



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

October 2026

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write message in box)

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PRESIDENT'S REMARKS

紅葉の美しさもう見えますか？

Can you see the fall colors yet?

The winds of change are upon us once again. As the summer sets for the year, we can look back in this issue on some very fond memories made at events over the past few months.

At the end of July, I had the privilege of representing our chapter at the JACL National Convention, this time with the help of board member Zenas Seiji Ikeda. Some of you may recognize Seiji's name as the mastermind behind our popular kamon (family crest) workshops. At Convention, Seiji shared his kamon workshop with the broader JACL community by hosting a booth, and one of the people who stopped by Seiji's booth to discuss her family kamon was Tamlyn Tomita, our upcoming Chrysanthemum Banquet honored guest! Get your [tickets](#) now! And read Seiji's full account later in this issue!

We also had the opportunity to get to know Lily Simmering, JACL's new executive director. She is a passionate and inspirational leader that I believe is well poised to guide JACL toward its fast approaching 100th anniversary! There were strong leadership transitions at many levels on the national board, and I was particularly excited to see the highly motivated young leaders who are exploring ways to improve the organization as a whole! I've seen that kind of ambition many times before, but never with the kind of determination and organization that this next generation is bringing with them. We'll be waiting to see how we can support them from here in Minnesota.

One last thing to mention about National Convention is that the JACL National Council adopted R-1, a Resolution in Support of Immigrant Communities Targeted by ICE. This was a resolution that our chapter co-sponsored in order to condemn the violence perpetrated by federal agents against our communities and honor the names of some of their victims, including Renée Nicole Macklin Good and Alex Jeffrey Pretti. It is also a reminder that the threat of ICE remains very real in the Twin Cities and that we cannot sit idly by as the new ICE detention center is established in Appleton. You can read the full text of this resolution, along with the many powerful resolutions passed since 1942, [here](#).

As always, please reach out if you would like to do more or have ideas of what your chapter should be doing to better support our community. And don't forget to read the rest of this issue so you don't miss any of the exciting community events coming up in the next few months!

コミュニティの秋になりますように。

May this be an autumn filled with community.

In solidarity,



Vinicius Taguchi
Chapter President

UPCOMING EVENTS FOR OCTOBER/NOVEMBER

October 2026 has become a milestone for the Twin Cities Chapter of JACL. The chapter has been planning for **FOUR** major events - the first event will be on October 8, and the last one will occur on October 24. Even though there has already been publicity about the events, here is information for you to know.

- **October 8 – Celebrating Bud Nakasone**



A member of Minnesota State.

Celebrating Century A Look Back with Bud Nakasone

Former professor and WWII Veteran

Join us for a special evening honoring Edwin “Bud” Nakasone’s service during World War II, his lasting contributions to Century College, and his lifelong commitment to education and community.



Photo by Defense Language Institute Foreign Language Center.

October 8, 2026
4 – 7 pm

4 - 5pm – WWII displays, organization
tabling, and registration

5 - 5:45pm – Program

6 - 7pm – Dinner and Community Fellowship

Featured Speaker

Paul M. Nakasone: *Son of Bud Nakasone*

Emcee

Kimmy Tanaka: Minnesota Historical Society &
Twin Cities Japanese American Citizens League
Education Committee.

For more information and to register scan QR code. Please
register individually. Questions: yanmei.jiang@century.edu.



www.century.edu/bud-nakasone

Century College, Lincoln Mall, East Campus, 3300 Century Avenue North, White Bear Lake, MN

Sponsored by Century College, Minnesota Historical Society, White Bear Lake Area Historical Society, and Twin Cities Japanese American Citizens League

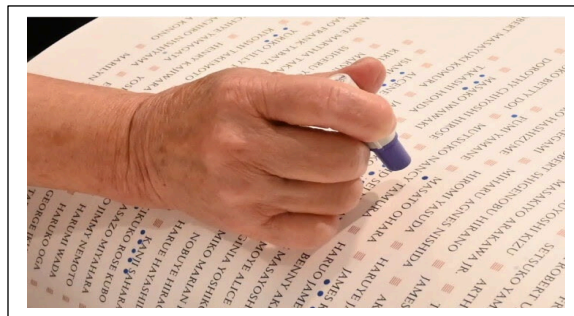
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This document can be available in alternative formats to individuals with disabilities by calling 651.444.2190 or emailing access.center@century.edu.

- **October 9-11 - Ireicho – The Book of Names National Monument for the WWII Japanese American Incarceration**

Ireicho is finally here at Historic Fort Snelling from October 9-11. As part of the experience, visitors can also visit the Plank Museum and the Visitor Center (17 Tower Avenue). For more information, visit MNHS or contact kimmy.tanaka@mnhs.org with questions.

Volunteers may still be needed on any one of the three days. If interested, email Kimmy Tanaka (email above).

Named after the Japanese term for “consoling the spirits,” the Ireicho monument honors both those who have gone before us as well as those who carry on the memories and legacies of forced removal, unjust incarceration, and family separation. Every visitor to the monument by marking one or more names in the Ireicho with a blue hanko stamp. For many camp survivors and descendants, leaving this mark has been a way to honor the personhood of a family member who suffered the indignities and losses of the wartime incarceration.



Marking a name with a blue hanko stamp

- **October 9-11-Densho – Community Scanning and Interviewing**

CORRECTED FORM – COMMUNITY SCANNING

We heard that the original signup form was not allowing people to submit. If you were trying to sign up, Please use the correct link below!

Densho has a two-fold purpose for being in the Twin Cities. The first, in partnership with the Twin Cities JACL and the Minnesota Historical Society, will host a Community Scanning event at Historic Fort Snelling. During this event, Densho staff will have a mobile digitization kit to scan historical photos, documents, and other materials for inclusion in the Densho Digital Depository. The Community Scanning day aims to provide families with an opportunity to digitize cherished photos and artifacts from the Pre-WWII, Exclusion, and Relocation periods, preserving these invaluable pieces of history for future generations.

Each family can bring up to 20 items for digitization. The staff can handle photographs, documents, and small artifacts. Unfortunately, bound items such as albums scrapbooks, or yearbooks cannot be digitized on site. All participants interested in scanning materials should complete the sign- up form found [here](https://forms.gle/e8NGj1LhGsDJCqLM6), Densho will contact you to schedule a date and time and answer any questions you might have.

<https://forms.gle/e8NGj1LhGsDJCqLM6>

- **October 9- 11 (same day as scanning) - Densho’s Living History Project**

This new oral history initiative is to document the community’s thoughts and experience in the current social and political moment, as we witness history taking shape in familiar and unprecedented ways. Densho began recording oral histories in 1996, but many of those who had lived through WWII incarceration had already passed away. So it is crucial that a project such as this be done NOW!

This project aims to:

- Create a collection of firsthand accounts of this moment for future generations.
- Record how memories of the WWII incarceration inform responses to current events.
- Create a historical record based on the experiences of everyday people, which can counter “official” narratives propagated by the government and those in power.
- Safeguard narratives that may otherwise be erased, distorted, or forgotten.

If you are interested in sharing your thoughts on the current moment, please contact densho.org/Living-History-Project or info@densho.org. The interviews last approximately 30-45 minutes and can be conducted in person or virtually by video call.

Submitted by Kimmy Tanaka on behalf of Irei Project and Densho

- **October 16-18 – Swingposium**

TCJACL is a proud sponsor of Swingposium, presented by TaikoArts Midwest and Theater Mu. Swingposium blends, taiko, big band music, swing dancing, and immersive theater to tell the true history of how Japanese Americans found hope despite being incarcerated in the internment camps during WWII. See and feel for yourself how Japanese Americans maintained morale during WWII as you step into an immersive theater experience. Expect to be moved by fear and loss, but equally inspired by the tenacity of these Japanese Americans—citizens and immigrants alike—to hold onto the light, even in the darkest of times. Produced by San Jose Taiko and co-presented by TaikoArts Midwest and Theater Mu, this nationally acclaimed show comes to CSPA Hall, 383 W Michigan St., St. Paul.

For tickets: bit.ly/swingposium-mn OR go to taiko.org/swingposium to find a link to purchase tickets. View a preview of Swingposium at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Z62wWoaKCg>

Submitted by Gloria Kumagai

- **October 24 – Chrysanthemum Banquet**

Please join us for this opportunity to greet Tamlyn Tomita and hear about her remarkable career. For more information, contact banquet chair, Lani Bennett, at lanibennett808@gmail.com

- **October 29 – TaikoArts Midwest’s Taiko Toshi**

Taiko Toshi is a celebration filled with powerful drumming vibrations a lion dance, and youthful energy at the North Garden Theater on Thursday, October 29th, at 7 pm. It’s not just an annual benefit concert for TaikoArts Midwest - it’s a party with food, performances, and honoring the essential role of the arts.

The word Toshi means to invest in Japanese. Taiko Toshi is an evening celebration of taiko. You’ll experience live taiko performances by Enso Daiko, Big Gravity, Edo Bayashi Ensemble, and the Mighty Drumming Club, all groups supported under the umbrella of TaikoArts Midwest. Enjoy food and conversation with members of our community, our very lively Taiko Jam for Cash, and a chance to meet some of the artists, educators, students, and supporters who make this organization what it is.



Submitted by Gloria Kumagai

- **November 14 – 2026 Mondale Gala**

JASM (Japan America Society of Minnesota) is happy to announce that Karen Tanaka Lucas will be the keynote speaker for the 29th Mondale gala on Saturday, November 14, at the Oak Ridge Country Club in Hopkins.

In her keynote, Karen will share an important chapter in Minnesota history. Most Minnesotans are unaware that Japanese was the first language ever taught by U.S. Military Intelligence, and that 6,000 Japanese linguists, mostly second-generation Nisei, were secretly trained in our state for military language intelligence during WWII. Karen's father was in the first class at Camp Savage in 1942. She will share his story.

Registration for the gala will open soon! Keep an eye on your inbox and the JASM website for registration details. A reception is from 5:30-6:30 pm. The banquet and program is from 6:30-9:30 pm. The dress code is business attire or kimono.



About Karen - Karen is a Sansei (third generation) Japanese American, born in post WWII Occupied Japan where her father was stationed with the U.S. Military Intelligence Service. She considers herself a native Californian, however. Karen received her bachelor's degree from Stanford University, but since attending graduate school, medical school, and residency at the University of Minnesota, she has been a Minnesotan for over 50 years. Karen retired after over 30 years as a family physician with Health Partners. She is a board member with the Twin Cities Japanese American Citizens League and volunteers on their education committee as well as being a part of the chapter's Speakers Bureau.

Submitted by Vini Taguchi on behalf of JASM

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Twin Cities JACL Scholarship News

Undergraduate / Graduate TCJACL Scholarship Applications Due 1 November 2026

Applications for Twin Cities JACL undergraduate/graduate level scholarships are due 1 November 2026.

Scholarship applicants must be active JACL – Twin Cities Chapter members (as of September 1, 2026) currently enrolled in a post-secondary educational program or graduate level program.

Applications can be found at <https://www.tcjacl.org/scholarships/apply/> . Only one scholarship may be received during a degree program.

2026 TCJACL High School Graduate Receives JACL National Scholarship

We recently learned Otaha Masaki, who graduated from St. Louis Park High School, was awarded a 2026 JACL National Scholarship! **Congratulations, Otaha!**

2027 High School Graduate TCJACL Scholarship Applications Available Soon

Twin Cities JACL scholarship applications for 2027 high school graduates will be available in January 2027 at <https://www.tcjacl.org/scholarships/apply/> . Applications will be mailed to the following candidates no later than January 31, 2027: Ewan Naohito Baker (Math and Science Academy - Woodbury), Ben Berger (St. Paul Central High School),

Emily Bly ((Irondale High School), Carter Klepp (Hudson High School), Naomi Kutz (Decorah (Iowa) High School, Jase Marella (Woodbury High School, Sienna Tanaka (Wayzata High School), Justin Trimbach (Hopkins High School), Kenji Webb (Minneapolis), Sachiko Webb (Minneapolis). Know of any other potential candidate(s) for this scholarship? Let Pam Dagoberg (Scholarship Chair) know by January, 1, 2027 at scholarship@tcjacl.org

In addition to completing the application form and submitting a transcript, students must write a short essay entitled "How JACL Has Affected My Life Or The Lives Of People I Know." Applications will be evaluated based on scholastic achievement, extracurricular activities, community service, and essays.

Another scholarship is available. Students may apply for the Twin Cities JACL Service Scholarship. This scholarship will be awarded to a student who has demonstrated outstanding Twin Cities 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 applicants must be current Twin Cities JACL members (individual student membership or family membership is required). Membership information can be found at www.tcjacl.org

2026 High School Graduate TCJACL Scholarship Recipients

The 2026 high school graduate scholarship recipients, photographed at the 2026 Scholarship Banquet. Pictured seated are Marco Takekawa-Litgen (Woodbury High School) and Addison Neitz (Wayzata High School). Standing are Ryan Shiroma (St. Paul Academy and Summit School) and Raegan Dean (Prior Lake High School). Not pictured is Maxwell George Murakami (Byron High School).



Past TCJACL Scholarship Recipients – What Are They up to Today?

Simon Kutz, recipient of the Susan Matsumoto Memorial Scholarship High School Graduate Scholarship, and the TCJACL Service Scholarship, was elected as the new National Youth/Student Council Representative at the JACL National Convention, meaning he now leads all of the district youth/student representatives and has a seat on the JACL National Board. Simon first connected with us in 2022, while he was a high school student in Iowa! As the closest JACL chapter, Simon became a member of TCJACL and went on to serve as the Midwest District Youth Chair before moving to the Eastern District Council to pursue his college degree.

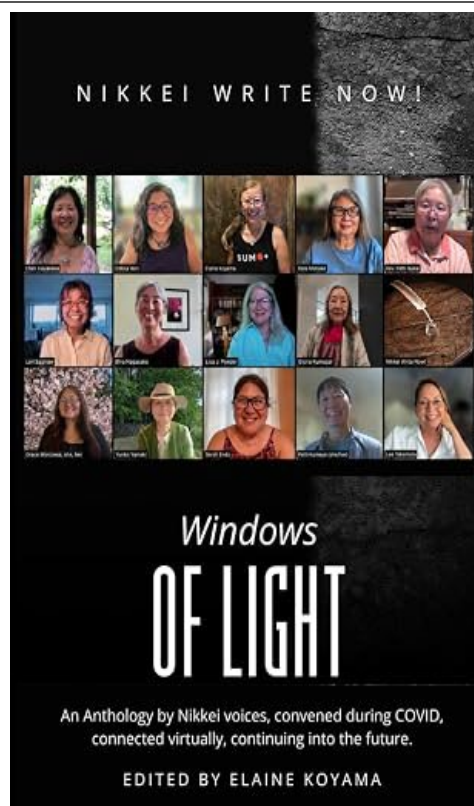
Erik Dagoberg, recipient of the Tom and Reiko Ohno Memorial High School Graduate Scholarship and the Tom and Reiko Ohno Memorial Undergraduate Scholarship, will be performing at the History Theatre as part of the Raw Stages reading of R.A. Shiomi's Standing Tall on October 11.

We'd love to hear what you've been up to since receiving your scholarship! Share your achievements, milestones, or any updates you'd like to feature in an upcoming issue of The Rice Paper. Please send your updates to scholarship@tcjacl.org Your story could inspire future scholarship recipients!

Additional Scholarship Information

- Information about the history of the Twin Cities JACL scholarship program – <https://www.tcjacl.org/scholarships/history>
- Donations can be sent to Twin Cities JACL Scholarship c/o Fred Tsuchiya, 5311 Scenic Heights Drive, Minnetonka, MN 55345
- Interested in learning more about available scholarships? Contact Pam Dagoberg at scholarship@tcjacl.org

OTHER OPPORTUNITIES



Windows of Light A Nikkei Write Now! Anthology

In September 2024 when I logged in to my first meeting of the Nikkei Write Now! virtual writing group, I was greeted by friendly faces, including Elaine Koyama and Gloria Kumagai of TCJACL. This Zoom call started a wonderful adventure. In the twice-monthly meetings, members showed me a wide range of approaches to stories of Nikkei, people with Japanese ancestry outside of Japan. We shared writing exercises, our work, and information on researching Nikkei. We cheered each other on as we wrote. Elaine, a published author now based in New Mexico, invited past and current group members to contribute to this anthology *Windows of Light*. We appear on the cover in little Zoom squares, our stories shedding a little light onto the world.

Nikkei Write Now! originated from a 2021 writing workshop led by Alden Hayashi during the Tadaima! A Community Virtual Pilgrimage. Alden and pilgrimage director Kimiko Marr contributed insightful and heartfelt front and back matter for this anthology. As Elaine writes in the preface, *tadaima* means, “I’m home!” The Tadaima! pilgrimage declared a home for Nikkei living in places that hesitate to respond *okaeri* (“Welcome home!”); Nikkei Write Now! speaks the truth of Nikkei experience, leaving evidence that Nikkei are in fact home.

As a Yonsei whose parents were born and raised in Hawai‘i, I was taught that the Japanese American incarceration had nothing to do with us. We were lucky. I felt strange when white people asked, “Was your family incarcerated?” Although they expressed sincere concern, I felt like I might have disappointed them when I said no and the conversation hung awkwardly. I now believe that the incarceration affected me because I felt (and still feel) residual shame being Japanese American. This shame originated in the social climate that produced the incarceration camps—a climate that evolved, but has not disappeared. My US history textbooks summarized the incarceration in a sentence or two, but I now understand that all American stories, Nikkei incarceration and otherwise, help me understand who I am and who we are as a nation.

I have not yet read the entire collection, but as I peek through *Windows of Light* I visit facets of Nikkei experience stretching from Hawai‘i to Canada and across the continental United States. Some stories reach to Europe and Japan as well. *Windows of Light* lets you sit in Nikkei kitchens, beat a taiko drum, follow writers as they search for ancestors in photographs, newspaper clippings, and shreds of family stories. The shifting ground between languages. Wartime fire. Community fire. The wonder of flowers. A miracle of fry bread. At the end of the volume appears some writing prompts that might inspire you to release bits of your story, too. In *Windows of Light*, you may see yourself in the past or present, or possibilities of what the Nikkei in your life might become.

You can order *Windows of Light* through Amazon here:

<https://www.amazon.com/Windows-Light-Elaine-Koyama/dp/BOH8TJMB44/>

Submitted by Patti Kameya

WANTED – 2026 Kakehashi Project Trip Chaperones

As of last week, National JACL was still looking for more volunteers to act as one of 6 chaperones for the Kakehashi trip to Japan in December 9-16. This year’s Kakehashi Project will comprise 55 participants who will travel to Japan to deepen their understanding of Japan’s economy, society, history, diverse culture, politics, and diplomatic policies through people-to-people exchanges. If interested, go to jacl.org/kakehashi

MinnPost Festival 2006

MinnPost Festival is an afternoon of onstage conversations about the year we've just lived through, with the people at the center of it. It will be held on **Saturday, October 10, noon to 6**, at Westminster Presbyterian Church in downtown Minneapolis.

Four of the ten sessions:

- The opening keynote is a conversation with Minnesotans who won this year's John F. Kennedy Profile in Courage Award for how the Twin Cities responded to Metro Surge: Imam Yusuf Abdulle, Superintendent Zena Stenvik, and organizer Carolina Ortiz on what they did and what it cost.
- Dr. Ibram X. Kendi on his new book, *Chain of Ideas*, which traces how "great replacement theory" traveled from the fringes of French nationalism into authoritarian movements around the world and what it will take to push back.
- Julia Ainsley, NBC News' senior homeland security correspondent, on *Undue Process*, her new book on how the mass deportation program was built and run, in conversation with Chao Xiong of *Sahan Journal*, who led the local reporting on what it did here.
- Jonathan Swan, White House correspondent for the New York Times, on *Regime Change*, the inside account of this White House he wrote with Maggie Haberman that everyone seems to be reading right now.

The rest including Feeding Our Future prosecutor Joe Thompson, Secretary of State Steve Simon, the USAID whistleblower, a midterm forecast, and live music to close it out is [in the full lineup here](#).

For tickets: [MinnPost Festival 2026 Tickets, Saturday, October 10 • 11:30 AM - 6:30 PM | Eventbrite](#)

Submitted by Gloria Kumagai

Go Go Go Kansha!

Join JACL Chicago at Kamehachi Northbrook for the Go Go Go Kansha! Fundraiser celebrating 15 years of their flagship program, the Kansha Project. Founded in 2011, the Kansha Project connects self-identified Japanese Americans, ages 18-25, from the Midwest to their identity, history, and community in engaging in an immersive educational trip to Los Angeles' historic Little Tokyo neighborhood and Manzanar National Historic Site.

As a fundraiser, all proceeds will support the chapter's ongoing work and programs, including the Kansha Project. For additional information, contact rebecca@jaclchicago.org

RECENT EVENTS

A World Championship for the U.S.

The United States wheelchair rugby team won its first global title in 26 years, beating rival Australia in the World Championship final in Sao Paulo, Brazil, on Sunday, August 23. CONGRATULATIONS!

Accompanying his son, Chuck, to Brazil was Andy Aoki, a professor at Augsburg College and a TCJACL member.

The 2026 Wheelchair Rugby World Championship was the 9th international game (it is played every 4 years) and was participated in by the world's top twelve national teams. The U.S. defeated Australia in the finals by a score of 57-51 to claim their first title in 16 years.



Chuck and Andy Aoki
Check out that huge trophy!

Submitted by Carolyn Nayematsu

Taking Shape – A Malleable Ceramic Public Art Installation

The Taking Shape clay exhibit opened at Normandale Community College on Wednesday, September 16, in conjunction with the 50th Anniversary of the Normandale Japanese Garden in Bloomington. Unfortunately, the exhibit closed on Sunday, September 28. Juliane Shibata, a TCJACL member and ceramic artist, worked with community members at the Northern Clay Center in Minneapolis and two sections of ceramic students at Normandale Community College whose ceramic creations were a part of the exhibit. Two of our chapter members, Cheryl Hirata-Dulas and Gloria Kumagai created ceramic items at one of the workshops.

About the Artist and Organizer – Juliane Shibata is a ceramic artist and educator based in Northfield, MN. Her work is informed by the Japanese concept of mujo (mutability and impermanence) as well as the Pattern and Decoration movement. Juliane draws viewers to her work through the rhythm of repeated forms that visually energize the space around them. Her temporary installations in unexpected spaces draw attention to both the nature of our own existence in relation to the constructed environment and to traces of activity in and around the architecture we encounter.



Taking Shape is a large-scale collaborative ceramic public art installation made in partnership with the Japan America Society of Minnesota (JASM). It is a group project, conceived and led by Juliane, that includes over a thousand floral-shaped pieces made by over 45 individuals, most of whom had not had any previous art or ceramic experience. TCJACL members Cheryl Hirata-Dulas and Gloria Kumagai participate in designing stamps out of clay that visually communicate an element of their heritage. Once the stamps were bisque fired, participants used the stamps to transfer their designs onto slabs of clay. They then used cookie cutters shaped like cherry blossoms to create the installation components.

Viewers are able to touch, manipulate, and move some of the component. Juliane hopes to encourage reflection about whom art is for, what role it can play in civic life, and what impact every individual can have on the environment around them as they design, shape, and re-shape the artwork.

This project was made in collaboration with Como Park Zoo and conservatory, JASM, Normandale Community College, Northern Clay Center, and Northfield Arts Guild. Juliane is a fiscal year 206 recipient of a Creative Individuals grant from the Minnesota State Arts Board. This activity is made possible by the voters of Minnesota through a grant from the Minnesota State Arts Board, thanks to a legislative appropriation from the arts and cultural heritage fund.

Juliane has received many grants to continue her work. She has been a resident artist in Virginia, New York, North Carolina, and even China. She has also worked in the College of Biological Sciences Conservatory at the University of Minnesota.



From the left – Gloria Kumagai, Juliane Shibata, and Cheryl Hirata-Dulas holding their own ceramic pieces.



May 21 Workshop Participants
Northern Clay Center



May 28 Workshop Participants
Northfield Arts Guild



Ordway Gardens (installation site)
Como Park Zoo & Conservatory



Ceramic cherry blossoms ready to be installed

Obon Festival

On August 16th, the TCJACL hosted a booth at the Obon Festival in Como Park to raise funds for our chapter's ongoing work and projects. Thanks to everyone's support, we raised approximately \$2,217.00.

A big thank you to the donors of the items contributed to the "re-used" side of our booth – Sylvia Farrells, Connie Fukuda Clark, Amy Dickerson, Mari Ito, Yuki Kato, Gloria Kumagai, Alexander Kumagai, Hisashi and Terry Kumagai, George and Judy Murakami, Chris Noonan, and Ken and Izumi Yoshitani.

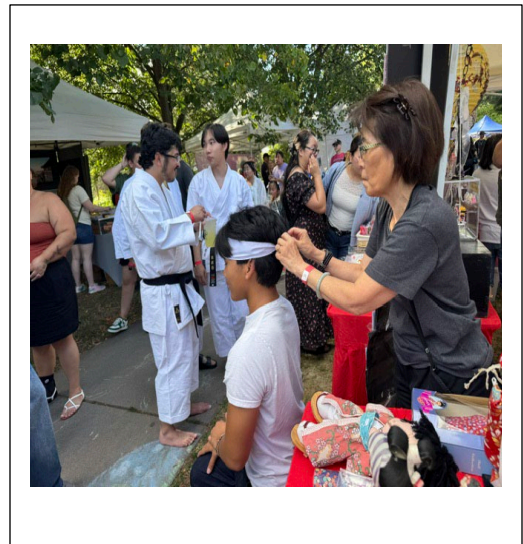
Another big thank you goes to the TCJACL members who volunteered their time to set-up and work at the booth on the day of the festival – Claire Biolo, Dallas Cordahl, Amy Dickerson, Mike Dickerson, Krista Hanson, Yuki Kato, Gloria Kumagai, Karen Tanaka Lucas, Carolyn Nayematsu, Phil Nomura, Tim Thompson, Lisa Tsuchiya, and Lynn Yamanaka.

And the BIGGEST thank you to Steve Lucas who provided a lot of muscle by hauling merchandise and other supplies from our storage unit in his trailer, as well; he also helped with set up and take down and back to the storage unit with the unsold items. MUCH APPRECIATION TO ALL!!!

We all enjoyed the beautiful weather, and the festival had a wonderful turnout of 8,530 people. To all of you, thank you all for making this event a success.



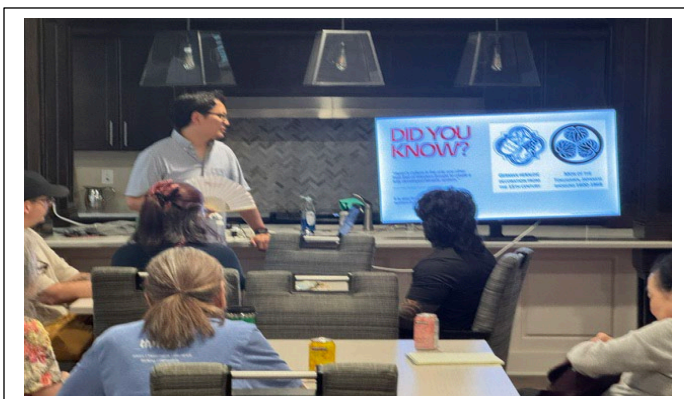
Some of the outstanding crew selling some of the donated treasures.



Helping a young man tie on his newly bought headband.

Submitted by Amy Dickerson

July Kamon Workshops



Session 2 participants concentrating on the presentation

TCJACL Board member Seiji Ikeda conducted two workshop on Japanese family crests, known as *kamon* (KAH-mown), in July. During the first session, participants learned how *kamon* combine history, symbolism, and elegant geometric design and were guided through drawing a selection of classic crest designs. The second session challenged participants to explore their values, experiences, and symbols that shape their own identities.

These workshops were very well-received. Participants rated them as excellent in learning about *kamon* – its history, thinking about their own values, and applying them to create their own personal *kamon*, and wanting more workshops on *kamon*.

We are very fortunate to have Seiji on the TCJACL board. He is an Associate Professor of Graphic Design at the University of Minnesota and has broad expertise as a visual communication designer, digital artist, and educator. His visual artwork and designs have been featured nationally and internationally in Japan, Korea, China, and Europe. His *kamon* website is Nikkeiatelier.com

Submitted by Gloria Kumagai

Thanks To All Our IFest Volunteers

Thank you to all our dedicated volunteers who worked at IFest 2026, the revival of what was the Festival of Nations after a 6-year hiatus. The event was held at RiverCentre for two days, April 10th and 11th instead of the 4 days it used to be open. It was downscaled to half of its original footprint. The number of food and merchandise vendor had not fully recovered from the Pandemic and ICE, but there were still four to five thousand students on Friday which kept the early sales shifts very busy. Volunteers this year had a lot of fun reconnecting with or meeting other JACLers. We raised just over \$4,000 for TCJACL activities for the coming year. The energy from several performances stages, food, and cultural demonstrations should serve to build even more enthusiasm for next year.



Left to right – Lynn Yamanaka, Amy Dickerson, Karen Tanaka Lucas, and Krista Hanson

Many thanks to:

- Steve Lucas for transporting merchandise and booth furnishings from storage to RiverCentre and back.
- Phil Nomura, Steve Lucas, Amy Dickerson and Karen Lucas for setting up the booth and lanterns
- Lynn Yamanaka, Krista Hansen, George Murakami. Judy Murakami, Tim Thompson, Gloria Kumagai, Kassian Vaubel, Connie Fukuda, Dave Clark, Phil Nomura, Cheryl Hirata-Dulas, Chris Noonan, Steve Lucas, Amy Dickerson and Karen Lucas for hard work in sales
- Thanks to Connie Fukuda, Dave Clark, Phil Nomura and Steve Lucas for helping to take down the booth

(My apologies to anyone accidentally left off)

Submitted by Karen Tanaka Lucas

Update: Alien Enemies Act Descendants' Amicus Brief - Court Decision

[ACLU press release](#), August 14, 2026

The full Fifth Circuit Court of Appeals in New Orleans today dismissed [W.M.M. v. Trump](#), a case challenging President Trump's invocation of the Alien Enemies Act. The court ruled the case was moot because plaintiffs have since been removed under immigration laws, not the Alien Enemies Act. The court did not rule on the merits of the lawsuit. The ruling stems from a case filed by the American Civil Liberties Union and the ACLU of Texas challenging the president's use of this centuries-old wartime act in peacetime.

The Supreme Court previously blocked the Trump administration from using the Alien Enemies Act to remove Venezuelans who were being detained in northern Texas and told the Fifth Circuit to expedite the appeal, while keeping a stay in place. In September 2025, a three-judge panel of the Fifth Circuit rejected the administration's assertion that the wartime authority's invocation was lawful because an "invasion or a predatory incursion has occurred." The Trump administration then sought a hearing before the full appeals court, which heard the case in January 2026.

The ACLU has other legal challenges to the Alien Enemies Act ongoing throughout the country. If appropriate, the descendants amicus brief will be used.

The following is reaction to today's Fifth Circuit ruling:

"The Supreme Court's injunction barring use of the Alien Enemies Act remains in place, which is essential because there are still people at risk of being wrongly removed under the act without due process. The Fifth Circuit decision also doesn't change the fact that courts have overwhelmingly held that the use of this wartime authority during peacetime is unlawful," said ACLU attorney Lee Gelernt, who argued the case.

[The link to the full ruling is here.](#)

Submitted by Gloria Kumagai

JACL National Convention Report

Vini (President) & I went as the TCJACL delegates to the 56th National JACL Convention in Las Vegas, titled "Reigniting Our Purpose and Mission." The multi-day event took place July 29 to August 2 and had several delegate-related meetings we attended as well as topical lectures. As my first national convention, I was pleasantly surprised to meet so many Japanese Americans for the first time in my life.

I was most impressed with two things: the passionate and sympathetic speeches from the new Executive Director, Lilly Simmering; and the Young Adults sessions. Lilly mentioned that, as the overall financial lows we are facing are looming, we need to strap on our boots and revitalize as a grassroots organization—one that is based in our core of social justice. As all community-based organizations across the nation are facing difficult challenges, the message was clear that much effort will be needed in the next couple of years for all of us to grow and prosper. But given our long history of community and activism, we have a strong track record and foresee a realistic, bright future ahead.



Seiji Ikeda raising the "Twin Cities" voting card



The young adults session, entitled "The Next Chapter: Activating Nikkei Youth Towards Purpose and Action"

For the sessions given by Young Adults (25 or younger), the overall impression I had was a need to listen to their needs and to empower their choices. The sessions highlighted their struggles in raising interest in JACL and sustaining motivation as individual chapter organizations dwindle in numbers. They offered insights and possible solutions that were very thoughtful. Something our own Twin Cities chapter may consider looking into in the near future.

Significant business that was conducted was well stated by the media release emailed by National JACL on August 28, "JACL Looks to the Future Following Conclusion of 2026 National Convention." An excerpt:

"The National Council, JACL's governing body, adopted three resolutions, passed an exciting updated budget, and elected a new board for the next biennium. Resolution One, adopted by the National Council, focused on continuing and codifying JACL's support for immigrant communities and supporters of immigrant communities amidst the ongoing threat of ICE and immigration enforcement. Resolution Two looks ahead, calling upon the National Board and staff to craft a new strategic plan to take JACL into its 100th anniversary and beyond. The final resolution was an emergency resolution to combat the announced closures of National Archives and Records Administration (NARA) sites in California and Illinois, which hold documents that are related to the broader histories of immigrant communities and documents related to the Japanese American wartime experience."

"While there were no changes to the JACL Constitution and Bylaws, the National Council adopted a new budget for the next biennium. While budget approvals are normal for the governing body, this budget was a departure from previous ones. The National Council voted to approve the endowment funds withdrawal rate from 4% to 5% and empowered the board to increase the withdrawal by an additional percentage point if needed. This additional increase will support hiring additional staff positions, helping the organization expand its fundraising efforts, membership services, and policy capabilities."

On a more personal note, I also had an event table set up at the conference to discuss my research topic of kamons (Japanese family crests). I wasn't sure if people would even be interested, but it came to be that the discussions were deeply touching and filled with family history and insights. They were genuinely interested in learning more about their family's kamon and I felt honored to be able to share what I could with them. At one point, I was happily surprised when one said, "I'll be right back so I can get a 'kamon reading'." A 'kamon reading'? What a great phrase! And in the final hour of the convention, a dream scenario happened when actress Tamlyn Tomita came to my table! As a kid growing up in a small town in Kansas in the 80s, the first JA media representation I experienced was watching her and Pat Morita in the Karate Kid. So, I was in disbelief when Tamlyn was standing in front of me, let alone discussing a topic I'm passionate about. Someone pinch me! I was on cloud nine!



(L-R) Seiji Ikeda, Zara Espinoza, Vinicius Taguchi



Actress Tamlyn Tomita & Seiji Ikeda