

RICE PAPER

Asian Pacific American Heritage Month



JACL Hosts Dr. Franklin Odo, submitted by Gloria Kumagai

On May 14th, we hosted a potluck for Dr. Franklin Odo, who was the keynote speaker for the annual Asian Pacific American Heritage Banquet that was held the following evening. Dr. Odo is an author, scholar, activist, and historian, who retired as the director of the Asian Pacific American Program at the Smithsonian Institution in January 2010. He had held that position since 1997. He brought numerous exhibits to the Smithsonian highlighting the experience of Asian American groups, including one on the Japanese American camp experience during World War II. I remember seeing this exhibit, A More Perfect Union, and marveling at the fact that it was a part of the Smithsonian! He was the only Asian Pacific American curator at the National Museum of American History.

Dr. Odo was a delightful guest, sharing stories about the songs of Japanese immigrant workers in Hawaii in the early twentieth century. He has done a great deal of research on this topic for a book that he is currently writing. His keynote speech the following night included references to this research and stressed the importance of passing on our heritage and legacy through our stories.

Asian Pacific American Heritage Month Kickoff at the State Capitol

Submitted by Cheryl Hirata-Dulas

Twin Cities JACL Education Committee members, Sally Sudo (chair) and Cheryl Hirata-Dulas represented the Japanese American community at the Asian Pacific American Heritage Month kickoff in St. Paul at the Minnesota State Capitol rotunda on May 3, 2010. They showcased the TC JACL's display on the Military Intelligence Service Language School (MISLS) at Camp Savage and Fort Snelling during World War II, as well as the curriculum guide on the MISLS developed by the TC JACL Education Committee to help teachers fulfill a requirement for grades 4-8 on Minnesota History in the state's Academic Standards for the Social Studies.

Program speakers included Congressman Keith Ellison; Tony Leong, the first APA judge in Minnesota; local writer/actor David Mura, whose uncle trained in the MISLS during WWII; and Ilean Her, Executive Director of the State Council on Asian-Pacific Minnesotans.

Cheryl Hirata-Dulas (left) and Sally Sudo (right) at the TC JACL display with Ilean Her, Executive Director of the Council on Asian Pacific Minnesotans (middle).



David Mura and Ilean Her

