



Inter-Generational Legacy of the Japanese American Community

Sponsored by the Japanese Community Center of the East Bay

Japanese Community Center of the East Bay, Inc.
c/o 310 - 8th Street, Suite 205
Oakland, CA 94607
(415) 763-2970

NON-PROFIT ORG.
U.S. POSTAGE
PAID
OAKLAND, CA
PERMIT NO. 265

THEME/PURPOSE

"THE INTERGENERATIONAL LEGACY..." is the story of a community and its evolutionary path. It is the story of the continuing cycle of conflict, struggle, and resolution which has spanned four generations of Japanese Americans and nearly 100 years of American history.

The first generation Issei came to America with dreams and aspirations only to be faced with the hostility and racism of a strange new land. They persevered; theirs were lives of daily struggle and accomplishment. They laid the foundation for the Japanese American community, a community full of conflict and strength.

The next generation, the Nisei, were born into the reality of a dual culture. Were they American or were they Japanese? They and their Issei parents were forced to endure the injustice and humiliation of internment during World War II. Nearly stripped of their pride and possessions, they fought to reestablish themselves in American society by rebuilding the foundations of their ethnic community.

The third generation Sansei and their Yonsei children live in a time marked not only by drastic changes in traditional values, but also by increased mobility, expanded occupational opportunities, and multi-ethnic exposure. Living amidst increased social and political awareness and changing social and ethnic consciousness, they have had to find their own way, casting off old values and lifestyles in search of new ones. Some have maintained their ties to the Japanese American community or have expanded into the Asian American community which emerged in the late 60's. Others have left the boundaries of ethnic community to find new circles of community among each of their own social, occupational and political spheres.

Japanese Americans find themselves faced with a new challenge—that of maintaining a sense of history and appreciation of their intergenerational legacy while at the same time being free of the traditional constraints which bind them. By spanning the experiences of four generations of Japanese Americans and examining the elements which have contributed to the current situation, we will focus on the PRESENT DAY MEANING OF COMMUNITY and explore the choices at hand for these people.

EVENTS

During the months of April, May, and June an array of activities will be sponsored by JCCEB to bring together community, friends, and others interested in the understanding of Japanese Americans to explore this legacy in the making. Through the innovative use of photography, live theater, panel discussion, performance art, and audience participation we will exchange experiences and generational perspectives as we move towards a greater understanding of this collective story.

Initially, a photography search and contest will be held to obtain photos depicting the experience of Japanese in America. Then, during the months of May and June, a series of forums will be held taking a look at what is happening in the Japanese American community today. Our final event and end product will be a documentation of our living drama. In late June, selected photographs will be woven together in exhibition. A cultural program will accompany the exhibit showing in highlighting the evolution of community. We invite and encourage your participation in the coming months.

PHOTO SEARCH AND CONTEST

All too often, the American history of people of color has been glossed over and left untold. There is a growing need for these stories to be documented, seen and heard. In the context of our examination of the legacy of the Japanese American community, we also wish to address the need of adding to the understanding of Japanese Americans for the Bay Area Asian Community as well as to the larger Bay Area Community.

Whether you're a novice or professional photographer, we invite your participation in a unique photo search and contest. We are seeking photos which capture and express something about the Japanese American experience and community. In other words, we are seeking photos of individuals (the famous, infamous, and otherwise), of families (at work, at play, in conflict) and of communities (changing, living, dying). Please feel free to broadly and creatively interpret the general categories of (1) the individual, (2) the family, (3) community.

We particularly encourage the submission of photos from personal family albums and collections which historically document growing up Japanese in America. We equally encourage the submission of contemporary and abstract photos which give us your vision of the future.

EXHIBITION AND AWARDS

Images selected for exhibition will be assembled on June 20th at the Jefferson Adult School Auditorium in Berkeley. The exhibition will then be installed for eight weeks at five branches of the Sumitomo Bank (Fremont, Oakland, Hayward, Pleasant Hill, and Albany).

In recognition of unique and outstanding images which historically document the past or creatively interpret the present and future, we will offer five cash awards of \$100 each.

Selection Committee includes:

Rick Murai, Photo Instructor, Yuba College
Jane Muramoto, KQED T.V.
George Yoshida, Berkeley Adult School

COMMUNITY FORUMS

Beginning in May, JCCEB will sponsor a series of Saturday evening forums which will utilize theater improvisation (Asian American Theater Company), panel discussions, and audience participation.

All forums will be held at the Jefferson Adult School Auditorium (Rose and Sacramento Streets, Berkeley). The forums will begin at 7:30 p.m.

MAY 1 "Making a Living: Changing Choices & Expressions"

What is the relationship between our work, community, and ethnic identity? How have the range of choices available to individuals in each generation of the Japanese American experience impacted upon our sense of community?

The following panelists will explore the meaning of community in relation to these past and present choices:

Heizo Oshima, retired nurseryman
Ruth Asawa, artist
Naomi Kubota, autoworker
Astor Mizuhara, adult school administrator
Dianne Yamashiro, co-director, Asian Health Services

Moderator: Ron Takaki, Professor, Ethnic Studies Department, U.C. Berkeley

MAY 15 "Family Ties: Lifestyles and Interpersonal Relationships"

Part I: The Contemporary Nikkei Family

What does family mean to you? By sharing lifestyle choices, we will explore the changes taking place within the Japanese American Family, how the legacies of the Issei and Nisei family impacts upon the Sansei and Yonsei.

The following panelists will provide personal experiences and commentaries:

Sandra Uyentun, Associate Asian American Studies; U.C. Berkeley
George Yoshida, resource teacher in Gerontology; Berkeley Adult School
Jim Okutsu, Assistant Professor Japanese American Studies; San Francisco State
Jean Whitenack, social worker at Asian Community Mental Health

Moderator: Gary Okahiro, History & Ethnic Studies; University of Santa Clara

MAY 29

Part II: Inter-Racial Marriage

Ethnic suicide or social acceptance? For some it raises doubts about the future of the Japanese American family and community—for others, it marks the successful assimilation of Japanese Americans. The following panelists will offer dialogue around the issue of intermarriage and assess the changing values underlying this trend:

Nikki Bridges, writer
Sandy Ouye, Director of Issei Board and Care
Michael Omi, lecturer, Department of Ethnic Studies; Mill College
Chiori Santiago, member of I-Pride
Jeanie Hibino, community activist

Moderator: Pat Southard, Minister of Lake Park Methodist Church; Oakland

JUNE 12

"Making Bridges: Centers of Community and Cultural Activity"

As the foundation of any ethnic community, institutions reflect the crises and changes a community faces, so too with the Japanese American community. Its institutions and organizations reflect significant changes and crises confronting Nikkei, especially the value of ethnic institutions. We will focus on the East Bay area as the following leaders from churches, civil rights groups and service organizations will discuss their current status and evaluate their future role in the Japanese community:

Ryo Imamura, M.S., M.F.C.C., Minister of the Buddhist Temple of Alameda
Grant Hagiya, senior minister of Berkeley Methodist Church

Phyllis Ogata from East Bay Japanese For Action community worker

Ben Takeshita, representative from Japanese American Citizens League

Gina Hotta, representative from Japanese Community Progressive Alliance

Moderator: Jere Takahashi, Assistant Professor, Ethnic Studies; U.C. Berkeley

PHOTOGRAPHY EXHIBITION AND CULTURAL SHOWING JUNE 20, 1982

An exhibition of photography collected over the previous months will combine contemporary works with family photos spanning the experience of the four generations of Japanese Americans.

A cultural show including live theater, dance, and music will highlight the evolution of Japanese American culture.

The program will begin at 1:00 p.m. at the Jefferson Adult School Auditorium.

PHOTOGRAPHY EXHIBITION AT SUMITOMO BANK

During July and August of 1982 the EXHIBITION will rotate at five branches of the Sumitomo Bank in Oakland, Fremont, Pleasant Hill, Albany, and Hayward.

PROJECT STAFF

Michael Yoshii, Project Coordinator
Eddie Uyekawa, Project Assistant

VOLUNTEERS (In Alphabetical Order)

Margie Barrows
Jonathan Hirabayashi
Nancy Ishibashi
Masako Kuroki
Linda Kuwatani
Kathy Leong
Rick Murai
Kenny Murakami
Jane Muramoto
Johnny Ng
Suzanne Niki

Jean Shimozaki
Pat Southard
Rick Tada
Jere Takahashi
Linda Takei
Russell Takei
David Tom
Verna Uchida
David Ushijima
George Yoshida

CONTRIBUTORS & SPONSORS

Zellerbach Family Fund
California Council for the Humanities
IBM
Ichinose Family Foundation
Pacific Telephone
American President Lines
Sumitomo Bank
Gerber Foods