone has to have a first time, but many of the first-timers seemed frustrated by their physical discomfort and grew cranky and rude with their co-marchers. I was also a little disheartened that the crowd seemed so predominantly white, but was happy to see signs and badges of support for a wide swath of human rights and environmental issues.

Kate and I came home that afternoon to put up our tired feet and watch some TV, just in time to catch press secretary Sean Spicer’s first press conference. As he sputtered and whined, we realized that this was their first rally. I understand that everyone has to have a first time, but many of the first-timers seemed frustrated by their physical discomfort and grew cranky and rude with their co-marchers. I was also a little disheartened that the crowd seemed so predominantly white, but was happy to see signs and badges of support for a wide swath of human rights and environmental issues.

We who protest the current administration have seen several near-victories quashed in the last minute by Republican buffoonery. But when I am feeling hopeless that I’ll never have as much political weight as a billionaire or a lobbyist, or exhausted from calling, protesting in the street, or even just reading the news, I try to think back to the day of the March, my voice hoarse, my ankles aching, my mind at the intersection of compassion and righteous anger, my heart filled with nothing but love for my country. 😊

Have something you’d like to say? Submit your comments via email to info@jacchicago.org, or by mail to JACL Chicago Chapter, 5415 N. Clark St., Chicago, Illinois 60640

The views expressed in “The Way I See It . . .” column do not represent a position of the JACL or its Chapters.
Thank You to Our Donors and Advertisers!
(Donors as of 2/23/17)

Annual Giving
Robert Brown and Phyllis Tamada-Brown
Albert and Patti Hara (In memory of Ray and Frances Sugai)
Nancy M. Kondo (In memory of parents — Eunice and Raymond Kondo)
Carolyn Nakamura (In memory of Kay and Lillie Nakamura)
Stanley and Susan Nakamura (In memory of Yosh Harada)
Philip Wong
Ken Yoshitani

Inaugural
Richard and Joyce Morimoto

Kansha Project
Mary Doi
Pat Harada
Donna Melkonian
Bob Mita

Kenny and Jackie Nitahara
Michael Takada
Bob and Nancy Takagi
Naomi Negi Tran

Thank you to everyone else who made cash and credit donations at our Kansha Kick Off Fundraiser!

General
Seiji Itahara
Kay Kawaguchi (In Memory of Frank Kawaguchi)
Alexander MacDonald and Natasha Saleski
Laura Maeda (In memory of Richard & Violette Maeda, ad Maribeth Takei Steers)
Scott Matsumoto
Robert McQuinn
Nancy Nakagawa
Mark Sumpter
Kevin Uebelein (In honor of Jeannie Harrell)

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
☐ Individual ................................. $75.00
☐ Couple/Family ............................. $125.00
☐ Student/Youth ............................ $35.00
☐ 1000 Club ................................. $350.00
☐ 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

KANSHA Project T-shirts

$15 plus shipping
Call the JACL Chicago office for details.
773.728.7171
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 JACLe r newsletter (in full color), news and updates via email.** See page 2

## Calendar of Events

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Event</th>
<th>Location</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Wednesday, March 8</td>
<td>JACL Chicago Board Meeting</td>
<td>JACL Chicago Office, 5415 N. Clark Street, Chicago</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Saturday, March 11</td>
<td>Asian American Coalition of Chicago Gala: One World, Our World</td>
<td>Hilton Chicago, 720 South Michigan Ave, Chicago</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Saturday, March 18</td>
<td>JACL Chicago Inaugural 2017: Celebrating Community</td>
<td>Amron Hall, 6421 Hamlin Ave, Lincolnwood</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Saturday, March 25</td>
<td>5th Annual Lunar Ball</td>
<td>Wintrust Grant Banking Hall, 231 S LaSalle St, Chicago</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wednesday, April 12</td>
<td>JACL Chicago Board Meeting</td>
<td>JACL Chicago Office, 5415 N. Clark Street, Chicago</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sunday, May 21</td>
<td>JACL Scholarship Luncheon</td>
<td>Maggiano’s Little Italy, 4999 Old Orchard Shopping Center, Skokie</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Saturday, June 24</td>
<td>Kansha Project Culmination</td>
<td>TBA</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>