

SEATTLE CHAPTER

NEWSLETTER

October 2000

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Seattle Chapter seeks 2001 board and officer nominations

by Vicki Toyohara

The Seattle Chapter Nominations Committee is accepting nominations for officer and board positions for the year 2001. Those interested, or knowing someone interested, in serving as an officer or board member should submit their name or names of others, to either:

(1) the Nominations Committee chairperson, Vicki J. Toyohara, who can be reached at (206) 464-6771 (days) or (425) 865-0272 (evenings); or

(2) the Board at its October 2000 board meeting, which will take place on Wednesday, October 18, 2000, from 7:00 p.m. until 8:30 p.m. at the Seattle JACL office located at 316 Maynard Avenue South, Room 111, Seattle, Washington.

No additional nominations for officer or board positions will be accepted after the closing of nominations at the October 18, 2000 board meeting. If you have any questions or require information, please contact committee chairperson Vicki Toyohara.

Seattle to host National Youth/ Student Council conference

by M. W. Nakata

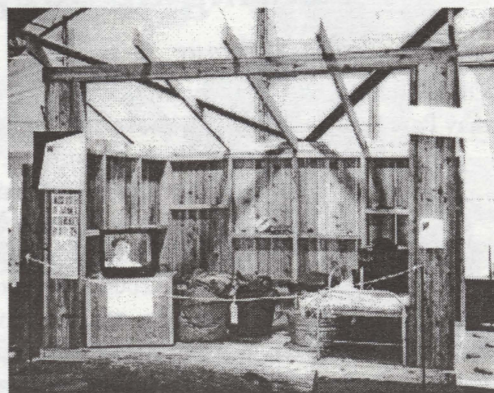
At its mid-September weekend retreat in Los Angeles, California, the JACL National Youth/ Student Council (NY/SC) voted unanimously to have the next biennial National Youth/ Student Conference in Seattle. The council cited the city's strong Asian Pacific Islander community, potential financial resources, and a desire for a change of venue.

The Pacific Northwest District Youth/Student Council is in the process of being formed and most likely will be actively involved in the planning and organizing of the conference. Contacts have already been made with Seattle University as a possibility for the summertime conference site.

Anyone interested in joining the District Youth/ Student Council, or participating in the planning, fundraising or programming efforts for the conference, should contact Matthew W. Nakata via e-mail at: nakata_ma@hotmail.com, or by phone at: 206-726-8257.

'Doing the Puyallup' in 1942

According to Wing Luke Asian Museum (WLAM) program director Charlene Mano, about a million people visited a re-creation of a Puyallup Fairgrounds barrack



created by WLAM for the Western Washington Fair's centennial exhibit. The exhibit displayed cars and fair memorabilia for each decade of the 1900s.

For four months in 1942, 7,400 Japanese Americans, forced out of their homes by racist government edicts, were housed in make-shift barracks at the fairgrounds before being moved to War Relocation Authority concentration camps in the interior United States.

New coalition targets voter registration, education

by M. W. Nakata

In early July, the Seattle Chapter helped to form Raising Our Asian Representation (ROAR), a coalition created to register new Asian Pacific Islander voters, promote voter education, and further strengthen a political voice for the Asian Pacific Islander community.

The non-partisan coalition is made up of representatives from the Asian Pacific American Labor Alliance, Commission on Asian Pacific American Affairs, Eastside Asian Pacific Islanders, Filipino American Political Action Group of Washington, International Drop In Center, Japanese Americans Citizens League, Korean American Bar Association, Korean American Professional Society, National Association of Asian American Professionals, National Asian Pacific Center on Aging, Organization for Chinese Americans, University of Washington Asian Students Commission, and the Vietnamese American Business Development Organization of South Seattle. There are also many volunteers who have graciously donated time. Since early July, ROAR has registered nearly 600 new voters.

If you are a member of a group that would like to join the coalition, would like to volunteer, or would like information on becoming a registered voter, please e-mail roar_apivote@hotmail.com or contact Matthew W. Nakata at: 206.726.8257.

(A complete version of this article can be found in the chapter newsletter at Seattle Chapter web site: www.jaclseattle.com.)

President's Message

Gearing up support for the Medal of Honor recipients

by Sharon Sobie-Seymour

On March 25, 2001, at the Mercer Arena, the Nisei Vets, MIS, Cathay Post 186, Seattle JACL, Association of U.S. Army and a host of other organizations are planning to hold a commemorative ceremony in honor of two Washingtonians, William Nakamura and James Okubo, who were awarded the Medal of Honor on June 21, 2000. The ceremonies are open to all, including congressional delegations, city, county and state elected officials, local colleges, and school children of all ages.



Sharon Sobie-Seymour

The Medal of Honor committee (MoH) is also working on several activities in conjunction with the ceremony. First, committee member Steve Finley initiated a resolution to name our U.S. District Courthouse after Seattle born, William Nakamura. The Seattle City and King County Councils have approved it. Our congressional delegation has indicated their willingness to introduce it to the U.S. Congress. Second, the Seattle School Board will present a plaque, next year, to Garfield High School alumnus Nakamura.

On November 11, 2000, Veterans Day, at the University of Washington Huskies football game, a short ceremony to honor Nakamura is planned at half time. He was attending UW at the time WWII broke out. We are also hoping to incorporate Internment curriculum with some of our activities.

The MoH committee is currently working with the City of Bellingham to initiate a plaque recognizing Okubo's contributions. Okubo, who was residing in Bellingham at the time of his death in

National JACL urges chapters to support Native Hawaiian sovereignty

by Arlene Oki

In accordance with a resolution supporting Hawaiian sovereignty issues that was passed at the 36th Biennial JACL National Convention this summer, the national JACL office is asking all local chapters and members to urge their congressional representatives to support S. 2899 and H.R. 4904. This important legislation affirms support for Native Hawaiians' inherent right as an indigenous people to self-determination and recognizes the political status of Native Hawaiians.

Companion bills introduced by Senator Daniel Akaka (S. 2899) and Representative Neil Abercrombie (H.R. 4904) clarify the political relationship between the United States and Native Hawaiians and establish a process for their self-determination. The bills declare that the indigenous, native peoples of the United States—American Indians, Alaska Natives and Native Hawaiians—have the same status under federal law and policy, a status that includes the right to self-determination and self-governance and a federally-recognized government-to-government relationship with the United States. S. 2899 has passed out of committee on the Senate side and H.R. 4904 is currently being considered in committee on the House side.

The legislation will protect the civil rights of Native Hawaiians, specifically, and will prevent the possible erosion of civil rights of all native peoples, in general. The United States has long acknowledged its trust relationship with the native peoples of the United States, including Native Hawaiians, and has long affirmed its responsibility to

1967, was a medic who served as a member of the Medical Detachment of the 442nd RCT. In a two-day period, he carried back and treated 25 wounded soldiers while under a constant barrage of machine gun fire and grenades. A few days later while exposed to hostile fire directed at him, Okubo ran 75 yards to evacuate and treat a seriously wounded crewman from a burning tank. His commanding officers recommended him for the Medal of Honor but it was downgraded to the Silver Star. The reason given was, as a medic, the highest award allowed was the Silver Star.

With his platoon pinned down in a fierce firefight, William Nakamura attacked an enemy machine gun nest alone, crawling within 15 feet to toss in grenades which stopped the fire long enough to free his unit. Later that same day he again single-handedly fought off enemy fire in order for his platoon to withdraw to safety without further casualties. Sniper bullets killed him during that heroic stand on July 4, 1944, near Castellina, Italy. He served with the 100thBN/442nd Regimental Combat Unit.

In addition to the afore mentioned organizations, the local American Legion, several VFW Posts, Mayor Paul Schell's Office, the PNW JACL, Seattle School District and the U of W Alumni Association are also represented on the planning committee.

I encourage all JACL members and their families to attend the ceremony next year. This is a great opportunity for the Nikkei community to support and honor two of our own extraordinary American heroes. I hope that this will be another step in educating mainstream society on the contributions and sacrifices made by Japanese Americans during WWII.

promote their welfare.

Congress has enacted more than 160 statutes addressing the conditions of Native Hawaiians, many of which recognize Native Hawaiians as Native Americans. Unfortunately, despite statutes and precedents set with the American Indian and Alaska Native peoples, no action has been taken to restore the rights to self-determination or self-governance of the Native Hawaiian people that were lost when the United States minister and U.S. Marines assisted in the overthrow of the Native Hawaiian government on January 17, 1893.

The bill establishes a process for Native Hawaiians to reorganize a Native Hawaiian government; provides for federal recognition of that Native Hawaiian government for the purposes of a government-to-government relationship similar to that of American Indians and Alaska Natives; creates an office within the Department of Interior to focus on Native Hawaiian issues; and authorizes the Department of Justice to designate an official to continue to work with the Department of Interior in addressing Native Hawaiian issues.

In addition to support from the JACL, the legislation is generating broad-based support including the Hawaii State Legislature, the National Education Association, the National Congress of American Indians, and the Alaska Federation of Natives.

(For a more detailed account of the bill, go to our chapter newsletter posted at our website <www.jaclseattle.com>.)

Enthusiastic volunteers beautify Aki Kurose Middle School

Jeffrey Hattori

Despite waking up to a drizzly and overcast morning, over 50 enthusiastic volunteers came out to clean and manicure the front entrance of Aki Kurose Middle School Academy. On Saturday, August 26, the entire Graham Street block of the school was cleared of litter and the sidewalks and stairs were swept. The landscape areas were weeded and covered with compost and beauty bark. The *Aki Kurose Peace Garden* was cleaned so that new vegetables and flowers could be planted. In addition, Seattle Chapter JACL planted a tree in honor of Aki.

What made this such a special project was the number of young adults and children who wanted to participate in the beautification, reflecting how Aki had and continues to make a positive impact on all of our lives. We hope the beautification will be an annual event.

The JACL's Aki Kurose Middle School Academy Committee and Seattle Chapter JACL would like to thank all of the individuals who volunteered their time and energy and the generous donations. (See list below.)

The Aki Kurose Middle School Academy Committee is not done in their support of the school! Unfortunately, there is nothing in front of the school to identify that the school is named after Aki. Thus, the



Volunteers at the Aki Kurose Middle School beautification workday pose after a hard day's work.

committee, in partnership with principal Bi Hoa Caldwell, has embarked on raising funds to place a 4'x 6' Reader Board that will be prominently placed on the Graham Street side of the school. The project requires a minimum of \$10,000 but can go as high as \$25,000 for an elaborate electric Reader Board. The Reader Board will include the name, *Aki Kurose Middle School Academy*, the school emblem, a Peace Crane created by our own Mits Katayama, and space for announcements. The following organizations have generously donated funds for this very important project: \$1,000.00 by the Seattle Chapter JACL (Inouye Fund), \$500.00 by the Center for Career Alternatives Board, and \$250.00 by the Asian Pacific Director's Coalition. Thank you very much to these organizations!!! If anyone would like more information about this project or would like to donate, please call Jeffrey Hattori at (206) 726-6504.

Aki Kurose Middle School donors and volunteers

| | | |
|-----------------------------|-----------------|----------------------|
| Elaine Akagi | Katherine Hirai | Becky Moliga |
| Vice-Principal Beth Brunton | Shino Hirai | Joe Moliga |
| Principal Bi Hoa Caldwell | Sofia Hirai | Mariah Moliga |
| Jaqueline Calloway | Frank Irigon | Matthew Nakata |
| Ryan Chin | Gene Kanamori | May Namba |
| Gretchen DeDecker | Lance Kanamori | Shigeru Nishikawa |
| Ann Fujii-Lindwall | Traci Kanamori | Chizuko Norton |
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| Jeffrey Hattori | Kazzie Katayama | Mori Rothman |
| Serii Hattori | Mits Katayama | Nathan Rothman |
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| Brian Hirai | Jan Kumasaka | Manaji Suzuki |
| Jeffrey Hirai | Guy Kurose | Kazumi Takeuchi |
| | Ruthann Kurose | Bill Tashima |
| | Audhra Lutz | |

Thank You!!!

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Membership Renewals

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| INDIVIDUALS | Lillian S. Ogawa |
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| Frank Fujii | Arlene Oki |
| Penny Fukui | Norman T. Suzuki |
| Mary Fujita | Hideko Tachibana |
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| Masao Kojima | COUPLES |
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| George Koza | Minnie and Henry Itoi |
| Charlene Lee | Karen and Stan Kawamoto |
| Andy Mizuki | Judy and Dennis Nomura |
| Lilly Mukai | Chiye and Alan Yabuki |
| Frank Muramatsu | 1000 Club |
| Emil Mas Nakao | Margaret Yanigamachi |
| Janice Nishimori | |

API Leadership foundation receives grant

The Asian Pacific Islander Community Leadership Foundation (ACLF) received a \$5,000 donation to their mentorship program from State Farm Insurance, a property and casualty insurer in Washington. The donation was received by State Representative Kip Tokuda, who is the ACLF board president.

The ACLF was established in 1998 in response to a growing con-

cern about the need to build individual and community leadership within the Asian Pacific Islander community. The ACLF believes there is a critical need to identify, train and mentor community members for future leadership to ensure that the Asian Pacific Islander community has a strong voice.

For information about ACLF, call Kip Tokuda, (206) 720-3510.

Seattle Chapter JAACL Newsletter

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Board members should submit materials to the editor (<shimaito@home.com>, fax 206-722-2044, 6621 S. Bangor St., Seattle, WA 98178) by the Friday after the monthly board meeting.

Calendar items emphasize chapter or community events not likely to be covered by community newspapers or by other newsletters.

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