The threat of a heavy snowfall in the afternoon didn’t deter former Kansha participants from attending a reunion of the participants from 2012 and 2013 at Sunshine Restaurant on January 11.

JACL Chicago Chapter played host to this event where Kristen Yang, Lane Mita, Kelly Uchima, Emily Harada, Warren Hidaka, Lauren Uchima, Robin Kanemoto, Midori Bowen, and Anna Takada enthusiastically greeted each other and caught up on what all had been doing.

The participants talked of how they heard about the Kansha Project and each were determined to promote the project to their network of friends. Although many talked
Securing and maintaining the civil rights of Japanese Americans and all others who are victimized by injustice and bigotry.

Kansha Reunion continued

about the program as being individually enriching, they also emphasized the friendships they had established.

Also attending the event were Christine Munteanu and Bill Yoshino, who plan each program and accompany the participants to Los Angeles. John Tateishi, former JACL national director, flew in from Marin County, California to attend the reunion. John has been an important participant in each Kansha trip, accompanying the participants and presenting educational sessions about the incarceration. Carol Yoshino and Brandon Mita also attended to show their support for the event.

Sunshine Restaurant and Dan Nakashima were generous in their support of the Kansha reunion.

2014 Kansha Project

applications are available online at www.jaclchicago.org
Application Deadline is Monday, March 31st
Apply today!

National Council for the Social Studies Annual Conference

By Christine Munteanu

Last November, Bill Yoshino, JACL Midwest Regional Director, and I attended the National Council for the Social Studies Annual Conference in St. Louis, MO. We set up an exhibitor’s booth in order to educate teachers about the importance of including Asian American voices and stories in their classroom, and promote teaching materials about the Japanese American WWII incarceration and Asian Pacific American history. Over the course of the two day conference, we distributed over 200 curriculum guides, both “A Lesson in American History: The Japanese American Experience,” and “The Journey from Gold Mountain: The Asian American Experience.”

This was my first time attending an NCSS conference, and I enjoyed the opportunity to speak to educators across the country. It was encouraging to see how many teachers were already teaching about the incarceration, and how acutely aware they were of the parallels between the Japanese American experience and the civil rights issues faced by their students today. Even the teachers who were not already incorporating lessons about the incarceration in their classrooms were eager for information and resources. JACL’s presence at these conferences is an important reminder to teachers that education must strive to be inclusive in reflecting the histories, cultures, and lived experiences of all.

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Christine Munteanu, JACL Assistant Program Director, speaks with an educator at the National Council for the Social Studies Annual Conference.
The Kansha Project helps ensure that our history and legacy is never forgotten. This is a life-changing experience, designed for college-age students in the Japanese American community.

Please join us and show your support for JACL Chicago’s newest premier program:

Thursday, March 13th, 6 – 9 pm
Hors d’oeuvres, Beer, Wine, Soft Drinks & Program
Prairie Moon Restaurant
1502 Sherman Avenue, Evanston

Tickets: $100 adults, $50 students
All proceeds from this event will benefit the Kansha Project.

The Chapter will also install the JACL Chicago Chapter 2014 Board of Directors:

Marisa Fujinaka*  Lane Mita*  Judith Tanaka
Bryan Hara      Megan Nakano  Tad Tanaka
Sharon Hidaka*  Michael Oshita  Cary Wong*
Tonko Doi*      Lisa Sloan      Thomas Yatabe
Glenn Inouye    Robert Takagi  Pat Yuzawa-Rubin
Robert Mita*    Phyllis Tamada-Brown  Phil Wong (Legal Counsel)

*newly elected

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or contact us at
773.728.7171 or chicago@jacl.org
to make your reservation.

Tickets are $100 each
$50 Students (with school ID)
A full house filled the Chicago Room at the Chicago History Museum on Sunday, February 16, where the Chicago Japanese American community hosted the 2014 Day of Remembrance (DOR). This year’s program highlighted the experiences of the Heart Mountain draft resisters—63 men who were tried and found guilty of draft evasion after they insisted upon a restoration of their civil liberties before serving in the armed forces. The story of the Heart Mountain draft resisters is not often told within the larger narrative of the Japanese American incarceration. Yet their story is vital to Japanese American history, as it is a testament to the many ways our community demonstrated their loyalty, courage, and faith in the Constitution and in their country. It is important to ensure that these histories are not lost, as we continue to build an inclusive sense of community memory and remembrance that honors the many forms of resistance and survival that our community showed during this trying time.

Keith Uchima and Pearl Paramadilok directed and produced a staged reading of excerpts from the historic mass trial of the Heart Mountain resisters. The actors included Cheryl Hamada, Gary Houston, Jin Kim, Ed Kuffert, Paul Moy, Gene Mui, Stephenie Park, Cary Shoda, Dwight Sora, Keith Uchima, Jason Williams, and Joe Yau.

The program was emceed by Cheryl Hamada. The Chicago Nisei Post no. 1183 Color Guard posted the colors, and Lauren Saiki read excerpts from the removal poster.

The Chicago DOR event continues to grow and educate the public. The 2014 program enjoyed a diverse crowd with over 300 in attendance. The Day of Remembrance is sponsored by the Chicago Japanese American Council, the Chicago Japanese American Historical Society, the Japanese American Citizens League – Chicago Chapter, Japanese American Service Committee, and the Japanese Mutual Aid Society of Chicago.
Meet Two of the New JACL Chicago Board Members

Robert Mita
A Chicago native, Robert Mita has been involved in numerous organizations in the Chicago Japanese American community prior to joining the JACL Chicago board. He previously served as a board member with the Chicago JACL Credit Union. Robert is currently a 7th degree black belt in judo. His former clubs include Uptown Judo, BTC Judo, Tenrikyo, and Kiku Judo Dojo. Robert is currently on staff at Tohkon Judo Academy. For the last 10 years, Robert has been the Promotion Board Chairman for the Chicago Judo Black Belt Association. In a previous life, Robert played basketball on several teams with the Chicago Nisei Athletic Association. Robert is an insurance agent and has his own agency in Skokie, IL. He resides in Skokie with his wife, Janice. Bob and Jan have three sons: Brandon, Scott, and Lane.

Lane Mita
At the age of 20, Lane Mita, is a sophomore at the University of Illinois at Chicago. He is the younger brother of Brandon and Scott Mita and the third son of Robert and Janice. He has tried to stay involved as much as he can in the Japanese community volunteering for the Christ Church of Chicago, Midwest Buddhist Temple and until recently, the JASC. For the past 10 years, Lane had been heavily involved in playing soccer. His club team, the Chicago Fire Juniors North, won the Under 17 Illinois State Championship. Lane was varsity co-captain and team MVP his senior year at Niles West High School for the varsity soccer team. In addition he played soccer his Freshman year on the varsity at Roosevelt University. In August of 2013, Lane began working at the new Fashion Outlets Mall of Rosemont, IL. He was recently promoted to assistant manager at the Finish Line, a nationally known athletic shoe and accessory store for men, women, and children.

Photos: Robert Brown
A benefit concert to raise funds for the Legacy Garden at Midwest Buddhist Temple will be held on Sunday, March 9, 2014. This unique concert, held a week prior to St. Patrick’s Day, will feature traditional Irish musicians Paddy Homan, Dennis Cahill and Teresa Shine along with the Ho Etsu Taiko.

The funds from the concert will be used to support the construction of the Legacy Garden on the grounds of the temple. The garden, which will be dedicated on June 22, 2014, honors the Issei and Nisei pioneers who founded the Buddhist temple in Old Town nearly 70 years ago. Designed by the renowned landscape artist, Hoichi Kurisu, the garden is being described as an “oasis of peace and inspiration for the Buddhist community and the public at large.”

The unique collaboration by Ho Etsu Taiko is consistent with their innovative approach while respecting the traditions of Japanese drumming. The Irish headliner Paddy Homan is an award-winning vocalist from Cork, Ireland. Dennis Cahill and Teresa Shine are native Chicagoans who are well-known to the Chicago Irish music scene.

The concert will be held at the Midwest Buddhist Temple, 435 West Menomonee in Chicago. There will be two performances, at 12:30 PM and at 4:00 PM. Tickets are $30/$35 at the door on the day of the performance. Tickets are also available at eventbrite.com or they can be purchased in advance at the Midwest Buddhist Temple office.

On January 30, a coalition of Chicago community groups, including JACL Chicago, CAIR-Chicago, Asian Americans Advancing Justice – Chicago, and the National Asian Pacific American Women’s Forum – Chicago, as well as student groups from Northwestern and DePaul University, hosted a screening and discussion around “Of Civil Wrongs and Rights” in honor of Fred Korematsu. Held at the DePaul College of Law, the event also featured reflections from Rabya Kahn of CAIR and Kiyo Yoshimura, a former WWII internee.

Fred Korematsu, along with Gordon Hirabayashi and Min Yasui, challenged the government’s discriminatory enforcement of the curfew and forced removal orders. Their story of principled protest and redemption highlights the fragility of civil liberties in times of crisis. However, their story of resistance would not be complete without also including Mitsuye Endo, who protested the incarceration camps on the grounds of habeus corpus. Her successful Supreme Court case, decided on the same day as Korematsu’s case, led to the closing of the incarceration camps.

The day following Chicago’s Korematsu Day event, Gov. Pat Quinn proclaimed Jan. 30 “Fred Korematsu Day” across Illinois. The JACL was helpful in securing this proclamation from the Governor’s office. Illinois is the fourth state to recognize Korematsu Day, following Hawaii, California, and Utah. It is the first such honorary day named for an Asian American in the United States.
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### Calendar of Events

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<td><strong>Thursday, March 13</strong></td>
<td><strong>HONORING OUR LEGACY</strong>&lt;br&gt;JACL Chicago Inaugural and Kansha Project Fundraiser&lt;br&gt;6 – 9 PM, Prairie Moon Restaurant, 1502 Sherman Road, Evanston</td>
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<td><strong>Now through Thursday, March 20</strong></td>
<td><strong>Hiroshige’s Winter Scenes</strong> <em>(prints and paintings by Utagawa Hiroshige,1797–1858)</em>&lt;br&gt;The Art Institute of Chicago, 111 South Michigan Avenue, Chicago</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Monday, March 31</strong></td>
<td><strong>Kansha Project Application Deadline</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Friday, April 4 – Sunday, April 6</strong></td>
<td><strong>Spring 2014 Midwest District Council Meeting</strong>&lt;br&gt;JACL Chicago office, 5415 North Clark Street, Chicago</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Now through Sunday, April 6</strong></td>
<td><strong>The Year of the Horse</strong> <em>(portrayals of horses in Japanese and Chinese art from the 6th to the 18th centuries)</em>&lt;br&gt;The Art Institute of Chicago, 111 South Michigan Avenue, Chicago</td>
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<td><strong>Sunday, May 18</strong></td>
<td><strong>JACL Chicago Scholarship Luncheon</strong>&lt;br&gt;Maggiano’s Little Italy, Skokie, Evanston</td>
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<td><strong>July 9 -12</strong></td>
<td><strong>JACL National Convention</strong>&lt;br&gt;San Jose, California</td>
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