













## Elizabeth Humbargar: Veteran Teacher Dead at 86

By Richard Hayashi

(Special to The Pacific Citizen)

STOCKTON, Calif. — A "saintly lady" passed away on July 9 five days after her 86th birthday. The lady was Elizabeth M. Humbargar, retired teacher born on 4th of July at Salina, Kansas. Little did she know then that she would spend half of her life as a teacher.

On July 14 funeral services were held at Cathedral of the Annunciation. Her friends, fellow teachers and former students came to pay their last respects. Messages of tribute and recognition of her accomplishments, especially her protest against internment of Japanese and Japanese Americans at the onset of World War II from Rep. Richard H. Lehman (R-Calif.) and state Assemblyman Patrick Johnston were read at the service. She was laid to rest at San Joaquin Cemetery.

Upon graduating from Kansas University as its youngest graduate she was hired to teach classes for returning WWI veterans. Even differences in ages did not preclude from gaining respect and admiration from the veterans. Her long teaching career was born here.

In 1924 she came to Stockton at the beckon of her sisters Sue and Catherine. All during 1924 she worked at various teaching jobs waiting for an opening at Stockton High School. In the fall of 1925 she was hired as an English teacher.

This was the beginning of her lasting friendship with Japanese American and foreign-born students that spanned over seven decades. She became more involved with her Japanese American students because of the many racial problems confronting them. Humbargar encouraged all of her students to attend college. It paid off for many of her Japanese American students who set an incalculable record of achievements after World War II.

In 1935 the Japanese government invited her and other American teachers to tour Japan, Korea and Manchuria.

They were selected because of their involvement with Japanese students.

When war broke out on Dec. 7, 1941, Humbargar publicly stood up for the rights of the Japanese Americans when it was unpopular to do so. She did all she could to help the people of Japanese communities caught in the mass hysteria and increasing racial tension.

In spring of 1942 the Japanese and Japanese Americans of Stockton and vicinity were evacuated from their homes and placed in the assembly center at San Joaquin County Fairgrounds. They were given less than a week to dispose of their property, store their excess belongings and pack all of their clothing and necessities for daily living into two suitcases per person.

She and her sister Catherine collected books for a library and borrowed books from local schools for use in makeshift classes. Classes were held at the center so students were able to receive their high school diploma before they were shipped inland to internment camps. Many of her fellow teachers assisted during this emergency. With all the bank accounts frozen, the Humbargar sisters used personal funds to purchase food and personal items requested by the students. Salami was high on the list of wanted items. The guards at the gate never suspected two pregnant looking teachers were smuggling "delectable" contraband tied to their waist.

Students wrote to her from Rohwer Relocation Center, Ark., asking for references to obtain outside employment and to enter college. She gladly wrote letters for them and also requested scholarships and financial aid. Because she wrote so many letters, the FBI had her and her sister on the list of suspected "subversive" persons for duration of World War II.

Throughout World War II, Humbargar and her sister were ostracized by her neighbors and friends. She received many malicious crank calls and hate

letters. This did not deter her support of Japanese Americans.

In the spring of 1943, a "hush hush" Japanese POW camp was activated at nearby Byron Hot Springs, west of Stockton. It was staffed with Japanese American language soldiers. Her home became a USO for them because all of California was off-limits to all Japanese American servicemen.

Starting January 1945, the War Relocation Authority started to close down the many internment camps. She and her sister opened their home as emergency shelter for returning Japanese families. She was a member of Stockton resettlement committee.

After 44 years of teaching Humbargar retired in 1969. She taught at Stockton High School and later at Stockton City College. Even after retirement she worked as a consultant for adult and foreign-born education. Not satisfied with the textbooks in use she wrote several manuals and handbooks which are still used today.

In 1970 she was given a testimonial dinner by 500 of her friends and former students. The Stockton Japanese American Citizens League chapter established a \$10,000 scholarship in her name. A \$500 scholarship is awarded annually to worthy Japanese American high school student and a \$250 scholarship to a San Joaquin Delta College Foreign student.

In 1978 the Japanese government decorated her with the Order of the Sacred Treasure, 4th Class, in recognition of her years of friendship and assistance to the Japanese community. She went to Tokyo to receive her decoration at a private ceremony held at the Foreign Office. She became the second American woman to receive such a decoration. The first was Elizabeth Gray Vining a Quaker teacher from Pennsylvania who was private tutor for four years to present Emperor Akihito, then crown prince. She was awarded the Order of Sacred Treasure, 3rd Class, in November 1950. She was selected by

## REDRESS

Continued from page 1

Councilman Mike Woo in the plaza of the Japanese American Cultural and Community Center.

"It's very important by marching, by sending letters, by making phone calls to congressmen to say it's not enough to make a promise," Woo said in his opening remarks. "It's great that the promise was made, but now it's important that the U.S. government follow through on that promise."

Although the bill granting redress was signed into law on Aug. 10, 1988, no money has been appropriated by Congress to fund it. The House Appropriations Committee has recommended \$50 million to fund redress in 1990.

However, the Justice Department estimates that 2,500 former internees have died since the bill was enacted and 200 more are dying each month. The coalition is seeking \$500 million in the next fiscal year (which starts Oct. 1, 1989) to provide redress to all of the estimated 16,000 surviving internees aged 70 or older in the next year.

### Woo's Encouragement

"We need to send the message very clearly that justice delayed is justice denied," Woo said, echoing the growing frustration of the community. "Let's all fight together against this amnesia which I think is one of our biggest problems, and fight for the rights of all American citizens especially those of Japanese Americans who were interned during World War II."

Also appearing on the program was George Nishinaka of the 100th/442nd

General Douglas MacArthur back in 1946. To this date only two American women have received this high award. It is very coincidental that both were teachers and shared the name Elizabeth.

An important chapter in the history of Stockton died with Elizabeth M. Humbargar - an early advocate of human rights, outstanding educator and concerned citizens.

Veteran's Association. Glen Kitayara and Julie Takaki brought a strong contingent from the Asian Pacific Island Student Union, a group of student organizations at colleges all over Southern California.

Kinnara Taiko and the Pacific Ballet Theater entertained the diverse crowd which represented all age and ethnic groups. Actor Sab Shimono read congressional testimony from a fisherman who died soon after redress was enacted.

Edward James Olmos of television's "Miami Vice" appeared as keynote speaker. The actor said he grew up in Boyle Heights among Japanese Americans and feels a special kinship to the community.

"This is a very important issue. thought it was settled a year ago," he said. "My heart is with every descendant who has already lost a loved one . . . who may have been interned and didn't live to see some justice being done."

## NJAHS Undōkai to Help 1990 Women's Exhibit

SAN FRANCISCO—This year, the Women's Exhibit Committee of the National Japanese American Historic Society has a prominent role in sponsoring the annual NJAHS undōkai on Sunday, Sept. 3, in the famed Japanese garden of the Shibata family's Mt. Ede Nursery.

Peggy Saika, the executive director of the Asian Law Caucus, has been selected as the mistress of ceremony for the entertainment program. For tickets, call: NJAHS, 1855 Folsom St Suite 161, (415) 431-5007. Only 50 tickets will be available until Aug. 2 for the picnic this year.

## ALOHA PLUMBING

Lic. #440840  
—SINCE 1922—  
777 Junipero Serra Dr.,  
San Gabriel, CA 91776  
(818) 284-2845 (213) 283-0018

# MILD SEVEN

An Encounter with Tenderness.

MILD SEVEN Lights



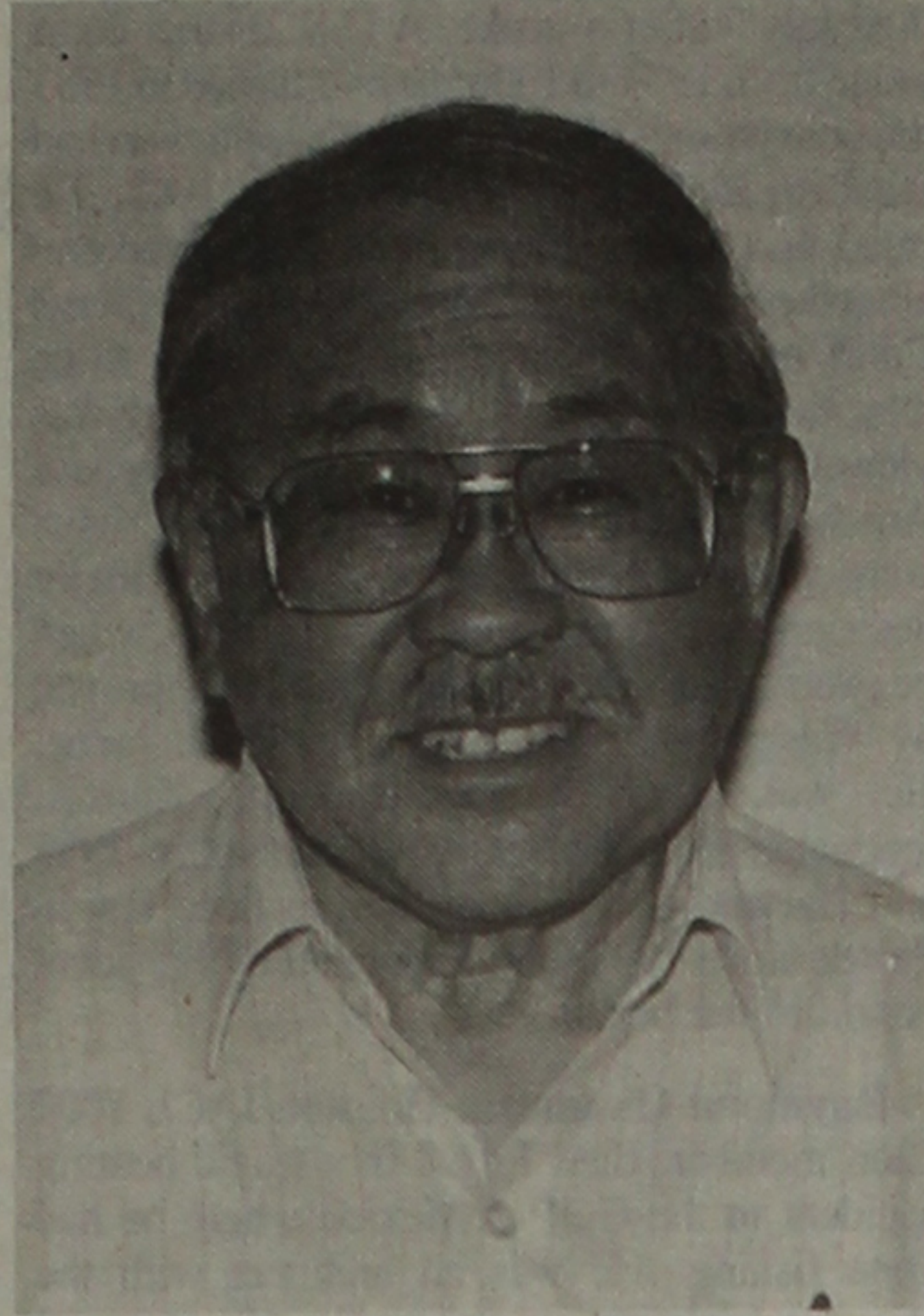
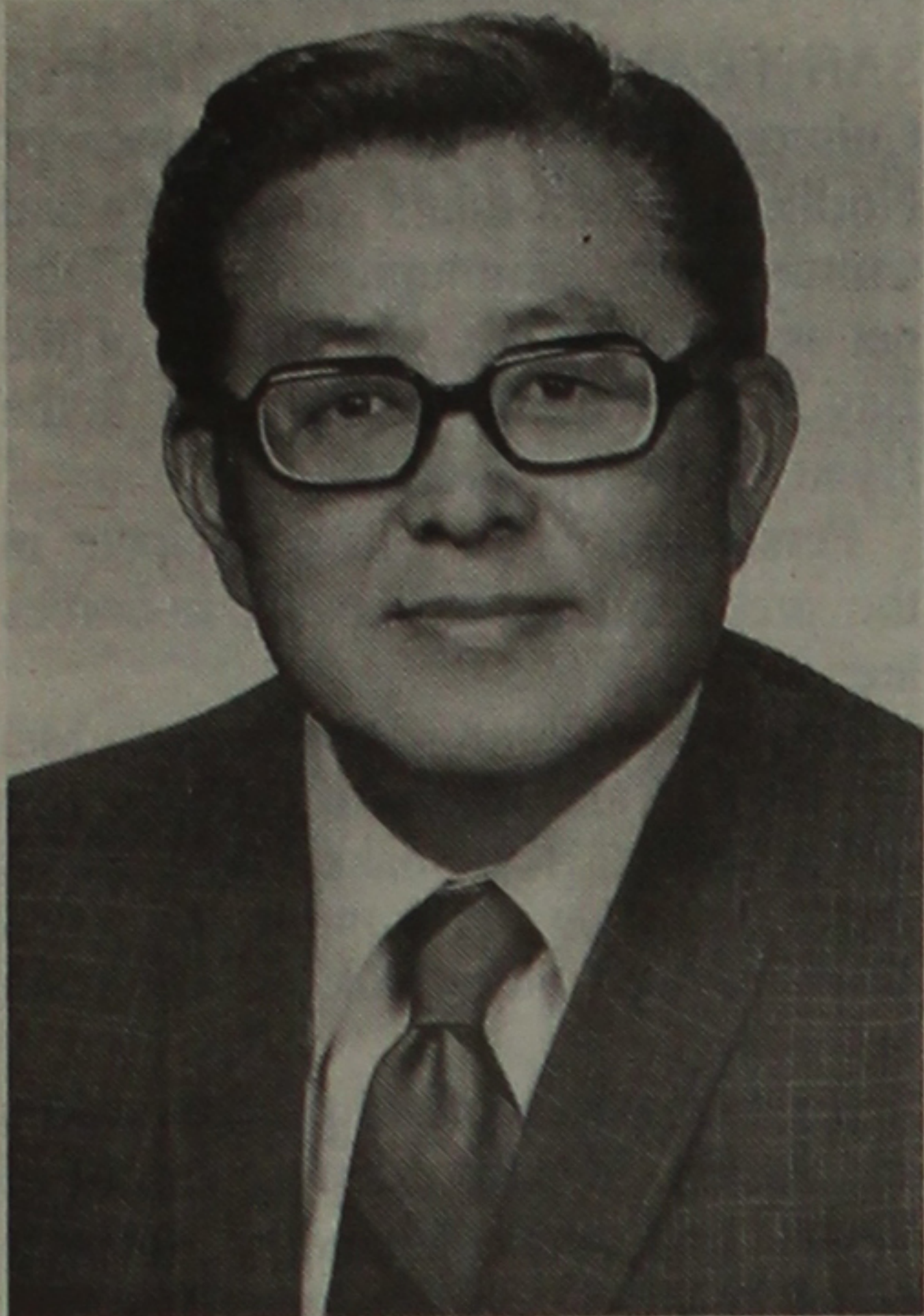
MILD SEVEN

SURGEON GENERAL'S  
WARNING: Cigarette Smoke  
Contains Carbon Monoxide.





THE NEWSMAKERS



STEPHEN NAKASHIMA

▶ Stephen Nakashima, 67, of San Jose was appointed by Governor Deukmejian on July 3 to the Regents of the University of California.

▶ Eugene Isamu Sugita, DDS, of El Cajon, Calif., was awarded first place in the graduate research competition for his paper entitled "Factors Influencing the Prognosis of Endodontic Therapy"

▶ David Koyama, Bellevue (Wash.) school district's affirmative action officer, has projected a 40% minority population for his schools by the turn of the century.

▶ Rep. Norman Mineta (D-Calif.) received the honorary Doctor of Public Service degree from Santa Clara University on June 3.

▶ Howard Taira Tokunaga, of Berkeley, was conferred the Ph.D. degree from UC Berkeley on May 29.

▶ Ken Noda, New York-born pianist-conductor, paired with flautist Eugenia Zuckerman at the month-long Seattle Chamber Music Festival July 8.

▶ Warren H. Maruyama of Takoma Park, Md., was appointed deputy director of international economic policy in President Bush's administration.

FRED HOSHIYAMA

▶ On June 17, Fred Y. Hoshiyama, Culver City, Calif., was inducted into the YMCA Hall of Fame at Springfield College, Mass.

▶ Judge Lance A. Ito, 38, of Pasadena, was appointed by Governor Deukmejian to the Los Angeles county superior court July 13.

▶ California Assembly Speaker Willie L. Brown Jr., appointed Claudine Cheng of San Francisco to the Housing Finance Agency board of directors.

▶ Sadae Iwataki, who started her ESL (English as a Second Language) teaching career in 1957 at Hobart branch of Cambria Adult School for the L.A. Unified School District, retired June 1.

▶ Stuart Takeuchi, 40, was named interim vice president for budget-finance at the University of Colorado effective July 15.

▶ Pastors at Centenary United Methodist Church, in Little Tokyo at Third and Central, were appointed by the California-Pacific Annual Conference for another two years.

DR. FRANCIS NAKANO

▶ Dr. Francis Nakano, teacher and administrator in the Los Angeles Unified School District since 1962, was appointed superintendent of new Region A.

▶ Students of Joanne Nitta, art instructor at Hereford Elementary and Red Hill Elementary schools in the East Penn Motor Club area, won first and other prizes in the 45th annual AAA school traffic national safety traffic poster program in June.

▶ Longtime JACLA member 1000 Club life member Dr. Frank F. Sakamoto of Chicago was among 279 optometrists in the U.S. to receive the American Optometric Association's 1989 Continuing Optometric Recognition Award.

▶ Alan Momohara of Seattle, a consultant to Washington Governor Booth Gardner on human resources management, is acting director of the state human rights commission.

▶ Rudyard E. Urian, 34, of Filipino ancestry, was named by Chicago Mayor Richard Daley to be executive director of the Commission on Asian American Affairs.

▶ Mineko Sasahara Avery, children's rights attorney for Community Health Services, was named one of the five "Real Pittsburghers" by WQED's Pittsburgh Magazine panel of business and professional leaders.

Management
An Opportunity Like This comes along ONLY ONCE every 10 years.
U.S. Government
Seeks candidates to fill supervisory/management positions for temporary offices opening in the counties of: LOS ANGELES (11 locations), ORANGE (3 locations), RIVERSIDE (1 location) & SAN BERNARDINO (2 locations) during the fall of 1989.

'PC' Advertisers Look Forward to Serving You

Available Exclusively To JAACL Individual Members And Group
The JAACL-BLUE SHIELD Health Plan
Quality Blue Shield Coverage At Special Rates For JAACL Members
Your Choice Of Doctors And Hospitals
Wide Range Of Benefits Including Professional Services, Hospitalization, And Dental Coverage
Includes HEALTHTRACSM - a personal wellness program to help keep you healthy





