

November/December 2013

A publication of the  
JACL Chicago Chapter

# JACL *on*

## In this Issue:

- page 1 A Story of Sacrifice
- page 3 American Heroes Opening at the Chicago History Museum
- page 4 The Kansha Project
- page 5 Racist Graffiti Found at Senn High School
- page 6 *The Way I See It . . .*  
The Problem with Government Taking Sides on Religion
- page 7 Thank You to Our Donors and Advertisers
- page 8 Calendar of Events

## A Story of Sacrifice

By Brandon Mita

*"The art of teaching is the art of assisting discovery." — Mark Van Doren*

**O**n Thursday, October 17, 2013, the National Veterans Network (NVN) and the Smithsonian Institution partnered together to provide Chicago-area teachers with a new and innovative way to approach the Japanese American World War II veteran experience.

I took away two important lessons when I attended the Teacher Training Workshop at *American Heroes: Japanese American World War II Nisei Soldiers and the Congressional Gold Medal* exhibit at the Chicago History Museum: (1) project-based learning may be an effective way for children to learn about the Japanese American incarceration and World War II experience; and (2) teachers love free school supplies.

One presenter, Christine Sato-Yamazaki, guided teachers through a primary/secondary curriculum that used the 442nd/100th/MIS experience in project-based learning. Specifically, students are to select one of six character traits (i.e., courage, compassion, perseverance, humility, respect, and citizenship), conduct research on a Japanese American World War II veteran who fit that character trait, compare that veteran's story with another historical American figure, select a contemporary event that reflects the same characteristic, and finally, put together a video to be presented to the class. The second presenter, Noriko Sanefuji, informed the audience of the Smithsonian's website. The website has a number of resources that students can use while conducting



Photo: Brandon Mita

CHRISTINE SATO-YAMAZAKI INTRODUCES TEACHERS TO A PRIMARY/SECONDARY CURRICULUM USING THE 442ND/100TH/MIS EXPERIENCE IN PROJECT-BASED LEARNING AT THE TEACHER TRAINING WORKSHOP HELD BEFORE THE PUBLIC OPENING OF THE AMERICAN HEROES EXHIBIT AT THE CHICAGO HISTORY MUSEUM.

*Continued on page 2*

**2013 Annual Meeting  
Wednesday, Nov. 6th**  
*details 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](http://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: [chicago@jacl.org](mailto:chicago@jacl.org)

Web: [www.jaclchicago.org](http://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 [chicago@jacl.org](mailto:chicago@jacl.org) and let us know you'd like to be added to our electronic mailing list!

### The JACLER is now accepting advertising!

Go to [www.jaclchicago.org](http://www.jaclchicago.org) for details on how to place your ad today.

- Affordable Rates
- Targeted Community Audience
- Support the JACL Chicago Chapter



Follow us on Facebook!

A Story of Sacrifice continued

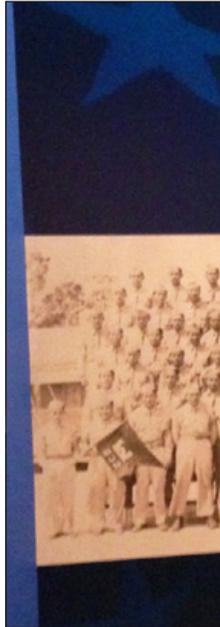
research. The Smithsonian has compiled a magnificent array of Japanese American incarceration and World War II veteran photos.

At the end of the presentation, the presenters held a raffle and gave away a year-long membership pass to the Chicago History Museum, with parking, as well as free school supplies. The audience "ooh'ed" at the sound of free school supplies. The winner was clearly the envy of the other 30+ teachers in the room.

In a moment of questionable judgment, I decided against having free dessert with the teachers, and instead, chose to head towards the Congressional Gold Medal exhibit on the second floor. I didn't get the opportunity to see the Medal before the workshop started because I was at the Chicago JACL booth distributing materials to any teachers that came by the community partners section. When I walked into the room displaying the Congressional Gold Medal, I noticed that the Medal was beautifully displayed inside a glass case. It was surrounded by photos of veterans, medals and commendations, uniforms, and wartime mementos. In that instant, I realized just how important the role of the teacher training workshop is and how necessary it is to have teachers teach the legacy of the 442nd/100th/MIS.

Courage, compassion, perseverance, humility, respect and citizenship. These are clearly great words that describe the 442nd/100th/MIS. However, as I looked around the exhibit, and particularly, the photos of veterans who have passed on, their medals, and their uniforms, I felt that there was a word that was distinctly missing from the list. That word is sacrifice.

In a country that forcibly made them stay in their homes when all other Americans could go out after dark. That took away their homes, their lands, and their businesses. That called them Japs, Nips, and Slant Eyes. That made them live in hastily-constructed tar paper barracks in desolate places. That locked them away and called them traitors. In that environment, these brave men struggled for a country that had turned its back on them. Many of them painted the fields and mountains of distant lands red with their blood so that their fellow Japanese Americans could make it back home to start over and rebuild our communities. That is sacrifice. And that is a value worth teaching the generations of tomorrow. 🇺🇸



Please join us!

2013 **Annual Meeting**

*& potluck dinner*

Wednesday, November 6th, 7-9 pm

JACL Office, 5415 North Clark

rsvp: 773.728.7171

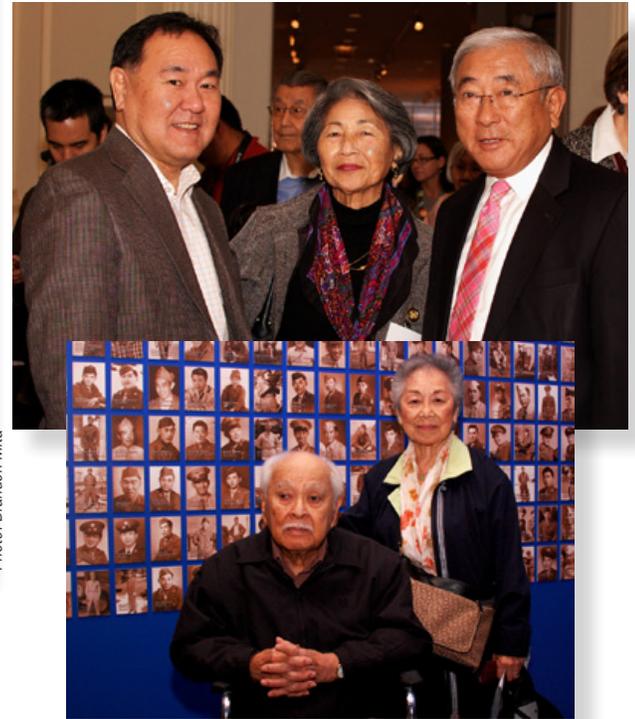
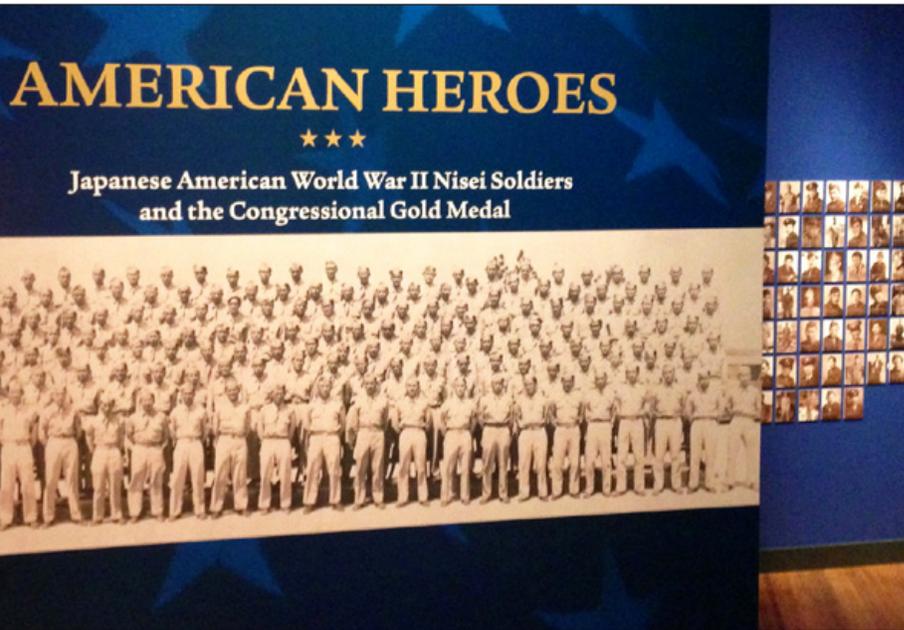


Photo: Brandon Mita

The public opening of the Chicago History Museum's exhibit, *American Heroes: Japanese American World War II Nisei Soldiers and the Congressional Gold Medal* was held on Saturday, October 19th. The day began with an opening ceremony welcome from Chicago History Museum President, Gary T. Johnson, as well as remarks from Col. Robert Hashimoto; Christine Sato-Yamazaki, National Veterans Network Chairperson; and Kenneth Clarke, Pritzker Military Library President and CEO. The presentation and retirement of colors was performed by Chicago Nisei Post 1183 Color Guard. The day's schedule of events included craft activities, a highlight performance by storyteller Alton Takiyama-Chung, and music performed by Tsukasa Taiko. The exhibit is in Chicago through December 8th.



Photos: Robert Brown (unless indicated)

## The Kansha Project

By John Tateishi, former JACL National Director

Reprinted from the *Pacific Citizen*

I've written about this topic before, but it's such a good program that it's worth mentioning again. The Kansha Project, a program funded out of the JACL's Chicago office, is coordinated and supervised by Christine Munteanu, Chicago office associate. The goal of the project is to bring together ten to twelve college-aged JA youth to learn about the history and legacy of Japanese Americans.

To steal from the Chicago office flyer, the Kansha project is a "program that connects Japanese American youth to the continuing legacy of the Japanese American community's incarceration during World War II" and "aims to preserve the Japanese American legacy and connect Japanese American young adults to their ethnic identity and community history by learning about the Japanese American incarceration experience during World War II."

The specifics of the program deal with (again, from the flyer) "personal identity, the role of media and language in shaping the public perception of the incarceration experience, the historical context of the incarceration (racism and nationalism), the personal/interpersonal impact of the incarceration on the Japanese American community, the current state of the

*Japanese American community, and the continued legacy of the Japanese American experience."*

The program includes a Saturday workshop at the Chicago office and is highlighted by a trip to Los Angeles, where they get a tour of the Japanese American National Museum as well as a tour of Little Tokyo to get a sense of the *Nihonmachi* where the nation's largest Japanese American population resides. The Southern California trip ends with the *coup de maitre*, an overnight trip to Manzanar.

The beauty of this program, in addition to being an extraordinary opportunity for the participants, is that it's funded completely from donations. All the costs for travel, meals, hotels — everything is funded by the generosity of the Chicago JACL chapter members.

In last year's program, I joined the group in LA to do a workshop session on the JACL's redress campaign and to drive one of the two rented vans to Manzanar.

I don't know how many of the participants — or even Bill Yoshino or Christine, for that matter — had ever been out to the desert areas of this country. The drive through the town of Mojave, past Edwards Air Force Base, and into the desert is about as desolate an area as you can find anywhere in this country. Deserts don't change over short periods of



2013 KANSHA PROJECT PARTICIPANTS AT MANZANAR INCARCERATION CAMP.  
L TO R: ANNA TAKADA, MARC ODA, LANE MITA, KENJI TRAN, HATSUMI YOSHIDA,  
MIDORI BOWEN, ROBIN KANEMOTO.

time, like from WWII to today, so driving through that desolate area gives you a sense of what it was like for Japanese Americans from the neighborhoods of Los Angeles as they were being shipped to Manzanar.

Manzanar itself is a great place to visit for this kind of program because all the years of effort put in by Sue Embrey and the Manzanar Committee brought enormous dividends. The site has a guard tower in front, making it an unmistakable prison marker for travelers passing by on Highway 395. What used to be the auditorium is now an interpretive center filled with exhibits and information about life at Manzanar during the war.

Last year, we arrived at Manzanar near closing time, but two rangers took the group through the interpretive center and on a tour of the camp site, which was fascinating because they had so much detailed information about the history of the valley and specifics about the various parts of the camp. Their knowledge of the history of Manzanar was invaluable and made the long drive through the desert well worth the effort.

Unfortunately, the government sequestration has had a major impact on the National Park Service, so no rangers will be available to lead a tour for the group at Manzanar this year. But as Bill Yoshino put it, just being out there walking



2013 KANSHA PROJECT PARTICIPANTS POSE WITH MIS AND 442ND VETERANS IN FRONT OF THE GO FOR BROKE MEMORIAL IN LITTLE TOKYO.

around the camp and seeing what it must have been like will give these young people a sense of life at Manzanar.

That's true. For the participants of the Kansha Project, it's a chance to experience the kind of place where their grandparents spent three years of their lives as victims of institutional racism at its extreme. It's an exceptional opportunity for them to be able to visit such a place because really, how many Japanese

Americans not among the incarcerated have ever been to any of the camps?

Learning about the community's history through books is one thing, but to walk through that history and touch it is quite another. What makes the Kansha Project so unique is that its participants experience that history, and in this sense, how better to truly comprehend and appreciate the legacy of the JA community? 🇺🇸



2012 KANSHA PROJECT PARTICIPANTS STOP DURING A LITTLE TOKYO TOUR LED BY CRAIG ISHII AND ALAN NISHIO.

## Support the Kansha Project!

A Special Kansha Project and JACL Inaugural Event will be held

**Thursday, March 13th, 2014**

Mark your calendar and stay tuned for more details coming soon.

To make donations to the Kansha Project, send your check made payable to:

JACL Chicago/Kansha Project  
5415 North Clark Street  
Chicago, Illinois 60640

For more information call 773.728.7171 or go to [www.jaclchicago.org](http://www.jaclchicago.org)

## Racist Graffiti Found at Senn High School

A homemade graffiti label declaring "Chinky Killa" was discovered pasted to a post in front of Senn High School at 5900 North Glenwood Avenue in Chicago on September 23, 2013. In response, the JACL quickly contacted the school principal, Susan Lofton. In an email to Lofton, JACL Midwest Director, Bill Yoshino said, "This is clearly a racist depiction that is threatening to your Asian American students."

Lofton replied that they had their security personnel try to locate the label but could not find it. The following morning, Yoshino went to the high school and found the

label had not been removed. He went into the school and met with Lofton and Vice Principal Carter Carey. Lofton indicated their concern about the label and that the school had not experienced this type of incident.

Yoshino accompanied Carey to where the label had been posted and after taking a photo, Carey removed the label. A request was made for the school to remain vigilant in the near future for similar postings in and around the school. 🇺🇸



A PICTURE OF THE GRAFFITI LABEL FOUND OUTSIDE SENN HIGH SCHOOL IN CHICAGO'S EDGEWATER NEIGHBORHOOD.

# The Way I See It . . . **The Problem with Government Taking Sides on Religion**

By Lary Schectman

**B**efore going further I would like to remind the readers that the JACL long ago determined that several violations of the U.S. Constitution occurred during the WWII Concentration Camp years, including violations “with respect to the practice of Eastern religious beliefs” wherein “the practice of the Shinto religion was prohibited in the camps, Christianity was officially encouraged by camp administrators... Buddhism was severely restricted by the ban on written materials in Japanese and the placement of Buddhist clergy in separate Department of Justice camps.”

Let’s be clear, the JACL National Council has confirmed time and time again that JACL supports the word and intent of the Bill of Rights that “Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof...” As a civil rights advocacy and education organization, we must speak out whenever we see others facing a state-authorized religious agenda.

The U.S. Supreme Court will hear a case that challenges clergy-led sectarian prayers before meetings of the town board in Greece, N.Y. This will be the first time the Supreme Court has “heard” on this issue in 30 years, and if the Justices rule the wrong way, it could set a terrible example nationwide precedent.

For years, local officials in Greece N.Y. began their government meetings with prayers that were almost always Christian. This was an affront to many residents and a blatant violation of the separation of church and state. Local citizens felt like second-class citizens in their own community, but couldn’t get the city government to listen. So, they turned to Americans United For Separation of Church and state.

Since then, the battle lines have been drawn. On one side is Americans United (AU), representing the plaintiffs. Opposing is the Alliance Defending Freedom (ADF), a wealthy Religious Right legal group founded by TV and radio preachers. AU lost the first round but won on appeal, leading the ADF to appeal to the U.S. Supreme Court.

It is shocking to learn what had been going on in Greece for so many years. The governmental prayers were almost always Christian. In fact, during one 9-year period, every single one of the town board’s prayer-givers was Christian. These were supposedly “voluntary” prayers but these prayers were offered as part of the official meetings. Board members could have had prayers before the meetings got under way, but they insisted on making these a public pronouncement of faith.

The town board was sending a message: We have a favorite religion. It’s this one. If it’s not yours, too bad!

Government must represent all of its citizens: All residents are supposed to be equal in the eyes of the government. When the government elevates one faith over others by associating itself closely with that religion, it sends the message that some citizens are favored insiders while others are second-class citizens.

If confirmed, communities across the country could decide to adopt their favorite religion, as well. It would be a tone-deaf response to a nation that is more diverse than ever in matters of religion. This could turn out to be one of the most important church-state disputes the U.S. Supreme Court has heard in years. For more information please visit the American United website at [www.au.org](http://www.au.org). 🗣️

### **Have something you’d like to say?**

Submit your comments via email to [chicago@jacl.org](mailto:chicago@jacl.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.*

## **2014 Day of Remembrance**

**Sunday,  
February 16, 2014**

**Chicago History Museum  
1601 North Clark Street**

*(Details to follow)*

## **Asian American Coalition of Chicago 31st Lunar New Year Dinner**

**“Beyond the Bamboo Ceiling”**

**February 22, 2014**

**Hyatt Regency O’Hare**

**Hosted by the Japanese American Community**

**Thank You to Our Donors and Advertisers!**

**Kansha Project**

James and Coralie Kozu  
*(in memory of M. Nakagawa)*

**General**

Matsue Honda  
*(in memory of T. Iwata)*

**Advertise in the JACLER Today!**

The JACLER reaches the entire membership of the Chicago Chapter and many Chapter friends at very reasonable advertising rates. It's a great value!

Your ad also helps offset some of the raising costs of the newsletter.

Go to [jaclchicago.org](http://jaclchicago.org) or call 773.728.7171 for details on how to place your ad today.

HOME & AUTO · BUSINESS · HEALTH · LIFE



**THE ROBERT T. MITA AGENCY**

ROBERT T. MITA  
AGENT

5432 MAIN STREET SKOKIE, IL 60077  
P 847.966.0991 F 847.966.0982  
C 847.899.7065  
E robertmita@gmail.com

**America's Best Dental Solutions**

Affordable and Trusted Dental Care for Children and Adults

**Nikki Fukushima DDS**

(773) 267-7645

[americasbestdentalsolutions.com](http://americasbestdentalsolutions.com)

2941 W Addison Street Chicago, IL 60618

Located in the Addison Mall - Free parking available

**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 \_\_\_\_\_

<b>Membership</b>	<b>Fee</b>
<input type="checkbox"/> Individual . . . . .	\$75.00
<input type="checkbox"/> Couple/Family . . . . .	\$125.00
<input type="checkbox"/> Student/Youth . . . . .	\$35.00
<input type="checkbox"/> 1000 Club . . . . .	\$100.00
<input type="checkbox"/> Century Club . . . . .	\$175.00
<input type="checkbox"/> 1000/Century Spouse . . . . .	\$50.00
<input type="checkbox"/> 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: [chicago@jacl.org](mailto:chicago@jacl.org)  
w: [jaclchicago.org](http://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

<b>Saturday, November 2</b>	JACL National Board Meeting JACL Headquarters, San Francisco, CA
<b>Wednesday, November 6</b>	JACL Chicago Annual Meeting JACL Chicago Office
<b>Saturday, November 9</b>	JASC Holiday Delight 10 am – 4 pm, JASC, 4427 N. Clark St.
<b>Wednesday, December 11</b>	JACL Chicago Board Meeting JACL Chicago Office
<b>December 23 – January 2</b>	MDC Office Closed
<b>Wednesday, January 8</b>	JACL Chicago Board Meeting JACL Chicago Office