"They moved the horses out, and moved us in..." I heard Sam repeat this during numerous presentations he made about his personal incarceration experience. Sam's stark assessment was that the horses were worth more than the civil rights protection of Japanese Americans.

I can't recall how many times I asked Sam to speak at schools and other public forums. However, I do recall that he rarely turned down this type of opportunity. He knew the importance of getting our story out into the public and he saw this as a personal obligation.

In addition to these presentations, I often asked Sam to assist with troubling incidents of defamation where we interceded to talk to media executives or the head of institutions that displayed inappropriate material. Sam was one of those who traveled to Pekin, Illinois in the 1970s to change the name of the school mascot name from "Chinks" to something more appropriate.

But one of the prouder moments was in 2009, when Sam and I testified before a House committee in Springfield to ask that they support a resolution requesting the U.S. Postal Service to commemorate the heroism of the 442nd and MIS with the issuance of a postage stamp. Sam spoke about the sacrifices of his 442nd buddies and not about his own exploits. He talked about the legacy of his comrades and why they served, fought, and died. Sam amply supplied what little persuasion the committee needed to approve the resolution.
During the war, Sam served in the same company as Senator Daniel Inouye and took part in the battle when Inouye lost his arm in Italy. Sam remembered when Inouye was carried off the battlefield, and swore he heard Inouye say there was a bottle in his footlocker and the guys should help themselves to it. Sam used to chuckle when he told that story, saying he didn’t know whether that recollection was just his imagination. But, that was typical of Sam, who always put those he knew in the best light possible.

There were so many dimensions to Sam… educator, veteran, activist. We appreciate that he was a strong supporter of JACL. He attended our events and took part in our issues. We appreciate his contributions to the Redress Campaign during the 1980s. We will miss his voice and his willingness to always stand up when the occasion required it. 🙏

2016 JACL Chicago Scholarship Program

JACL Chicago awards scholarships to help qualified students pursue their educational goals. The program awards are funded by generous donations from community sponsors.

Scholarships are available to graduating high school seniors entering as freshman to a school of higher learning, continuing undergraduate students, and graduate students.

Key Dates

November 2015
Applications will be available for download from the JACL Chicago website (http://www.jaclchicago.org) or by calling the Chicago JACL office at 773/728-7171.

March 1, 2016
Applications Due.

April 2016
Scholarship applicants will be notified of the results.

May 22, 2016
Annual Scholarship Luncheon.

VISIT www.jaclchicago.org FOR MORE INFORMATION.
Star Wars: The Twitter Force Awakens

By Michael Oshita, JACL Chicago Board Member

We are just a few short weeks away. December 18th, 2015. Moviegoers of all ages will pack the theaters eagerly awaiting those scrolling yellow words rising upwards across the screen. Of course, I’m talking about Star Wars: The Force Awakens.

The film, which is a continuation of Episode 6: Return of the Jedi, stars Daisy Ridley, John Boyega, and Oscar Isaac along with some familiar faces from the original trilogy. Ridley is white, Boyega is black, and Isaac has Guatemalan and Cuban ancestry.

Finally, we find out what happens to the Rebel Alliance following the explosion of the Imperial Army’s partially rebuilt Death Star (I know I’m a nerd, I can’t help it). And while a lot of the details surrounding the plot have been withheld for good reason, one topic that has arisen since the release of the final trailer on October 19th is the apparent lack of white actors. The hashtag #BoycottStarWarsVII was trending as of Monday night with supports claiming, “It is anti-white propaganda promoting whitegenocide,” according to a Twitter account called “End Cultural Marxism.”

Let me start off by saying this is the problem with social media nowadays. Anybody can post anything they want at any time, and can remain anonymous. I find a move like this cowardly in fact.

Fans of the franchise (like me), find the claims of the movie being “anti-white” ironic, especially considering the first Star Wars movies had a primarily white cast. Of course, we know James Earl Jones was the voice of Darth Vader, but it wasn’t until The Empire Strikes Back that we saw an African American actor being portrayed onscreen (Billy Dee Williams as Lando Calrissian). And in Episodes I-III, George Lucas made a greater attempt towards racially diverse by casting Samuel L. Jackson and Jimmy Smits in large roles.

The whole thing in my mind is an attempt to gain traction for an issue that isn’t there; a way to spread disbelief and anger within the Internet community. At a time where we should be celebrating the beginning of another trilogy 32 years in the making, we instead have to deal with unsubstantiated racial criticism. I know I for one am looking forward to watching this unbridled enthusiasm because I will be rejoicing this achievement for what it is: a movie, whose purpose is to keep me entertained for a few hours and make me want more. It’s as simple as that. 😊
In September, a group of 50 mostly Japanese Americans from Chicago headed to Los Angeles to experience JACL Chicago’s Kansha, Too! program. The itinerary included a reception at the Japanese American National Museum, where JANM CEO Greg Kimura welcomed participants; tours of the historic Little Tokyo neighborhood; workshops exploring different aspects of the incarceration experience; and a day trip to Manzanar guided by the knowledgable NPS Park Ranger Rose Masters. The program sparked ideas, connections, and conversations that will continue beyond the program. Here are a few of our participants’ reflections on their experience.

THE LOST GENERATIONS
By Roy Yamamoto

Our Japanese-American parents and grandparents can probably be considered the lost generations, as they lost their livelihood during World War II when they were rounded up and put into detention camps.

It was as if they were put in jail without due cause, as the camps were in the desert where they could not escape, where they were enclosed by barbed wire, and where they were watched by armed sentries in guard towers. They did not do anything illegal - their only crime was looking like the enemy.

I often wondered why some of our elders seemed to take it all in stride, seldom complaining or being bitter, and being the ‘silent majority’. All I could figure is, that it can be traced to how the people in Japan consider conformity to be the norm. One doesn’t want to stand out and be a rebel.

So our grandparents, the Issei, trusted that the US government was doing what it had to do. They were embarrassed that their home country attacked the US. They suffered the consequences of having Japanese ancestry by relinquishing all their belongings, valuable, and savings, giving up their hard earned jobs, and being looked down upon and losing all their friends, neighbors, and customers. After the camps, most would never go back to the west coast.

Our parents, the Nisei, similarly had to take things in stride. Since they lost the chance to get degrees in higher education, they had to take menial jobs, starting all over and working hard to prove they were loyal citizens. At the same time, they also had to put on a good face to their children and raise us to be loyal Americans.

They could not have us being bitter at the country we were being raised in. They had a faith that we could do at least as well as our grandparents did and maybe get into college, get a better education and get good jobs, and go further as they had tried to do. They wanted us to attain the American Dream.

Being a Sansei or third generation, some of us have been shielded from knowing what they endured in their lifetime. Our parents never talked much of what they went through. As a result, we do not fully comprehend what they sacrificed or the discrimination they faced as a result of what is now called racial profiling.

One cannot imagine what it was like, unless it is personal. So, when the Kansha, Too! tour to Manzanar, California was
Sincere gratitude to the JACL Chicago for extending the opportunity for some of us from Indiana (Hoosier JACL) to experience Kansha, Too!. It was fun and meaningful to experience Kansha, Too! with a group of Japanese Americans.

The walking tour of Little Tokyo provided deeper insight into its history and importance to Japanese Americans. I gained a deeper appreciation for the crucial role the Little Tokyo community and institutions such as JANM play in preserving and enriching our cultural heritage.

The welcome reception and workshop presentations helped prepare us for our visit to Manzanar. Each of us who lived during WWII owns very personal and unique stories and experiences of that period, and our perceptions of Manzanar were seen through the lens of individual recollections and emotions as well as what we’ve heard and read. As we walked the dusty grounds, ate in the hot mess hall, and visited bleak barracks, I was most struck by the constancy of discomfort, indignities, and uncertainties faced by those who lived here during the war. Although there was little relief, little control, and little hope in the harsh, desolate setting, I witnessed evidence of the tenacity and strength of human spirit in creating beauty (like gardens) and in making the best of a terrible situation.

Our final stop at Manzanar was the cemetery. I was reminded that much was lost here, including lives. Also lost were precious time, freedoms and civil rights, property, relationships, and dreams. We owe thanks to those who came before us, left an admirable legacy, and endured.
You, Me, and the Lessons of Kansha
By Karen Kanemoto

A Chinese American friend from Minnesota once told me that when she first arrived in Chicago, she looked around and thought, “Wow! So many Asians!” Her sister, who lived in Oakland, came to visit a few months later and exclaimed, “Wow! Where are all the Asians?”

So where are all the Japanese American Chicagoans? Here in the Midwest, we are a stealth ethnic group; we leave very little physical evidence of our presence. Japanese Americans typically have to make an effort to interact with other Japanese Americans. Thus, it was mildly discombobulating to spend a few days in Little Tokyo, Los Angeles, this September to participate in the JACL Chicago Kansha, Too! program, a full-immersion overview of Japanese American history, community, and activism. Where, one mused, are all the non-Asians?

A comparison of LA and Chicago may be one of apples and oranges, but that’s what we do. A walking tour of Little Tokyo revealed both the power of place and the power of a concentrated community. Here’s a building erected by a Japanese American church; there’s a residence rehabbed by a Japanese American community service organization. Underfoot, embedded in concrete, is a timeline tracing the history of the neighborhood. One wonders where in Chicago might Japanese American real estate acquisition, construction, and public pedagogy occur on a comparable scale. Given our numbers, demographics, and history, would we be able to muster the unity of vision — not to mention the cash — required to undertake a major project of any magnitude?

Nevertheless, it’s good to be reminded every so often what unity of vision can achieve. Workshops on camp life and Japanese American identity explored what we share and what should bring us together. A fascinating workshop on the Redress movement was an in-the-trenches case history demonstrating how dogged work and steady focus brought a historically significant goal into reality.

Then there was Manzanar. You think about the Isseis and Niseis in your life — moms, dads, grandmas, and grandpas — at home in Chicago, mowing the lawn, going to church. Then you envision their younger selves among the barracks and mess halls of the anti-Japantowns that were Manzanar and the other WRA camps. Was it resignation or resolve that kept them going? Was it resignation or resolve that compelled them to furnish their meager living quarters, recalibrate their perceptions of normalcy, and go on to build parks and monuments in the wilderness? Can you really chalk it all up to “shikata ga nai”?

Channeling kansha — gratitude — into action is not easy. We have much to think about and much to be thankful for. Here’s the easy part: expressing appreciation for the organizational work of Christine, Bill, and the Kansha, Too! committee; the contributions of our LA hosts and facilitators; and the encyclopedic knowledge and generous spirit of Ranger Rose Masters of Manzanar. The hard part will be figuring out how we, as individuals and a community, can draw from our shared experiences and make our presence in Chicago and the nation known in a lasting way.

Photos: George Hanasono

LEFT: KANSHA, TOO! PARTICIPANTS EXPLORE LITTLE TOKYO. BELOW: PARTICIPANTS ENJOY A BUFFET AT THE KANSHA, TOO! OPENING RECEPTION.
A Reflection of Kansha, Too!
By Gary Yamagiwa

Way back in the early ’80s, I really had little knowledge of redress or reparations for the WWII incarceration of Japanese Americans. I was just trying to figure out the teenage mind as a teacher at Senn High School. But I was fortunate to become good friends with Alice Esaki, who began to teach me about the redress movement and one day told me, “You’ve got to go to Northeastern and listen to the hearings. This is a great opportunity! Don’t miss it.” Well, I did what I was told and stood in the back of the hearing room and listened and learned. As I walked away, my head was spinning and I was exhausted. But I was pretty sure of one thing, “Nothing will become of this all…”

On the way to Kansha, Too!, I was excited. As a parent of Kansha Project participants, I had heard fabulous stories about the entire experience. It turned out to be all that and more.

After an informative walking tour of Little Tokyo led by six all-star guides, we settled in to hear the words of June Berk and Min Tonai about their relocation experiences. It was so very real, listening to their stories about camp life. It was inspiring to be with people who lived the incarceration experience and took the time to share themselves with others. And it took me back some thirty years and shook loose some long forgotten memories.

The fourth presentation of the day was John Tateishi’s journey through JACL’s Redress Campaign. He presented a detailed, personal account of the strategies and actions of many of the key players as they worked their way through the labyrinths of governmental bureaucracy. I was sitting on the edge of my seat, mesmerized by the description of the process as it unfolded. Although I already knew the ending, John’s story was as exciting as any I’d ever heard. I soon realized that in my youth, I begrudgingly believed that the government that imprisoned JAs had tried to right a wrong. Through John’s story, I learned that the apology was really due to a dedicated group of people who would not take “No” as an answer. It made me grateful for the efforts of all those people that worked on the Redress Campaign.

The next day we left for Manzanar. I had been reminded of much already and as our trip transitioned from the mind to the spirit, this pilgrimage gave me opportunity for personal reflection. As I walked the grounds, I realized that I could be walking the same path that my father walked in 1942. I looked out towards Mt Williamson like many others did in ages past. I discovered the names of persons I knew in the camp rolls. It had been a great trip! And I became more appreciative of all who lived in the camps and left the camps and then showed us how to live life with dignity and grace.
The Midwest District Council (MDC) Fall Meeting was hosted by the Cincinnati Chapter on October 16 and 17. Representatives from the Chicago, Houston, Detroit, Cincinnati, Dayton, Wisconsin, St. Louis, and Omaha chapters were present.

During Saturday’s business session, National JACL staff members Bill Yoshino and Christine Munteanu and District Governor Colleen Morimoto provided updates on national programs including the E.O. 9066 Smithsonian Exhibit, civic engagement initiatives, and the Kakehashi Program. Delegates also discussed the recently announced transition of the Pacific Citizen to a digital format.

The new District Council Board was elected, including Colleen Morimoto as Governor, Betsy Sato as First Vice Governor, Steve Mitori as Second Vice Governor, Stephen Rutherford as Secretary, Kenji Kuramitsu as District Youth Representative, and Mary Coomes as District Youth Chair.

The next MDC meeting will be held in spring of 2016.

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Over the past four years, JACL Chicago has provided the unique opportunity for college-aged Japanese Americans to visit the Japanese American incarceration camp called Manzanar, spend a day in Little Tokyo, and visit the Japanese American National Museum. I have had the pleasure of going on this journey called the Kansha Project in 2013, and I can say that it definitely was a life-changing experience. My mind was filled with many ideas and emotions like gratitude, sorrow, empathy, and thankfulness. Gratitude that reflects my feelings at being able to attend this program; sorrow and empathy for the hardships that Japanese American families had to endure; thankfulness for the members of the Chicago Japanese American community, who had the foresight to help create this program.

I was able to personally connect to this whole experience because my great grandparents and grandparents on both sides of my family were incarcerated in Heart Mountain and Manzanar respectively. It was a bit surreal to witness the site where thousands of Japanese Americans persevered and endured through many hardships. As I stood on the desert sand, I couldn’t wait to speak to my grandmother more in-depth about her personal experience in the camp. Through this unique program, I had the opportunity to learn a lot about my own personal background and Japanese American Identity.

This brings me to the pressing issue. I believe it is the responsibility of those who attended the Kansha Project to grab the reins and continue this worthwhile project, to make sure the Kansha Project is a sustainable program that allows the next generation of young Nikkei to experience the same, if not a better, opportunity than we were given. In essence, we want to make sure this precious legacy continues to be passed on, and not forgotten. Through the Kansha Alumni Leadership Board project, Kansha Project alumni will have the chance to take leadership and ownership of the Kansha Project. Our goal is to try and bring in new alumnus to bring new perspectives to the project!

Through the late summer and early fall, I have worked closely with Becky Ozaki, JACL Chicago Youth Co-chair, and Christine Munteanu to assemble the first Alumni Leadership Board. The 14 members of the Board will be spread into different committees to oversee and implement various aspects that will maintain the Kansha Project for 2016. This is a pilot year for the board, but we have a lot of potential and a lot of passionate and talented young people who will drive this program. We have already met twice over the summer, and the committee members are set, and we are beginning our preparations for the 2016 program. I am really excited for what the future will hold for the Kansha Project.

Kansha Project applications will be available in early 2016.
2016 Japanese American Citizens League (JACL) Chicago Chapter

SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM GUIDELINES

GENERAL INFORMATION
The Japanese American Citizens League (JACL) is a national civil rights and education organization founded in 1929 and with chapters across the country. Since its founding, JACL has taken an active role in dismantling discriminatory barriers for all Asian Pacific Americans.

The Chicago Chapter of JACL administers a scholarship program to help qualified students pursue their educational goals. The program awards several scholarships each year that are funded by generous donations from community sponsors. The scholarships provide financial assistance to promising students who have demonstrated academic excellence and school/community service with a special emphasis on involvement with JACL, social justice, and service within the Japanese American community.

SCHOLARSHIP CATEGORIES
Scholarships are available to graduating high school seniors entering as freshman to a school of higher learning, continuing undergraduate students, and graduate students.

- Entering freshman should complete the FRESHMAN application. All other applicants should complete the GENERAL application form.
- JACL Chicago reserves the right not to make awards in every category depending upon the type and qualifications of the applicant pool.

ELIGIBILITY – NEW REQUIREMENTS
Scholarship applicants must meet all of the following eligibility requirements.

1. Applicant must be a JACL member at either an Individual or Student/Youth Level. (Parent membership will not meet this requirement.) If the applicant is not a member, he/she must join JACL at the time of application – for information, visit jaclchicago.org or call the JACL Chicago office at (773) 728-7171.

2. Applicant must be a full-time student at a college, university, trade school, business school, or other institution of higher learning within the United States in the fall of 2016. Students deferring enrollment will not qualify for the 2016 scholarship program.

3. A high school senior applicant must be a resident of the State of Illinois for at least one year prior to graduation or graduate from an accredited Illinois high school. Undergraduate and graduate students must be Illinois state residents although attendance at schools outside of Illinois is permissible.

4. Applicant may apply under only one scholarship category (Freshman or General) during the same year.

5. Applicants are not limited as to the number of times they may apply for a scholarship. Awards to the same individual, however, are subject to the limitation on the number and timing of awards as outlined in eligibility requirement #6.

6. NEW: Recipients of JACL Chicago scholarship awards are limited to two awards total and in non-consecutive years. Undergraduate and graduate applicants may not use high school activities in their applications. The intent of these requirements is for repeat awardees to demonstrate a history of community involvement.

7. Scholarship recipients must attend the annual scholarship luncheon on May 22, 2016, to receive their awards. Requests for exceptions to attendance must be submitted in writing to the Scholarship Committee at least three weeks in advance of the luncheon and approved by the Scholarship Committee.

8. Note: JACL also administers a National Scholarship Program in addition to the Chicago scholarship program. Each program has its own application. The Chicago application is available at www.jaclchicago.org, and the national program application is available at www.jacl.org. Students may apply for both local and national scholarships in the same year.

APPLICATION MATERIALS

1. Applications will be available at www.jaclchicago.org by the end of November 2015 or from the JACL Chicago Office.

2. The following is a condensed list of supporting documents required to complete a JACL Chicago Scholarship Application: JACL Application, JACL involvement, Personal Statement, Two Letters of Recommendation, Official school transcript(s), SAT and/or ACT test score verification (applicable to graduating high school seniors), Extracurricular activities, Work experience and Community involvement.

3. Two (2) letters of recommendation must be submitted with the application. One letter must be from a teacher, counselor or school administrator. The other could be from the same or employer or community leader. Recommendations must be in sealed envelopes with the seal signed over by the writer.

4. Applications and all supporting materials – official transcript, SAT and/or ACT documentation, and letters of recommendation must be complete in one package to be considered for an award. Materials may not be submitted separately.

- Your name should appear at the top right of each page and all pages should be numbered
- Do NOT staple the application or materials – use a paper-clip or binder clip
- All responses must be typed or printed legibly – email addresses should be readable

5. If the SAT/ACT scores are not contained in the official transcript, other official documentation of test scores must be submitted with the application. (Freshman applicants only.)

6. Application and supporting materials must be received by or postmarked no later than Tuesday, March 1, 2016.

JACL Chicago Scholarship Committee
5415 North Clark Street
Chicago, IL 60640-1294

Decision of the Scholarship Committee is final.

*************************************************************************

KEY DATES
November 2015 – Applications will be available for download from the JACL Chicago web site (http://www.jaclchicago.org) or by calling the Chicago JACL office at 773/728-7171.

March 1, 2016 – Applications must be received or postmarked by this date for scholarship consideration. Applications must be complete for award consideration.

April 2016 – Scholarship applicants will be notified of the results of the Scholarship Committee’s evaluation.

May 22, 2016 – Annual Scholarship Luncheon. Recipients must be present to receive awards unless an exception is approved by the Scholarship Committee.
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Important!!!
Make sure you choose “Japanese American Citizens League Chicago, IL." There are other JACL chapters listed.

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SAVE-THE-DATE  
2016 Day of Remembrance  
Sunday, February 21, 2016  
2:00 – 4:00 p.m.  
Chicago History Museum  
1601 N. Clark Street, Chicago

Free and open to all.

Asian American Coalition of Chicago (AACC)  
Annual Lunar New Year Celebration  
Saturday, February 6, 2016  
5:30 pm – 9:00 pm  
HYATT REGENCY CHICAGO  
151 East Wacker Drive, Chicago, IL

Membership Fee

□ Individual $75.00  
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Symposium on
“U.S.–Japan Relations: 70 Years and Beyond”
Saturday, Nov. 21 2015
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The U.S. and Japan. Where is this partnership heading? What role do Japanese Americans play in developing the relationship? Register at ChicagoNikkeiForum.org and attend to find out.

Admission is free with complimentary continental breakfast and lunch.

For more information or to register, go to ChicagoNikkeiForum.org

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**Calendar of Events**

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<th>Date</th>
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<td>Sunday, November 1</td>
<td>Kansha Too! Reunion</td>
<td>Calo’s Ristorante, 5343 N. Clark St., Chicago</td>
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<tr>
<td>Saturday, November 14</td>
<td>JASC’s Holiday Delight</td>
<td>4427 N. Clark St., Chicago</td>
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<tr>
<td>Wednesday, November 18</td>
<td>JACL Chicago Annual Meeting</td>
<td>Midwest Buddhist Temple, 435 W. Menomonee St., Chicago</td>
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<tr>
<td>Saturday, November 21</td>
<td>U.S.-Japan Symposium: 70 Years and Beyond</td>
<td>Register at ChicagoNikkeiForum.org, Harris Hall, Northwestern University, Evanston</td>
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<tr>
<td>Wednesday, December 9</td>
<td>JACL Chicago Board Meeting</td>
<td>JACL Chicago Office, 5415 N. Clark Street, Chicago</td>
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<td>December 24–January 1, 2016</td>
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<td>Wednesday, January 13</td>
<td>JACL Chicago Board Meeting</td>
<td>JACL Chicago Office, 5415 N. Clark Street, Chicago</td>
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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.