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JACL

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Chicago Nikkei Picnic

Saturday, August 4
11am - 6pm
Bunker Hill Forest Preserve
Grove 7

Register for the 2018 Chapter Golf Outing

Thursday, July 26
See page 6 for details

2018 Kansha Project

By Josh Fidler, Kansha ALB Member

This past June, I was fortunate enough to facilitate the 2018 Kansha Project, where we brought 12 college-age Japanese Americans from the Chicagoland area to Little Tokyo in Los Angeles, CA and then to Manzanar National Historic Site. The trip entailed an exploration of Japanese American history, tours of museums, a service

project at Manzanar, and much more. The program centered around the history of Japanese Americans pre-, during, and post-WWII. This analysis of history included an examination of community as well as identity. The program was revelatory for many of the participants, who returned to Chicago to present their projects at the



Photo: Katherine Nagasawa
THE 2018 KANSHA PARTICIPANTS, FACILITATORS, AND PARK RANGER VISIT THE CEMETERY AT MANZANAR NATIONAL HISTORIC SITE.

Kansha Project Culmination with a renewed vigor to become active members of the local Japanese American community.

This year's Kansha Project engaged participants from the Midwest and greater Chicagoland area. The participants included: Lauren Cannon, Sara Pyne, Keiko McCullough, Colin Smith, Mary Kojima, Sam Fidler, Seesha Takagishi, Casey

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.

Article submission deadline for our next issue is 8/15/18.

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

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2018 Kansha Project continued

Nakawatase, Samuel Dunn, Britney Wlettes, Katherine Nagasawa, and Marilyn Garces. This was the second year that the Kansha Program was facilitated by program alumni. The facilitators were Lisa Doi, Breanna Wlettes, and myself, Josh Fidler.

The 2018 Kansha Project started off with hosting a day-long orientation at the JACL office. The day included history and timeline mapping, special guests Anna Takada and Mari Yamagiwa, as well as workshops designed by the facilitators. Orientation concluded with a meet and mingle dinner with Kansha ALB members and JACL Chicago board members.

The Kansha Project itinerary has been developed over the years into a well-oiled machine and has remained relatively similar to past years. This year the Kansha Project met with Shane Sato and Robert Horsting, who discussed their book, *Go For Broke Spirit*. The participants were able to speak with Japanese American veterans about their experiences during WWII. The group was then given a political tour of Little Tokyo by Kathy Masaoka and Steve Nagano of the Little Tokyo Historical Society. The group was privileged to be given a tour of the Japanese American National Museum (JANM) by a *Nisei* and former incarceree, who shared insights from his research and personal



KANSHA PROJECT PARTICIPANTS MEET WITH LA-BASED JAPANESE AMERICAN ARTISTS AND ACTIVISTS.

knowledge. The first day in LA ended with a return to JANM and an exploration of the *hapa.me* exhibit which was celebrating its 15th anniversary.

Our second day began with a panel of young Japanese American artists and activists from the LA community, including Kurt Ikeda, Daryn Wakasa, Tani Ikeda, and Traci Ishigo. The panelists each presented their work to the group. The participants were then given the opportunity to have an open dialogue with the panelists. The heartfelt discussions that followed left all inspired. Following the panel, the group embarked on their journey to Manzanar National Historic Site where participants were given the records of family members who were incarcerated during WWII. The participants were then led on a tour of the grounds of Manzanar. Our tour guide, Park Ranger Rose Masters, identified the barracks of some participants' family members. Being at Manzanar gave the participants a new-found perspective of the lived experiences of Japanese Americans in the camps.



KANSHA PROJECT PARTICIPANTS PREPARE FOR THEIR SERVICE PROJECT AT MANZANAR NATIONAL HISTORIC SITE.

Photo: Josh Fidler

We returned to Manzanar early in the morning on Saturday to begin our service project. The group spent hours in the sun and dust weeding, hoeing, and raking the hundred-year-old apple and pear orchards. Afterward, the group was given time to explore the interpretive center and camp grounds. We then loaded back on to the bus and headed back to Little Tokyo.

Sunday, our final day in Los Angeles involved a workshop with Stephanie Nitahara, in which participants created visual journey maps that documented their life experiences with the Japanese American community and their process through Kansha. Participants were given structured time to develop their culmination projects and ideas for further contributions to the Japanese American community. The group wrapped up their time in Little Tokyo by souvenir and *omiyage* shopping before saying goodbye.

The Kansha Project Culmination took place on Saturday, June 23rd at Lakeside Church of Chicago in Skokie. Most participants presented their visual projects gallery-style that gave the attendees an opportunity to ask questions and engage with the projects. Three of the participants also presented live performances. The creative projects included poetry, songs, dance, a community cookbook, screenplays, and much more. The projects reflected the impactful experience the Kansha Project had on the participants.

This year's Kansha Project was supported in part by a grant from the U.S. Department of the Interior, National Park Service, Japanese American Confinement Sites Grant Program, as well as many generous community donors. We greatly appreciate all of your support and hope to see you next year! 🎉



Photo: Bryan Hara

KANSHA PROJECT PARTICIPANTS AND ALUMNI LEADERSHIP BOARD MEMBERS AT THE
KANSHA CULMINATION.



Photos: Amy Chow

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Each year, Kansha Project participants are asked to create a project of their choosing that expresses their reflections and personal connection to the Japanese American legacy. The following three projects were created by participants from the 2018 Kansha Project.

Places and Identity Formation

By Katherine Nagasawa, 2018 Kansha Project Participant

My project asks Chicago Japanese Americans to identify places in the city that were formative in shaping their sense of Japanese American (JA) community and identity, as well as nominate JA individuals they believe should be commemorated with a monument. 



KANSHA PROJECT CULMINATION ATTENDEES INTERACT WITH KATHERINE'S PROJECT.



Photo courtesy of Katherine Nagasawa

ABOVE: KATHERINE POSES WITH HER PROJECT THAT INVITES ATTENDEES TO RESPOND AND ENGAGE.

LEFT: ATTENDEES WROTE DOWN PLACES AND PEOPLE WHO HAVE HELPED SHAPE THEIR SENSE OF JAPANESE AMERICAN IDENTITY AND ATTACHED IT TO THE LARGE MAP OF CHICAGO.

hyphen

By Colin Smith, 2018 Kansha Project Participant

By the end of the first day, which was in Little Tokyo, I started thinking more about the issues of being a “hyphenated-American.” Just meeting other Japanese Americans during the trip built onto my own understanding of my own identity as both a Japanese American, as a second-generation immigrant, and a multiracial person.

I wrote many takeaways during our group discussions and debriefings, especially ones that spoke to the issues of being multiracial — being “hapa” or “hafu” — and having split identities, split homes, and split communities.

As a writer and a musician, I decided to combine my own interpretation of the trip by writing music and lyrics. The medium gives the audience something direct to respond to, e.g. sharing a message and themes via lyrics, and also something more indirect, e.g. the mood and tone that music gives that something like writing an essay cannot achieve. Sound can be organized in a way to elicit emotions and shape a space and an experience.

One of our organizers, Josh, said on the last day something the effect of “not having to be separated by a hyphen,” which spoke to my own experiences deeply and became the springboard for

my lyrics. A participant that same morning said, “half is whole.” Both of these phrases fed into one of the sections and also one of the central messages of the song.

In other words, much like many of the hapa.me participants who revisited the question “what are you” 15 years later, I became more appreciative of my mixed identity because I saw my experiences as a person not as split or compartmentalized but instead holding multitudes.

I'm gathering the wind,
counting colors on my skin.

I still have dust from the desert
on my nails.

I'm like a mutt,
But do they see both halves?

I wouldn't have it any either way,
best of both worlds.

The half is whole, the whole is half
Splitting with a line, or with math —

Continued on page 5

hyphen continued

Carry the zero, "what are you?"
Assumptions do not have to be me.

I'm like a mutt,
I see both halves

I wouldn't have it any either way,
best of both worlds.

The half is whole, the whole is half
Splitting with a line, or with math —

Carry the zero, "what are you?"
Assumptions do not have to be me. 📸

American creatives based in LA, about how to make our legacy one of progress and joy. That is where my poem transforms, paralleling the way I transformed throughout the course of Kansha.

Note: some of the language in this piece has been altered from the original performance for the print version.

Here I Stand in Manzanar
Wondering how on earth we got this far
Away from our ancestors stories
And their photographic memories,
burned back when we were labeled the enemies

Here I Stand in Manzanar
Wondering just how far the barbed wire goes
When they were told it was to keep them safe
Yet the guns were pointed in.

Here I stand in Manzanar,
Broken in tears and I watch as they fall
Onto the buried bodies of those whose narratives will never be told.
People who died, before they were too old
From the guns of the military, pregnancy without proper care in the middle of a desert,
and grief whose only solace was in suicide.
People whose last memories, were of incarceration.

Here I stand in Manzanar,
Seeing just how far my own family had to go for food,
showers, childbirth,
life.

Here I stand in Manzanar,
Knowing My family's stories were only told,
Through the ears and mouths of people who never had to live the same life.
Textbooks written, news photographs taken,
By people who got to stand outside the fence
Taking pictures with cameras that were never allowed in.

Here I stand in Manzanar
Lost, confused, unsure of what this means to me
As another Japanese American
Standing behind barbed wire fences.

Here I stand in Manzanar
As a survivor of sexual assault
Who thought it was her duty to stay silent
To protect her family from carrying any more shame on their backs
Than they already did

Here I stand in Manzanar
Remembering just how far
People went to make me feel like other
When I was just seven years old
Pulling their eyes back,

Continued on page 6

Photo courtesy of Sara Pyne



2018 KANSHA PROJECT PARTICIPANT, SARA PYNE, STANDING AT THE MANZANAR NATIONAL HISTORIC SITE.

I wanted to write a poem that allowed me to take control of my narrative as a young, Japanese American woman, but also honor the history of my family. So, my poem begins focusing on just this. However, the longer I stood in Manzanar, the more I realized that I wanted my poem to focus on more than just our painful history. We learned so much during the trip from young, Japanese

2018 JACL Chicago Golf Tournament

Thursday, July 26, 2018

Glenview Park Golf Club

800 Shermer Road, Glenview, IL



9:00 am

Cost: \$90/golfer

Lunch will be served after golf.

Please RSVP to the JACL office by July 6th.

2018 Golf Tournament Registration Form

Please enclose entry fee(s) for all golfers (\$90/person) listed on the registration form. We will inform you of your starting time. **Registration deadline is July 6th.**

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not letting me play with them
Because I was
Other.

Now knowing that, that was only a sliver
of what my aunties and uncles
went through
Of what my grandmothers and
grandfathers fought against.
It makes this, me standing in this camp,
Feel like my heart doesn't belong here
Like my feet don't deserve to stand on
this dirt.

Yet here I am in Manzanar,
the dust running over my hair
Getting in my shoes, and through
my socks.

Looking out and seeing the despair
memorialized forever,
knowing it's only a hint of the way it's
been memorialized
In my family's unspoken words.

Here I stand in Manzanar
Realizing this was never an evacuation,
never an internment camp, and never a
safety precaution,
But an incarceration that forced the
removal and stripped the rights
Of this country's own citizens in the name
of prejudice and fear.

Here I stand in Manzanar,
Physically from quite afar.
But with external pressure to assimilate,
And internal shame to be more of one way,
I'm boxed in, in a way these camps were
meant to make.

Still behind the barbed wire fences

Here I stand in Manzanar,
wanting to face history head on,
Making eye contact with the worst of what
its been.
So it knows
I remember.

Here I stand in Manzanar
Imagining a place not that far
From our history.
Wondering just how far we're willing to go
Before this re-becomes our future.
Making racist jokes and propaganda
It makes racism,

This eternal, living creature.
One that buries itself deep
Into the roots of souls, our society, our institutions, and
our culture.

Here I stand in Manzanar
Overwhelmed by a feeling to go farther,
To speak louder,
To say the words I've kept silent for so long,
Because I'm surrounded by memories of people whose
voices were never given
The space you're giving me right now.

So Here I stand in Manzanar
Trying to create my own narrative,
One told by MY voice, MY words, MY choice,
A photograph with my own intentions in mind
Collaborating with another JA woman in kind,
To set this narrative straight,
These are MY words,

Finally.

Here I stood in Manzanar,
Feeling trapped, by my own identity.
But now, owning the fact that I am Japanese enough.
I am American enough.
I am not half I am whole, enough.
I am me, enough.
You are you enough.
We can be an us, enough
And we can stay an us
If we create together.

Because here I am in Manzanar,
Wondering just how far we can push this community,
To transform itself into one that goes beyond grief
And become one of connection. Of joy. Of creativity.
How do we use the trauma we've carried for so long, on
the nape of our necks,
to reach out and extend our arms
And fight injustice against our fellow beings.
How can we bridge together and create art that
remembers the horrors and respects the pain,
Yet paves a way for an intentional, welcoming future.

We can be more than just an incarceration story.

We can build something greater
Than guilt, shame, and grief.

We can build community.
We can build identity.
We can build an exhale.

So Here I stand in Manzanar.
Glimpsing just how far we can push this creative, young,
JA community

To make the next chapters in our history books
Ones we're proud to be a part of.

So here I stand in Manzanar,
Ready, to turn the page. 



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2018 JACL Chicago Scholarship Luncheon

By Douglas Ishii, Scholarship Committee Member

On the rainy afternoon of Sunday May 20, 2018, the Chicago chapter of the Japanese American Citizens League kept dry by awarding five scholarships to recognize the achievements of seven outstanding students.

Alana Chandler and Henry Litt received the John Iwaoka Memorial Scholarship, a fund named after Heart Mountain survivor John Iwaoka to empower future generations of Japanese Americans to follow their dreams. Alana Chandler, who spent her high school career balancing a rigorous course load with numerous advocacy and social justice commitments, will be attending the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT) in the fall. Henry Litt just completed his first year at the University of Chicago's Pritzker Medical School, and volunteers to provide free healthcare and tutoring services.

Gary Shimomura, President of the Japanese Mutual Aid Society of Chicago, presented Miyumi Aoki and Zinone Lee scholarships on behalf of the organization. Founded in 1934 to pay for the final expenses of Japanese immigrants who passed away without families, the Japanese Mutual Aid Society of Chicago supports community outreach activities, services, and projects. Miyumi Aoki is a student of Accounting and Japanese Language at DePaul University, and has been involved in Tsukasa Taiko and Asian Improv aRts Midwest. Zinone Lee, formerly Deputy Editor-in-Chief at the Korea Daily Chicago, is pursuing his Masters in Data Science at Northwestern University.

Emma Yang received the Mitzi Shio Schectman Memorial Scholarship. Emma Yang, a skilled ice hockey player, will be attending the University of Illinois, Urbana-Champaign in the fall. The scholarship, named after Minidoka survivor Mitzi Shio Schectman to honor the strength of the Nisei generation of women and to keep her legacy alive by encouraging young people to continue their education, was presented by her husband Lary Schectman.

Rebecca Ozaki was awarded the Chiye Tomihiro Memorial Scholarship, which was named after the Minidoka survivor and former JACL Chicago chapter president and board member to carry on her legacy of leadership through education. Rebecca Ozaki is earning her Masters degree from the Jane Addams College of Social Work at the University of Illinois at Chicago, and serves in leadership roles with both JACL Chicago's Board of Directors and the Kansha Project Alumni Leadership Board.

Ron Yoshino, on behalf of his brothers and parents, presented Katie Howard with the Yoshino Family Scholarship. The Yoshino Family Scholarship honors the memory of Maurice and Misako Yoshino, who believed in education as one of the foundations of their family life. Katie Howard, an active participant in her church's service projects, will be attending Abilene Christian University.

Awardees were evaluated on the basis of their academic achievements, the contributions to the Japanese American community, and their work toward realizing a socially just future for all. The Scholarship Program serves as part of the Chicago chapter's growing youth program, with the goal of increasing engagement and offering recipients pathways to being leaders in the JACL and the Japanese American community. JACL Chicago, as always, extends its thanks to the donors and supporters who have helped ensure the success of the Scholarship Program. 🗣



Photos: Robert Brown

TOP: 2018 JACL CHICAGO SCHOLARSHIP AWARDEES.

BACK ROW, L TO R: MIYUMI AOKI, REBECCA OZAKI, HENRY LITT, ZINONE LEE.

FRONT ROW, L TO R: ALANA CHANDLER, KATIE HOWARD, EMMA YANG

BOTTOM: CURRENT SCHOLARSHIP COMMITTEE CHAIR, CHRISTINE MUNTEANU THANKS JUDY TANAKA, PREVIOUS SCHOLARSHIP COMMITTEE CHAIR, FOR HER HARD WORK AND YEARS OF SERVICE.

Japanese American Memorial Day Service

By Mari Yamagiwa, Programs Manager

On Monday, May 28th, the Japanese Mutual Aid Society of Chicago held its annual Memorial Day service in the Japanese American section of Montrose Cemetery. Various churches and various community organizations are represented at the floral offering. The Chicago Nisei Post #1183 also held its special service prior to the main community service at the Veterans Memorial in Montrose Cemetery.

The Japanese Mutual Aid Society, began its annual community Memorial Day services in 1938 and is the oldest Japanese organization in Chicago. Their services have included purchasing cemetery lots, helping provide funds for those who passed without family or sufficient finances, and providing social services to the Chicago Japanese community. While they no longer provide social services, they continue to be an integral part of the community, including bringing us all together every year to honor and remember those who have passed before us. To learn more about the Japanese Mutual Aid Society and their services, you may visit their website at www.jmaschicago.org. 



Photos: Brian Ozaki



Chicago Nikkei Picnic
Saturday, August 4
11am - 6pm

Bunker Hill Forest Preserve, Grove 7
W Harts Rd, Chicago

Bill Yoshino Recognized for Contributions to US-Japan Relations

By Mari Yamagiwa, Programs Manager

In April of this year, the Government of Japan announced foreign recipients of the 2018 Spring Decoration, which is given by the Emperor of Japan. Bill Yoshino served as the Midwest Regional Director at JACL for 38 years. Along with playing an instrumental part in the Japanese American Redress Campaign, Bill has done significant work in combatting hate crime and was also successful in expanding JACL's work in education and teacher training. The Order of the Rising Sun, Golden Rays with Rosette was conferred to Bill Yoshino for his years of dedication to civil rights and education.

The Consulate-General of Japan in Chicago states that "Mr. Yoshino has dedicated himself to protecting and promoting Japanese American and Asian American civil and human rights and has been instrumental in improving the public view of Japanese Americans. He has worked to bring Japanese American history to a wider audience through workshops and educational materials, and he has organized events that foster

exchange among Japanese Americans and Japanese expatriates.

The remarkable achievements of each recipient represent the diversity and depth of the relations between Japan and the United States."

Congratulations to Bill Yoshino on this well-deserved award! 🎉

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Kansha Project

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(*In honor of Samuel Fidler*)

Anonymous

Elizabeth Doi

Mary Doi

(*In honor of all Kansha alumni, In memory of Al and Mary Doi*)

Tonko Doi

Joshua Fidler

Kiyo Fujii

Lawrence and Yoshimi Golden

(*In honor of family members who were in Manzanar, Rohwer, and Jerome camps*)

Emily Harada

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July 18-22
Philadelphia, PA**

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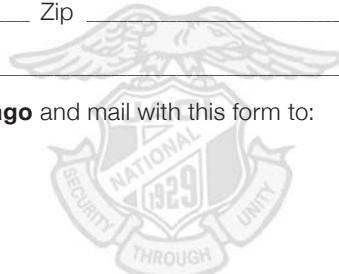
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Japanese American Citizens League

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p: 773.728.7171
f: 773.728.7231
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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 JACLe newsletter (in full color), news and updates via email. See page 2

Calendar of Events

Wednesday, July 11
7:00pm – 9:00pm

JACL Chicago Board Meeting
JACL Chicago Office, 5415 N Clark St, Chicago

July 18-22

JACL National Convention
Philadelphia, PA

Tuesday, July 24
6:30pm – 8:00pm

Japanese War Brides: In Post World War II America
Japanese American Service Committee, 4427 N Clark St, Chicago

Saturday, August 4
11:00am – 6:00pm

Nikkei Community Picnic
Bunker Hill Forest Preserve, Grove 7, W Harts Rd, Chicago

Wednesday, August 8
7:00pm – 9:00pm

JACL Chicago Board Meeting
JACL Chicago Office, 5415 N Clark St, Chicago

Friday - Saturday, August 10-12

Ginza Holiday- more info at: ginzaholiday.com
Midwest Buddhist Temple, 435 W Menomonee St, Chicago