



THE RICE PAPER

A newsletter of the Twin Cities Chapter
of the Japanese American Citizens League
e-mail info@tcjacl.org

website: www.tcjacl.org | @TwinCitiesJACL
January 2021

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PRESIDENT'S REMARKS

明けましておめでとうございます！今年もよろしくおねがいします。

Happy New Year! I look forward to continuing to work with you this year.

For those who don't know me, my name is Vinicius "Vini" Taguchi, and I have been serving on the Twin Cities JACL Executive Board for the past two years. Beginning this year, I will be serving as the chapter president. Since it's still not safe for us to meet in person and might be a while until I meet everyone outside of Zoom, I thought it would be nice to share a little bit about myself, why I've been involved in the JACL, and what I hope we can accomplish together in 2021 and beyond.

I am a shin-sansei with respect to when my grandfather moved from Sapporo to Brazil in 1956, but I am a shin-issei with respect to when my Brazilian parents and I emigrated from Germany (where I was born) to North Carolina in 1996. I earned my bachelor's degree in biological engineering from North Carolina State University, and I am now a PhD candidate in civil engineering at the U of M where I study green infrastructure and stormwater management.

Like many others, I joined the JACL to be a part of the Japanese American community in Minnesota. The reason I have remained involved, however,—and the reason that I decided to run for chapter president—is because of everything that the JACL stands for. As an engineer, I have been doing what I can in my professional life to help make the world a better place. But I have come to realize that engineering alone can only solve some of the problems our communities face. Even engineering projects fall short if they do not collaborate with grassroots community organizations to account for their social impacts. The JACL has given me that opportunity to serve my community in ways that I could not through engineering alone.

I never thought I would get involved in community advocacy. I grew up with the luxury of choosing not to care about politics. After all, life seemed okay, so why rock the boat? I now realize how privileged of a perspective that was. Thanks to the model minority myth, Japanese Americans can often choose not to think about politics and accept the system as it is. But, we remember all too clearly a time when we did not have that privilege. There was a time when those of Japanese ancestry were vilified by the government of the United States due to racism, xenophobia, and wartime hysteria. Even now, Japanese Americans are

treated as perpetual foreigners and discriminated against in the wave of anti-Asian xenophobia. Clearly, our work is not done.

When officers of our own police department murdered George Floyd this summer, many people finally began to listen to what our Black neighbors have never stopped telling us: that racism is here, it is systemic, and it is enforced by the police. While Japanese Americans are no longer regarded as spies by local police, our fellow Americans of Color are still being systemically oppressed. While we have received our redress, the descendants of over 400 years of slavery still have not received reparations. While our families were freed from behind barbed wire, children and their parents are still being held in concentration camps on our borders. While the FBI no longer investigates our family members for treasonous intent, Muslims in the United States continue to be unfairly suspected due to post-9/11 wartime hysteria. The Japanese American story is just as relevant today as it has ever been, and the history of oppression that our community has endured has never stopped repeating itself.

This year will mark the 79th anniversary of Executive Order 9066. It will also mark the 40th anniversary of the redress hearings where so many brave survivors from the Japanese American camps came forward to tell their stories. While listening to some of the recordings from those sessions on the powerful podcast *Redress Radio*, I was amazed by how similar those conversations sounded to the ones I heard in the healing circles held by Tsuru for Solidarity this past summer. The desire to come together and heal is still just as strong in our community today as it was at the time of redress. And I believe that it is our responsibility to tell our stories and share our legacy as we help others secure the rights that are promised to them by the United States, whether they be citizens, residents, or visitors. After all, the mission of the JACL is to “secure and maintain the civil rights of **Japanese Americans and all others who are victimized by injustice and bigotry.**”

I am so honored to have the opportunity to work with the Twin Cities chapter of the JACL. Our Education Committee has produced incredible exhibits, film screenings, and so much more, to share the Japanese American story and what it means today. Our chapter has also built important partnerships with community organizations such as the Council on American-Islamic Relations (CAIR), which I hope to continue strengthening. Additionally, I plan to broaden the reach of our work by collaborating more closely with the National Association for the Advancement of Black People (NAACP), the American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU), and other civil rights organizations.

I am so thankful to have such a talented and passionate executive board beside me. And I am excited to announce that we have three new members joining us on the Executive Board: Elaine Koyama (treasurer), Mary Kojima, and Paul Imon Pedtke. They are joining our incumbent board members: Amy Dickerson (vice president), Karen Tanaka Lucas (secretary), Phil Nomura, Teresa Swartz, Gloria Kumagai, Matthew Farrells, Kendal Takeshita, and representatives from the Scholarship and Education Committees. I am looking forward to continuing to work with all of these wonderful people, and I am thankful to have Amy Dickerson’s continued support in her new role.

2020 was a difficult year, but I have a sense of cautious optimism. Vaccines are being distributed, and the end of this terrible pandemic is finally coming into view. We look forward to hosting in-person activities again as soon as it becomes safe to do so, but until then we will continue to offer virtual programming via our online platforms and social media to keep our community connected.

これから将来のために一緒に頑張りましょう。

Let’s keep working together for a better future.

In solidarity,



Vinicius Taguchi
Chapter President

2021 JACL SCHOLARSHIP INFORMATION

2021 TC JACL High School Graduate Scholarship Applications Available

Twin Cities JACL scholarship applications for 2021 high school graduates are available on www.tcjacl.org under the Scholarships tab and will be mailed by the end of January. Please contact Pam Dagoberg at 763-557-2946 (scholarship@tcjacl.org) if you are interested in receiving a local chapter scholarship application or would like to recommend someone for a scholarship.

Applications will be sent to the following students no later than January 31, 2021:

Taylor Hara (Hill Murray)
Thomas Hirabayashi
Iris Johnson (South High School)
Robbie Knight (Delano High School)
Laura Maeda (Rosemount High School)
Brady Schmitt (Waconia)

In addition to completing the application form and submitting a transcript, students must write a short essay entitled “The Relevance of JACL Today.”

Applications are evaluated based on:

- Scholastic achievement
- Extracurricular activities
- Community Service
- Essay

In addition to other available scholarships, students may apply for the Twin Cities JACL Service Scholarship. This scholarship will be awarded to a student who has demonstrated outstanding JACL volunteerism. Students may choose to apply for this specific scholarship. If applicants are not selected for this scholarship, they will be considered for other awards.

Scholarship recipients must be current Twin Cities JACL members (individual student membership or family membership is required). Membership information can be found at www.tcjacl.org.

Completed applications for Twin Cities JACL scholarships must be postmarked by April 1, 2021.

2021 National Scholarship Program Guidelines

Please note: The National JACL Scholarships are not the same as the Twin Cities JACL scholarships. Each program has its own application form with different requirements.

WASHINGTON, D.C. -- The Japanese American Citizens League (JACL) announced that the 2021 National Scholarship and Awards Program is now underway. The JACL annually offers approximately 30 college scholarships for students who are incoming college freshmen, undergraduates and graduates, and those specializing in law and the creative/performing arts. There are also financial aid scholarships for those demonstrating a need for financial assistance of.

Scholarship Program guidelines, instructions, and applications have been posted on the JACL website, www.jacl.org, and can be accessed by clicking the “Youth” tab on the menu bar. You may also click the button below “To Learn More or Apply Click Here.”

Starting this year, the application forms for the scholarship program will be completely online. Freshman applications must be submitted directly by the applicant to National JACL through the online form no later than March 1, 2021, 11:59 p.m. Hawaiian Standard Time (HST).

These freshman applications will then be disseminated to their respective chapters for review. Chapters will have one month to evaluate their applications and forward the names of the most outstanding applicants to National JACL. It is these applications that shall be forwarded to the National Freshman Scholarship Committee for final selection.

Applications for the non-freshman scholarship categories (undergraduate, graduate, law, creative/performing arts, and financial aid) are also to be sent directly by the applicant to National JACL through the online form no later than April 1, 2021, 11:59 p.m. Hawaiian Standard Time (HST).

All those applying to the National JACL Scholarship Program must be a youth/student or individual member of the JACL; a couple/family membership held by a parent does NOT meet this requirement. Applicants must be enrolled in school in Fall 2021 in order to be eligible for a scholarship. If a student has received two National scholarship awards previously, they are no longer eligible to apply as the limit is two national awards per person.

For more information on the National JACL Scholarship Program, contact Scholarship Program Manager Matthew Weisbly at scholarships@jacl.org

The Relevance of JACL Today

(As part of their scholarship applications, graduating high school seniors are required to submit an essay on the topic "The Relevance of JACL Today." We are sharing some of those essays from the seniors in the class of 2020. We will share other essays in the future, Rice Paper publications.)

The Relevance of JACL Today Essay by Samuel Ogata

While researching and writing this paper for my application for a JACL scholarship, I learned that I knew a lot less than I thought I did about the JACL. I was surprised to find how active and incredibly far reaching the society is within the JACL.

One thing that the JACL does that is relevant to society is to help spread awareness and understanding of the suffering they endured during and after World War II. A lot of schools don't teach this, including my own, although it is a very important part of our nation's history. The JACL helps teach the truth about the incarceration to help it not to happen again.

The JACL helps spread positive images of different groups that might be under attack. They were the first civil rights group that openly accepted and supported gay marriage. They help enforce the basic human rights of other races and groups.

For example, in 2017 Trump signed an Executive order halting immigration from seven countries with a major Muslim population. TCJACL and the Minnesota Council on American Islamic Relations joined forces for the rights of the individuals affected by this order. They were fearful with how similar this was to the order made during WWII and wanted to stop any similar actions in its tracks.

Both my grandparents worked for the state teachers union, MEA/Education Minnesota. Their work had many similarities to the JACL.

Both organizations help educate their communities over issues important to their members. My grandparents, Harley and Christina Ogata, as well as the JACL, worked with legislators to help support their members and the issues important to them including civil rights issues.

JACL hosts social gatherings where members can come and feel free in an unjudged environment. Many of the elderly members still feel the effects

of World War II racism on them. Similarly Education union meetings offer members the opportunity to discuss issues of concern in an environment that is safe.

The one distinct difference between the two is that the Minnesota educators union works directly with the issue of employment and its terms, whereas the JACL is not a labor union.

As with most representative groups, both of these communities push hard for the voices of their communities to be heard along with being valued and respected. While still classified as a minority group, the Japanese American community is large enough to have a strong and common voice by banding together under the JACL's well built system. This is just as important today as ever, given the attacks minority groups are suffering.

Doing this paper helped me educate myself more about the JACL and what it is doing here and nationwide. I'm proud to be a member.

The Relevance of JACL Today Essay by Caden Scales

In 9th grade I read When the Emperor Was Divine by Julie Otsuka, a fictional historical novella about a family's experience in the internment camp in Topaz, Utah. Hearing about the internment camps, and how the US government persecuted Japanese American citizens was completely eye-opening for me. I'm biracial; my father is Japanese, African American and my mother is white. My maternal grandmother is a Japanese immigrant; that makes me sansei - third generation Japanese American. While my family has always talked about being multi-racial, it wasn't until this unit in 9th grade English, and the guest speakers from the JACL Twin Cities who came to our school to talk about their families' experience in the internment camps, that I really realized, understood, the mistreatment of African Americans. It had been challenged when I realized how poorly Japanese Americans were treated; actual citizens stripped of their rights, their homes, businesses, money and investments, stripped of their dignity and pride – all because our government was afraid of where their loyalties lay, afraid of them because they looked like the enemy. Clearly, our country and government

have made some of the same mistakes over and over again, to many groups of people.

The Japanese American Citizens League plays an integral role in working to remind people of how Japanese Americans suffered at the hands of the government, to reinforce positive images and impressions of Japanese Americans and to celebrate the culture of Japanese Americans. If someone thinks that this kind of persecution is behind us, all you have to do is look at the current news. We have a president that subtly perpetuates racism by calling the Coronavirus the "Chinese" or "Wuhan" virus. Asian Americans are all feeling the fallout of this kind of racist language. This simple twist on a name has a negative connotation that can influence or change the way someone might see an Asian person on the street. Even 80 years after the internment of hundreds of thousands of Japanese Americans, we still see this kind of subtle racist language and ideology permeating our society. We see it in the border camps that are set up to separate families who are immigrating to the U.S. and in the travel bans set up to minimize Islamic immigrants as well.

The JACL is an organization that our society needs. Just four years ago the JACL Twin Cities celebrated the 75th anniversary of the internment camps; through education, this painful part of our past will hopefully keep it from being repeated. While I believe that the most important role it can play is to continue to teach and celebrate Japanese heritage, it also can be a reminder, by keeping the reality of the internment camps alive for people to hear and learn about, as well as to continue to fight against the racism that plagues our society.

The Relevance of JACL Today Essay by Miles Sitcawich

"Liberty and justice for all" is promised to U.S. citizens. Although the United States of America is the freest country in the world, there have been multiple points in time where groups of people have been discriminated against. Even before the birth of this nation, slavery was a controversial issue. Black people were treated as property and were given no rights whatsoever. They had no power and could not fight back against their owners. It took over a century and a civil war for them to earn their emancipation.

Still, Jim Crow Laws prevented African Americans from enjoying the same liberties and rights that their white counterparts did. Around the same time as Reconstruction, the women's suffrage movement was also gaining momentum. The 19th Amendment was not passed until 1919.

These two phenomena are very well known - and for good reason. Lesser known, however, are the injustices towards Asian Americans. The 1882 Chinese Exclusion Act banned the Chinese, who had contributed to the building of our transcontinental railroad system, from immigrating to the US because some white people were angry that they were taking jobs away from the citizens that were born on American soil. Ironically, the void created by this act was filled by Japanese immigrants. In addition, the growing Japanese Empire made white Americans scared; they grouped all Asians together as the "Yellow Peril." Then the bombing of Pearl Harbor by the Imperial Japanese Navy in December 1941 catalyzed some Americans to act upon those fears.

Two months later, FDR's Executive Order 9066 imprisoned Japanese Americans that had done nothing wrong. They looked and spoke like the enemy, but was that justification for imprisonment? They were forced out of their homes and thrown into army-style barracks far from home that had no furniture and no privacy. Japanese Americans faced racism in these times due to the government's actions. These American citizens (or "non-aliens," as they were called) were treated as anything but. These hardships surely must have made the Japanese American population question how great the U.S. commitment to such constitutional rights as life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness truly was.

These incidents of severe discrimination are less frequent today, but you never know what the next President, Senate, or House of Representatives will do so it is imperative that we remember the injustices that precede us so we can fight against those in the future. The JACL does a great job of this; the presentation of Ms. Sally Sudo tells the tear-jerking story of Japanese Americans during WWII, and also how they fought back against this institutional racism democratically, through testimony and legal proceedings. President FDR signed the Executive Order, while also claiming that no group of Americans would be discriminated against due to

race. This shows that the Constitution, a sacred document that demonstrates our country's ideals, can be interpreted in arbitrary ways, for example creating exceptions in times of emergencies.

JACL programs including Ms. Sudo's presentation teach us that it is our job as citizens of this democratic country to keep an eye out for rogue government officials who seek to misuse this power and for us to condemn acts of racism or injustice against any group, including acts of hate against Chinese Americans falsely being accused of causing COVID-19. This way, we can all enjoy the freedoms our Founding Fathers envisioned for us centuries ago.

**Want to recommend a young person
for a Twin Cities JACL
Scholarship?**

**We would like to identify current
high school, middle school, elementary
school, and pre-school students!**

Please send the

**Name, address, high school
graduation year
of your
child/niece/nephew/grandchild/friend
to
scholarship@tcjacl.org**

**Once received, his/her name will be
added to the scholarship database,
and they will receive an application
during his/her senior year.**

History of the Twin Cities JACL Scholarship Program

The local scholarship program had modest beginnings. The Twin Cities Chapter of the JACL was formed in 1947. In 1960, the Twin Cities Chapter of the JACL hosted the Eastern District and Midwest District Convention. The convention was very well attended and financially very successful. Kimi Hara had an idea to start a scholarship program with the convention profits because the young Sansei and Yonsei did not qualify for other minority scholarship programs that existed at that time. Many Issei donated money to our Chapter so that the scholarship program would continue.

The scholarship program for graduating seniors began with the goal to recognize the generation of Sansei and Yonsei for their accomplishments and service to their school or community. The original scholarship applicants had the following traits in common: a willingness to learn, a desire to succeed, and the ability to demonstrate this through their accomplishments. The first scholarship awards were made in 1962.

In the 1970's, the TC JACL Scholarship program received a large sum of money from the Twin Cities Independent Church, a Japanese Christian church in Northeast Minneapolis, after its sale. It was the wish of the church members that the money be used to encourage further education.

Many of the scholarship that followed were established in memory of the loved ones of JACL members. One of the earliest and longest awarded memorial scholarship was the Earl Tanbara Memorial Scholarship, made in memory of Earl Tanbara, who passed away in 1973. The Earl Tanbara Memorial Scholarship has been awarded to over 40 students through the years. Another long-standing memorial scholarship was established in memory of Susan Tsuchiya Matsumoto who passed away at the young age of 26 in 1980 after a 15 year battle with cancer. This scholarship continues to be awarded to a young person who, like Susan, demonstrates outstanding academic accomplishments, excellence in the arts, and community service. Many other memorial scholarships have been made possible through the generous donations of TC JACL members.

Since the first year the TC JACL scholarships were awarded, the young people that have applied for these scholarships shared the same traits as their predecessors: a willingness to learn, a desire to succeed, and the ability to demonstrate this through their accomplishments. The criteria for the scholarship have remained essentially the same over the years: scholastic achievement, community service, and extra-curricula activities. If you are interested in learning more about these scholarships, please contact scholarship@tcjacl.org. Donations may be sent to TC JACL scholarship c/o Fred Tsuchiya, 5311 Scenic Heights Drive, Minnetonka, MN 55345. Scholarship information submitted by Pam Dagoberg

WHERE IS “WALDO”?

Do you remember that book? The one in which Waldo, a rather tiny guy, is hidden amid many colorful and intriguing images? Have you ever found him? Do you know where he is? Some of us have wondered whatever has happened to our former scholarship recipients. Where are they? And what have they accomplished and what are they doing now?

These questions were answered by Tensho Takemori. He writes (edited) “...My parents were Akira E. and Valerie Takemori, and I was awarded the Earl Tanbara Scholarship in 1984, for which I am forever grateful. I realize these scholarships are awarded and sometimes there is no feedback on the impact they have had. I can tell you this scholarship was an important piece for me in starting my upper education.

I attended the University of Colorado, Boulder, where I used the scholarship. After that I worked for a year in an architecture office in St. Paul, and then moved to Los Angeles to attend UCLA, where I earned a Masters of Architecture degree. Next I started working for Frank Gehry, a well-renowned architect, who designed the Weisman Museum in Minneapolis. I have worked at his firm for the past 28 years and am now a partner. I've been lucky to be involved in projects of all different types all over the world. Mostly, I just wanted you to know that your scholarships matter, and they help us on our way to great things. I am forever thankful for our help early in my career. Best, Tensho Takemori”

Another past recipient is **Hannah Hintermeister**, a 2020 graduate who won a State Swim title last spring before graduating. Go to https://www.hometownsource.com/sun_current/community/richfield/hintermeister-wins-state-swim-title/article_7a916ca0c0d-11ea-938e-fb4c06ad241a.html

A 2017 recipient is **Erik Dagoberg** who recently appeared in “A Beautiful Country” by Chay Yew at the University of Michigan. Erik is an acting major in the university's School of Music, Theater, and Dance. One of the characters he portrayed was Yoshi, a high schooler incarcerated at Manzanar. See <https://www.michigandaily.com/section/arts/beautiful-country-blooms-virtually>



DAY OF REMEMBRANCE

Sunday, February 21, 2021

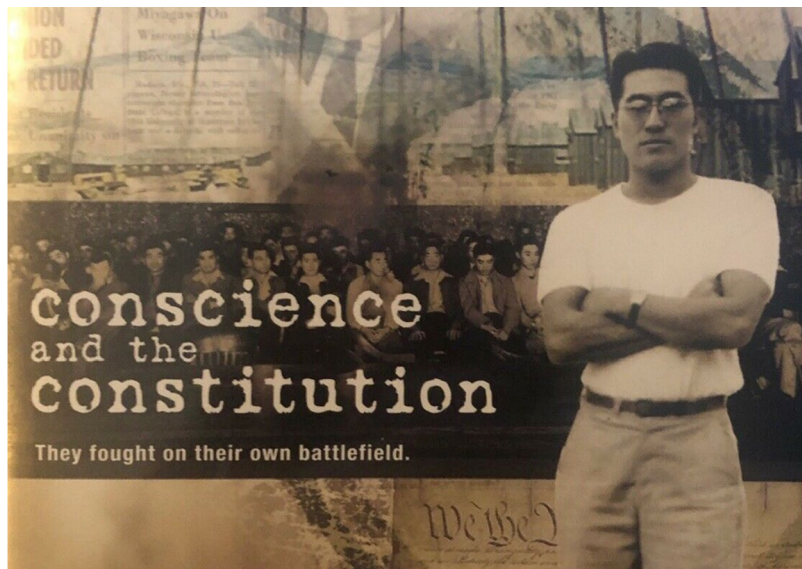
4:00-6:00 p.m. CST

The Twin Cities JACL is commemorating the 79th anniversary of the signing of Executive Order 9066 with a "Day of Remembrance" program that will be presented on Zoom.

The program includes the screening of "**Conscience and the Constitution**," an hour-long, award-winning PBS documentary that tells the story of the draft resistance movement at Heart Mountain during World War II.

A dialogue on the contemporary significance of the film will follow the screening, featuring Frank Abe, the film's writer, producer, and director, and Jaylani Hussein, executive director of the Minnesota chapter of the Council on American-Islamic Relations (CAIR).

To register for the program, visit: <https://tinyurl.com/DOR2021>. The program is funded by: donor advised fund St. Paul and Minnesota Foundation.



About the speakers:

Frank Abe is a journalist, reporter, writer, producer, director, actor, and a founding member of the Asian American Theater Workshop in San Francisco and of the Asian American Journalists Association in Seattle. His involvement with producing the two original "Day of Remembrance" events in Seattle and Portland gave media attention to the campaign for redress. He received the 2019 American Book Award for "John Okada: The Life and Rediscovered Work of the Author of No-No Boy." Recently retired, he has been busy with various projects including co-authoring a graphic novel, "We Hereby Refuse," available this February.

Jaylani Hussein is the executive director of the Minnesota chapter of the Council on American-Islamic Relations (CAIR). His family emigrated from Somalia to Minnesota in 1993. Hussein holds degrees in community development and city planning from St. Cloud State University and political science from North Dakota State University. He has collaborated with the Twin Cities JACL on various programs to discuss the relevance of the Japanese American incarceration in the present day and to foster understanding within the broader community.

Cipher in Chief: Paul Nakasone

Four-star general Paul Nakasone, son of longtime JACL members Bud and Mary Nakasone, is featured in a multi-page article, "Cipher In Chief" by Garrett N. Graff, in the November issue of Wired. The article can be accessed at: <https://www.wired.com/story/general-paul-nakasone-cyber-command-nsa/>. This is a must-read article about how Paul was the architect behind the development of Cyber Command that came into existence in 2010 and is now an integral part of our military. Cyber Command defends US military networks against cyberattacks and conducts cyberwarfare. An example of the latter was the disruption of ISIS networks, blocking their accounts, deleting files, and disabling online operations.

Paul currently oversees both NSA (National Security Agency) and Cyber Command. NSA did not allow him to be interviewed for this article. Graff drew upon his interviews with current and former officials from the White House, government, intelligence agencies, and the military. From those interviews, Paul is described as a leader who is very intelligent, hard-working, people-oriented, well-liked, and a respected leader. The article begins noting that Paul grew up with Bud's memories of December 7, 1941 when he witnessed the Japanese planes on their way to attack Pearl Harbor.

I spoke with Bud and Mary about the article. Bud shared that Paul went to St. John's University in Minnesota on a ROTC scholarship. The day after he graduated, he went to Fort Carson for training. Bud was in military intelligence, and Paul intentionally followed him into Army intelligence. According to Graff, Paul has "done more than perhaps any other military or civilian leader...to push, drag, and pull the United States into thinking through what warfare will look like in the 21st century." To find out how he did this, read the article.

Submitted by Gloria Kumagai

This article was published prior to the massive cyberattack on multiple agencies done by Russia. I wonder how NSA and Cyber Command are reacting to this.

From the TC JACL Board

Summary of December 2020 meeting

- The organization has a storage unit for items belonging to JACL
- Renting a mailbox is under consideration
- Anti-blackness workshops presented by Vini and Roy Kawai several months ago were well received
- No vote yet on whether to endorse a Mpls. Mayor or a City Council resolution regarding policing
- A Next Generations workshop's first meeting was on December 14, 2020.
- Vini has set up an Instagram account; go to <https://www.instagram.com/twincitiesjacl/>
- Board is encouraging calling or writing your U.S. Representative re HR 8637, a bill advocating for making the Japanese American Confinement sites program permanent and funding educational programs re the JA incarceration during WW II

2021 TC JACL Visioning Meeting

Purpose – to discuss the chapter's goals and visions; what are currently top priorities for our chapter as we work with other civil rights organizations and community groups; to have our chapter's mission in line with the National JACL's ongoing mission which is "to secure and maintain the civil rights of Japanese Americans and **all others who are victimized by injustice and bigotry.**"

Possible topics for discussion include, but not limited to policing and prison reform, drug and sex work decriminalization, and Black reparations. The meeting is on Saturday, January 23.

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MnDOT's Inaugural Name a Snowplow Contest!

During the 2020-2021 winter season, we'll be officially naming eight snowplows – one in each of our MnDOT districts to spread the love across the state.

It's your time to shine, Minnesota: We need your creative, witty, punny, and fun ideas for snowplow names! The submission form will be open until January 22, 2021.

In February, we'll share some of the best name ideas and invite you to vote on your favorites. The eight names that get the most votes will soon make their way onto a snow plow near you.

For more info, go to <https://www.dot.state.mn.us/namesasnowplow/>

TC JACL Endorses National JACL Petition

The National JACL has endorsed the petition supporting the only Japanese American intermediate care facility for elderly Japanese and Japanese Americans residents. Pacifica Companies had submitted a proposal to the LA City Planning office to convert this facility into multi-family housing, with another 50 units, and a parking structure.

The Boyle Heights Neighborhood Council overwhelmingly opposed the redevelopment proposal. In accordance with a Fast Response to Sign-on Requests procedure adopted by TC JACL last September, Vini gave the chapter's endorsement. You can also show your support by signing the petitions at <https://tinyurl.com/sakurapetition> OR <https://tinyurl.com/sakurapetition2>



Next Book Club Meeting

The next book club meeting is on Saturday, February 6, at 4 p.m. We are meeting on Zoom to discuss Brandon Shimoda's [The Grave on the Wall](#). It explicitly takes up the problem of memory by later generations. "It is part dream, part memory, part identity." Contact Elaine Koyama 612-940-5002 or elainekoyama@gmail.com for more information.

From National JACL

- On Dec. 11, Representative Clay Higgins (LA-3) posted on his Facebook page a comparison of Japanese American WW II incarceration to the alleged disenfranchisement of Trump supporters in recent elections. The headline to the article in the JACL Weekly Digest claimed that "Higgins fails to Understand the Gravity of Claiming a Loss of Constitutional Rights. After JACL reached out to Higgins, he expressed an interest in meeting, though he is not available in the immediate future.
- Japanese American Confinement Education Act Updates indicate that the grant was included again in the final numbers of \$3.155M for the coming grant cycle. The proposed amount is for national recreation and preservation, rivers, trails, and conservation assistance, Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation grants, and supporting programs for Native Hawaiians. You can still ask your Representative to support JACE (Japanese American Confinement Education Act).

From the National JAACL, cont.

- On January 7, when President-elect Joe Biden announced his final Cabinet appointments, there was a lack of Asian American appointments which JAACL finds unacceptable. For the first time in 20 years, there will not be any Asian American representation in the Cabinet. Though speaking of seeking to be a President for all Americans, Biden's appointments fall far short of that ideal. This comes as a shock as there is no shortage of qualified Asian American candidates put forward to the transition team. JAACL does celebrate the nomination of Vanita Gupta to the role of Associate Attorney General. As the daughter of Indian immigrants, Ms. Gupta will act on the concerns of Asian American in restoring of civil rights protections in the Department of Justice.
- There is an APAICS and NCAPA Resume Bank for Presidential Appointments. To submit your resume, go to SurveyMonkey at bit.ly/AAPIResBank. Any questions can be asked via email resumes@apaics.org. For more info about the appointment process, types of appointments, and what to expect, please visit the Partnership for Public Service's "Ready to Serve" website: <https://presidentialtransition.org/readytoserve/> Access the resume bank submission form here: bit.ly/AAPIResBank.
- Following is an excerpt from JAACL's statement on the Capitol insurrection which occurred on January 6. For the full statement, go to policy@jaacl.org. "Today we have seen the culmination of months of seditious rhetoric from the President and his supporters... The storming of the Capitol [is] treason..should not go unpunished...Right-wing terrorists desecrated the Capital with violence and menacing intent...[considering] the abhorrent treatment of Black Lives Matter protestors during the summer...it sends a clear message to our fellow Americans and the rest of the world that the U.S. does not value Black lives. This is the epitome of white privilege. JAACL emphasizes the importance and the power of words and calls upon the media to report on

- situation accurately. These are not protestors; these are violent white supremacist terrorists...social media networks must also crack down on hate groups that have been using these outlets to openly plan the violent acts that have unfolded today."
- JAACL is asking for support of H.R. 40 which create a commission to examine the institution of slavery, its legacy, and make recommendations to Congress for reparations. Go to policy@jaacl.org to sign up for updates on H.R. 40.

From the Seattle JAACL

Join the Seattle JAACL in a series of free digital workshops for Nikkei young people and others who wish to attend, to build awareness and take responsibility for our own implicit bias of anti-Blackness through education, community building, and dialogue. The workshops are called "Uprooting anti-Blackness in the Japanese American Community", a series created through an intergenerational committee of API activists, including the moderator, Dr. Kyle Kinoshita. The purpose of the workshops is to give participants the anti-racist tools one needs to navigate world today. Parts 1 and 2 have already been held on Saturdays in November and December. However, there are 3 more workshops to come. For questions, go to the Seattle JAACL website. Register at: tinyurl.com/seattlejaacl..

From Densho

A virtual book launch event will be held on January 21 at 6 p.m. CST for a new book by scholar and journalist Greg Robinson called The Unsung Great: Stories of Extraordinary Japanese Americans. The book showcases the lives and achievements of relatively unknown but remarkable people in Nikkei history. It devotes attention to Nikkei beyond the West Coast – including the communities of New York and Chicago, as well as the history of Japanese Americans in the U.S. South.



Densho’s podcast Campu tells the story of Japanese American incarceration like you’ve never heard before. Brother-sister duo, Noah and Hana Maruyama tell the story through voices of survivors who relate tales about mundane things. Episodes 1-3 have been available in 2020. Listen at densho.org/campu Episode 4 is called Cameras and uses pictures to look into the past, showing the visual record of WWII incarceration, and the stories that unfold from them. NOTE: Hana is a graduate student at the University of Minnesota. Her dissertation is on the relationship between the concentration camps and Native Americans. She also serves on the TC JACL Education Committee.

2021 Twin Cities JACL Board Members



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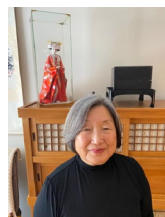
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Kathy Ohama Koch, organizer of the Twin Cities JACL Intergenerations Dinner in October 2001, with her husband Dave

Tribute to Kathy Ohama Koch

Kathy Ohama Koch, who served as a member of the Twin Cities JACL Board of Directors, as well as the inspiration for many of the chapter's programs, passed away on August 22, 2020 at the age of 73 years.

Kathy was born and raised in Minnesota. Her father, Robert Ohama, trained at the Military Intelligence Service Language School (MISLS) at Camp Savage during World War II. After graduation in December 1942, he served as a linguist in the Pacific Theater. He returned to Minnesota, married Grace Shioya, and together they raised their family.

Kathy, the eldest of four Ohama children, participated in many Japanese American/Asian Pacific American community organizations. In 1991, she and her mother came up with the idea to start a group to bring together local Nisei veterans, and the Japanese American Veterans of Minnesota (JAVM) was formed. Kathy served as secretary/treasurer, with Bud Nakasone as president, and Sam Honda as vice president. JAVM held an annual Memorial Day commemoration program for Japanese American veterans at Fort Snelling National Cemetery, which Kathy helped to organize.

Kathy and her mother were also involved with organizing and hosting a 50th anniversary commemoration of the MISLS at Camp Savage in May 1992, in collaboration with the Southern California MIS group. Themed "Sentimental

Journey," the reunion was attended by over 400 veterans and their family members.

As a Twin Cities JACL Board member and Education Committee member, Kathy was instrumental in helping to create the chapter's trifold displays on the MIS and on the 100th/442nd. She was on the committee that developed the MIS Curriculum and Resource Guide. For the chapter's 50th anniversary celebration in 1997, Kathy came up with the idea to create a cookbook with recipes collected from Twin Cities JACL members titled, "Bridging the Generations."

Kathy also chaired or served on organizing committees for many of the chapter's programs and activities including the summer picnics, intergenerational pot luck dinners, arts and craft classes, the MDC bi-district meeting in April 2001, Camp Savage 60th Anniversary commemoration program in May 2002, and film screenings and presentations. For many years, she and her husband, Dave, organized the chapter's annual Chrysanthemum Banquet with door prize drawings.

Other groups that Kathy volunteered her time were the Council on Asian-Pacific Minnesotans, the Nikkei Project, and the Dragon Festival committee.

In 1999, Kathy received the gift of a kidney transplant from her sister, Patty, which enabled her avoid having to undergo dialysis. During the past several years, Kathy's health conditions prevented her from participating in Twin Cities JACL activities and events.

Kathy is survived by her husband Dave, daughter Kristin, son Bob, daughter-in-law Annabelle, grandson Alex, and siblings Richard (Linda) Ohama, Patty (Rob) Lynn, Duffy (Kathy) Ohama, and nieces and nephews. She is interred at the Garden Mausoleum at Lakewood Cemetery in Minneapolis.

Kathy's numerous contributions to the Twin Cities JACL, the Japanese American community and the broader community are greatly appreciated. Her creativity, positive attitude, bright smile, and wonderful sense of humor will be dearly missed.

From Theater MU

As some of you may already know, Theater Mu is planning its first mainstage show since the beginning of the pandemic, starting the first week in February. It is called “Today is My Birthday”. In the production, Emily returns to Oahu after living in Manhattan. She becomes an actor on a radio dating show and ... The show will be broadcast LIVE from a streaming platform, February 5-14. For details about tickets, cost, and other questions, contact kevin@theatermu.org. For other Theater Mu events, go to www.theatermu.org.



Katie Bradley stars as Emily. Photo credit: Rich Ryan

“Auld Lang Syne” is a traditional Scottish folk song that is associated with New Year’s Eve celebrations in the United States and many other countries. In Japan, this same melody is often associated with school graduation ceremonies and known by the title, “hotaru no hikari”: the light of the fireflies. Although the lyrics are quite different, describing students studying diligently by the light of fireflies, both songs convey a sense of reflecting on the past and hoping for a bright future. More recently, the melody has been played by stores in Japan at closing time and performed on NHK on New Year’s Eve. Some Japanese American communities have long been singing both versions of the song on January 1, so what better way to say goodbye to 2020 and welcome 2021. For more info go to <https://tinyurl.com/hotarunohikari>.

From Instagram @TwinCitiesJACL

