

JACL *en*

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Never Again is Now:

Sunday, 9/29
The 13th Film Screening at Music Box Theater

Sunday, 10/13
Mass Incarceration Workshop at JASC

See jaclchicago.org or facebook.com/JACLChicago for details.

Bridge Builders

By Hinako Matsumoto, Bridge Builders Participant

Bridge Builders, a joint program between JACL Chicago and the Arab American Action Network, successfully launched its pilot program in the third week of August. The eight participants were made up of high school-aged youth from JACL Chicago and Arab American Action Network. These students were led by community leaders respectively from each organization on a pilgrimage to Rohwer and Jerome incarceration sites in Arkansas. The days were packed with visits to museums, intensive workshops on civil rights, and more opportunities for attendees to expand their knowledge on civil liberties.

One day was set aside at the JACL Chicago office for introductions and bonding between groups. We discussed the historical timeline of civil rights violations, histories of our ancestors, and activities that allowed the two communities to create connections. By the end of the day, we talked about the violations of civil rights and liberties in the modern day, highlighting the urgency for young people to be educated on this matter.

The pilgrimage began on the second day of the program, where long car rides were spent making *tsuru*, or paper cranes, and bonding over similarities within our



BRIDGE BUILDERS BROUGHT HIGH SCHOOL-AGED PARTICIPANTS ON A PILGRIMAGE TO ROHWER AND JEROME INCARCERATION SITES.

Photo: Lisa Doi

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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 10/18/19.

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

For More Information

For information about the JACL Chicago Chapter, call 773.728.7171, or visit www.jaclchicago.org

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Bridge Builders continued

communities. You may say that the group “built bridges,” hence the name of this program. During the quiet moments, students observed the never-ending, rolling crop fields through the window. While this landscape may be found anywhere else in the U.S., it was what the incarcerated saw on their way to the camps. With this point in mind, attendees processed the view and interpreted it in many different ways.

Carrying the chain of *tsurus*, we went to Rohwer and Jerome. Monuments stood where Rower was once a crowded camp, a patch in the sea of crops where barracks existed. At Jerome, there was nothing but a granite monument standing around the entrance of a farm. With heavy hearts, we laid our *tsuru* chain in silence at each incarceration site.

This trip not only focused on the incarceration of Japanese Americans, but also civil rights in the past and present. We visited Little Rock High School, the National Civil Rights Museum, and many more historically significant locations. Facilitators also led workshops on civil liberties and about the oppression of Arab Americans post-9/11.

As a whole, this program not only taught the youth the extreme significance of civil rights and liberties, but also to remember past events to prevent history from repeating itself again. As a participant, I am glad I had the opportunity to experience such a hands-on learning experience and hope to continue building bridges between communities.

Bridge Builders was funded by the Interfaith Youth Core. 🙏



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2019 JACL Chicago Golf Outing

By Glenn Inouye, Golf Outing Chair

On August 8th, the annual JACL Golf Outing was held at the Glenview Park Golf Club in Glenview, IL. For the first time that this event has been held, Mother Nature did not cooperate (torrential rainfall and oppressive heat) and the original scheduled date of July 18th had to be cancelled. The event was rescheduled for August 8th and many of the original entrants were able to return. Mother Nature apologized for the rainout as it turned out to be a beautiful day for golf.

Lunch and the award presentations were held at the Coarse Italian Restaurant at the conclusion of play. The top 2 gross scores were turned in by Slava Fidman (83) and Kai Raheem (86). The handicap winners for men were Earl Henderson (1st), Ron Yoshino (2nd), Vic Miyata (3rd) and Jim Tatsuda (3rd). The women's handicap winner was Lisa Sloan. The hole event winners were Robert McKendry for closest to the pin, Glenn Inouye and Marcus Inouye for the longest putt, Danny Liu and Slava Fidman for the men's longest drive, and Judy Tracey for the women's longest drive.

This year's event hole sponsors were Alan Endo of Endo Communications Inc., Al Shimizu of Nal's Auto Repair, Jeff Sher of Surefire Protection Inc., Keith Endo Real Estate and Alan Rosenfield. I would also like to acknowledge the staff at the golf course and the Coarse Italian Restaurant; they were very accommodating and helpful in meeting our needs.



Photos: Joyce Yoshino



Some of the prizes awarded this year were donated by Cary Wong and Glenn Inouye. Cash donations from the McCallister Law Group LLC (\$500), Glenn Inouye (\$370) and Ron Yoshino (\$200) will support JACL Chicago's ongoing mission to secure and maintain the civil rights of Japanese Americans and all others who are victimized by injustice and bigotry. Your donations are greatly appreciated.

As chairperson for this outing, I would like to give a special thank you to Carol Yoshino, Joyce Yoshino, and Laura Maeda. Their help with checking in golfers and recording everyone's score was greatly appreciated.

Thank you to all who participated in this year's JACL golf outing. This annual event is open to members, non-members, people who know how to golf and even those who don't. It has been an enjoyable way for JACL members and the community to join together to bring awareness and show support for our Chapter. I am looking forward to next year's outing and hope to see you all again. 🍷

Never Again Is Now: How Do Nikkei Stand Up for Justice Today?

By JJ Ueunten, NGN Board Member

On June 30th, thirty people gathered at the Japanese American Service Committee (JASC) to hear a panel discussion titled, “Never Again Is Now: How Do Nikkei Stand Up for Justice Today?” and think about connections between the WWII incarceration of Japanese Americans, and present day injustices. Next Generation Nikkei (NGN) of the JACL Chicago organized the panel, which was co-sponsored by the JASC.

Local organizers Arianna Salgado of Organized Communities Against Deportations (OCAD), Muhammad Sankari of the Arab American Action Network (AAAN), and Sharlyn Grace of the Chicago Community Bond Fund (CCBF) spoke on the panel, as well as Miya Sommers of Nikkei Resisters in the Bay Area. Brandon Lee of Asian Americans Advancing Justice - Chicago (AAAJ-C) moderated the discussion.

The program opened with video from the Untold Stories oral history project of the Chicago Japanese American Historical Society and the JASC. In it, a Japanese American woman shares a memory of her father being taken away from their home by the FBI after the bombing of Pearl Harbor. Panelists reflected on the video, including the fact that many young people today have similar experiences of loved ones being removed from their homes. As Muhammad said, “across the country, and here in Chicago, whether it’s immigration, whether it’s the local police, whether it’s federal law enforcement...we’re creating a whole generation of young people who are going to have these vivid memories when they’re 95 years old.”

Panelists talked about directly supporting the needs of people being harmed by immigrant detention and deportation, incarceration, and surveillance, while also working to change these systems. Sharlyn shared the CCBF’s work to pay bond for people to get them out of Cook County Jail while they’re awaiting trial, while also advocating for the end of money based

pre-trial detention, “so it’s no longer necessary to purchase our neighbors’ freedom.” The panel drew connections between realities that can seem unrelated: the surveillance of Arab, Muslim, East African, and South Asian communities in the name of counterterrorism; the detention and deportation of immigrants; and the criminalization and mass incarceration targeted at Black and Latinx communities.

Miya talked about how their organization initially started as a response to the Trump Administration’s policies, but has grown to think beyond Trump as the main issue and toward educating *Nikkei* on history and systems that Trump is just a part of. “Never Again Is Now is not just looking at incarceration of Japanese Americans, but incarceration of Native folks, incarceration of Latinx folks, and then also digging really deep into slavery and understanding this whole slave trade and how that is integral to our understanding of racism and genocide here in the states,” she said.

Panelists shared visions of a world where people’s needs are met, power is justly distributed, and incarceration and borders are no longer necessary. They talked about solidarity, and gave attendees actions to take toward justice, including signing petitions, attending a press conference about ending police-ICE collaboration in Chicago, and participating in the Japanese American/Asian American contingent of the Take Action to End Criminalization, Detention, and Deportations rally in July.

After the panel answered questions, Neil Ducklow, Kembre Daniel, Dante DiCastrì, Louis DiCastrì, and Kiyomi Negi of Tsukasa Taiko’s Gintenkai and Junior Ensemble, closed the panel with a taiko performance.

Video of the panel: <https://vimeo.com/350179384>

Untold Stories clip: <https://vimeo.com/287531451/9e7d087>



LEFT: MIYA SOMMERS AND MUHAMMAD SANKARI MAKE CONNECTIONS BETWEEN JAPANESE AMERICAN INCARCERATION AND PRESENT DAY INJUSTICES. BOTTOM: COMMUNITY MEMBERS LISTEN TO THE ENGAGING PANEL DISCUSSION.



Photos: Kat Nagasawa

Follow Next Generation Nikkei on Facebook:
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Summer Never Again Is Now Actions

By Anne Watanabe, NGN Board Member

This summer, JACL Chicago collaborated with the Japanese American Service Committee (JASC), Asian Americans Advancing-Justice Chicago (AAAJ-C), and other organizations to build solidarity with other communities and to speak out against the detention, deportation, and incarceration of immigrants.

In early July, a contingent of JASC and JACL Chicago members joined hundreds of protesters at the Never Again is Now: Chicago Mass Mobilization event organized by Jewish activists. JACL Chicago board member Tonko Doi spoke at the protest, alongside immigrant rights activists, about the parallels between her own experience as a child incarcerated during WWII and the incarceration of immigrant children today. We witnessed Jewish communities across the country organize mass civil disobedience actions targeting ICE, saying “Never Again for Anyone” and demanding the closure of the camps and an end to the deportation and criminalization of immigrants.

Inspired by these actions, we co-organized an interfaith Jewish-Japanese solidarity dinner with the Jewish Council on Urban Affairs (JCUA). At the dinner, Jewish activists lit candles and led shabbat; JACL Chicago members taught people how to fold tsuru; and in small groups, we explored what “Never Again” means to us and what it has to do with our stories. Rev. Ron Miyamura of Midwest Buddhist Temple led sa “gochisousama” to close the meal, and then we created signs in preparation for the Japanese American and Asian American Immigrant Rights Rally and the

March to End Criminalization, Detention and Deportations the following day.

The Facebook page for the event stated that Japanese American and Asian American Rally was organized to “express outrage at [policies targeting immigrants], hear from impacted Asian American communities, and to call on all communities of conscience to stand up in

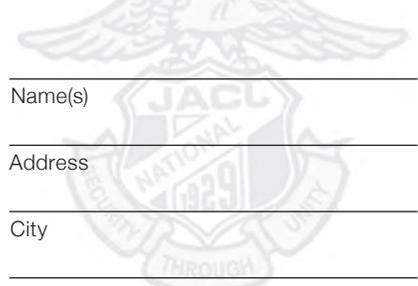


Photos: Ryan Yokota

opposition to these policies.” The rally was cosponsored by 16 organizations, State Representative Theresa Mah and Water Reclamation District Commissioner Josina Morita. Tonko spoke again, this time with her granddaughter and NGN/ALB board member SJ Doi, about their family’s experience and the responsibility of the JA community to speak up. SJ said, “As Japanese Americans and Asian Americans, we have a responsibility to stand up for our neighbors in this city who are at risk for deportation, and for the people who are imprisoned in concentration camps at the southern border.” After hearing statements from each cosponsor, we marched to join thousands of protesters, immigrant justice and community organizations in Daley Plaza. Tonko spoke to thousands of protesters in the Plaza about her

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Continued on page 6

experience being incarcerated during WWII, the hardships they endured and her solidarity with immigrants who are facing the same injustice today. JACL Chicago members and JCUA members held a joint banner, "Jewish and Japanese Americans say CLOSE THE CAMPS".

After the rally, Brian Mita reached out to collaborate on a fundraiser for immigrant rights at his restaurant, Izakaya Mita. At the Japanese American Fundraiser for Immigrant Rights on August 4, Izakaya Mita generously donated 25% of all proceeds to the 2019 Freedom Summer Fund, distributed information to customers, and encouraged them to make additional donations throughout the day. Izakaya Mita was able to raise \$1500 to post bond for individuals in immigration detention.

This past year, we have seen a wave of Japanese American activism nationally, expressing outrage at how history is repeating itself. Tsuru for Solidarity, in coalition with Latinx, Black,



Photos: Ayan Yokota

Indigenous, and Jewish activists and civil rights, immigrant rights and racial justice organizations, organized protests at Fort Sill in Oklahoma. Fort Sill, a former Native American "boarding school", and a former prison camp for Japanese Americans was slated to now become a detention center for immigrant children. Following the July 20th

#CloseTheCamps protest, both Oklahoma senators and their governor declared that Fort Sill will not be accepting migrant children for incarceration. Tsuru for Solidarity is planning another protest action in May 2020 in Washington, DC.

If you would like to support, consider attending future JACL Chicago or JASC Never Again Is Now events, signing the Close the Camps Petition (https://actionnetwork.org/petitions/close-the-camps?source=direct_link&), or donating to the 2019 Freedom Summer Fund (https://secure.actblue.com/donate/melt_ice).

2019 JACL National Convention

By Mari Yamagiwa, Programs Manager

This year's JACL National Convention was held in Salt Lake City, UT from July 31 – August 4. The theme for this year's convention, that celebrated the 90th anniversary of JACL, was: Advocacy | Action | Inclusion. The Chicago chapter delegates were Lisa Doi, Bryan Hara, Sara Pyne, and myself. Each day the convention schedule was filled with panel discussions, workshops, activities, and of course National Council sessions. Topics explored at the convention this year through the various sessions included

activism and leadership in the Japanese American community, exploring family genealogy, and civil rights issues today.

It was great to connect with old friends and make new ones. One of the nights, there was an open mic where several convention attendees, including Sara Pyne, shared their talents in singing, taiko,

spoken word, and more! It's special to be able to see Nikkei from all over the country share their creativity and stories. Throughout Convention, I was challenged and inspired to hear from leaders who are involved in



Photos: Toshiki Masaki

PRESIDENT, LISA DOI SPEAKING ON A PANEL FOCUSED ON YOUTH ENGAGEMENT

present-day issues and to see community members being willing to have hard conversations, such as exploring the intergenerational trauma of incarceration at Tule Lake. I returned feeling reenergized to continue to advance our mission.

Next year's JACL National Convention will be in Las Vegas. I hope some of you will be able to join us there!



THE MIDWEST DISTRICT CONTINGENT ENJOYS THE SAYONARA BANQUET.

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We welcome your participation.

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Calendar of Events

Wednesday, September 11

7:00pm – 9:00pm

JACL Chicago Board Meeting

JACL Chicago Office, 5415 N Clark St, Chicago

Thursday, September 26

6:00pm - 7:30pm

Memories of Now: Night in the American Village Book Talk

Japanese American Service Committee, 4427 N Clark St, Chicago

Sunday, September 29

2:15pm - 5:00pm

Never Again is Now: The 13th Film Screening

Music Box Theater, 3733 Southport Ave, Chicago

Wednesday, October 9

7:00pm – 9:00pm

JACL Chicago Board Meeting

JACL Chicago Office, 5415 N Clark St, Chicago

Sunday, October 13

2:00pm - 4:30pm

Never Again is Now: Mass Incarceration Workshop

Japanese American Service Committee, 4427 N Clark St, Chicago

Saturday, November 9

10:00am - 4:00pm

Holiday Delight

Japanese American Service Committee, 4427 N Clark St, Chicago