

# SEATTLE CHAPTER

## NEWSLETTER

March 2001

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### Scholarship applications available

by *Ryan Minato*

April 1, 2001 is the deadline for the Seattle Chapter and National Scholarship applications.

The Seattle Chapter JACL Scholarship Program is pleased to offer scholarships to high school seniors entering post-secondary education this fall.

The National JACL is also offering scholarships and awards in the categories of: Entering Freshmen (high school seniors), Undergraduate, Graduate, Law, and Hagiwara Financial Aid.

Requirements for both applications include: JACL membership, personal statement, letter of recommendation(s), and official transcripts (sealed). For applications or more information contact:

JACL Seattle Chapter  
Scholarship Program  
PO Box 18558  
Seattle, WA 98118-0558  
or E-mail:  
<scholarship\_2001@hotmail.com>

### Take the time to honor Nisei Medal of Honor recipients

by *Arlene Oki*

Please join the Nisei Veterans in honoring PFC William K. Nakamura and T-5 James Okubo, two Nisei heroes who were posthumously awarded the Medal of Honor last year. The Nisei Veterans organization has been working with the Pacific NW District Council JACL, the Seattle Chapter JACL and other sponsoring organizations for many months to organize an event to honor those who gave so much to this nation. The ceremony will be held at the Seattle Center's Mercer Arena on National Medal of Honor Day, Sunday, March 25. It will begin at 1:30 PM with a musical prelude, followed by the ceremony at 2:00 PM. The program will also acknowledge the accomplishments of other Medal of Honor awardees from Washington State.

Twenty Nisei and other Asian Americans were awarded the Medal of Honor in June 2000 for their meritorious service during World War II. As General Eric Shinseki, Chief of Staff, U.S. Army, notes: "It is unfortunate that it has taken 50 years for these men to receive this proper acknowledgement of their heroism."

The sacrifices of the brave Nisei veterans of the 100th/442nd regimental combat team who gallantly fought for U.S. interests during World War II should never be forgotten. They fought in Italy and France in a segregated unit while many of their Nisei brothers served in the Military Intelligence Service in the Pacific. All fought with the full knowledge that their loved ones were being deprived of the very freedoms for which they were fighting.

The 100th/442nd RCT received more medals for heroism than any other unit in the history of the U.S. — a total of 18,143 individual decorations for valor. The regiment also suffered the highest

combat casualties of any American fighting unit, a casualty rate of 314%. In an ironic twist, the Nisei soldiers from the 522nd Field Artillery Battalion of the 442nd, whose own parents were imprisoned by their own government in U.S. concentration camps, liberated the survivors of Dachau, one of Hitler's death camps.

The Nisei soldiers of World War II made the ultimate sacrifice to demonstrate their love for country, family and community. As President Bill Clinton said at the Medal of Honor ceremony on June 21, 2000: "They risked their

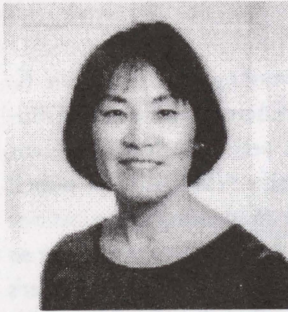
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Attending the Installation Banquet were Char Ohashi, Sherrif David Reichert, Akemi Matsumoto, Rev. Jerry Shigaki, Ruth Woo, Greg Nickels, Hyeok Kim, Hon. Fumiko Saija. Banquet story on page 2. Photo by Ryan Minato

## Volunteers are our chapter's lifeblood

by Akemi Matsumoto



The Jan 27<sup>th</sup> Installation Banquet was a smashing success with a tremendous turnout. Without the help of dozens of volunteers who spent many hundreds of hours over the past year planning and organizing the event, it would not have been possible. Kudos to our two co-chairs: Ann Fujii-Lindwall & Joanne Kimura.

Volunteers are the life-blood of our organization. With no paid staff, it is amazing how our dozens of committees get their work done year after year.

## Installation Banquet a huge success

by Ann Fujii

"Bridging Differences, Building Communities," the 79<sup>th</sup> Annual Seattle JACL Installation Banquet was a huge success with over 400 in attendance at the Doubletree Suites at Southcenter. Unfortunately, Bill Hosokawa, a native of Seattle, was unable to attend as our keynote speaker due to illness. Fortunately, JACL National President Floyd Mori was able to step in and do a great job.

Mori was born in Murray, Utah, of immigrant parents from Japan. After graduating from Brigham Young University, he moved to California where he became a City Councilman and later mayor of the city of Pleasanton, California.

A highlight for many in the Seattle community was seeing Rev. Jerry Shigaki (former board member and chapter president) give the invocation and benediction. Other highlights included the first female Consul General of Japan, the Hon. Fumiko Saiga, who introduced herself to the Seattle Japanese American community, and Mistress of Ceremonies S. Mae Numata, CFO of The Seattle Times, who did an outstanding job.

## Hosokawa defends JACL, praises Nisei veterans, thanks Seattle JACL

by Susan Hamada

Although Bill Hosokawa was unable to deliver the keynote address in person, his message to the Seattle Chapter had a little bit of something for everyone: humor, nostalgia, history and the words of a man who is not afraid to speak his mind.

Hosokawa briefly reminisced about his childhood during a time when Japanese were afforded second-class status. He spoke fondly of Jimmie Sakamoto and his weekly newspaper, *The Japanese American Courier*, where he worked part time and " (his) pay for working there a few days a week was a lunch ... which was provided by Mrs. Yagi's little restaurant around the corner for 25 cents." It seems Jimmie was responsible for not only introducing Bill to the JACL in 1935, but he promoted our young chapter, known then as the Seattle Progressive League, in his newspaper.

Hosokawa succinctly chronicles the beginning of early Asian im-

All of us have busy lives balancing our many work, family, recreation and community activities. Why do we work for JACL?

Some believe in equal rights and social justice; some want to continue their family tradition within JACL; some want to give back to the Japanese American community; some are building social and professional contacts, still others honor the past accomplishments of JACL by continuing its work. Each of us volunteers for JACL with our own mix of these reasons and others. In the end, there are the rewards of new friends, a shared mission, and just plain fun.

I want to sincerely thank the new Board, Officers, and all committee members for their spirit of giving and their volunteer work for Seattle JACL!

### Awards and thanks

The Don Kazama Award was presented to Rep. James McDermott; JACL Community Service Awards to Kaz Ishimitsu and Masa Murakami (Higo's Variety Store); JACL "Unsung Heroines" were Arlene Oki (JACL Board member) and Karen Yoshitomi, PNW Regional Director of the JACL. The Banquet Award was given to the Installation Banquet Committee.

Banquet Co-Sponsors were: The Bon Marche, Eli Lilly and Co., and Verizon Wireless. Corporate Sponsors included: Anheuser-Busch, Eddie Bauer, Boeing, KeyBank, Microsoft, PEMCO, SAFECO, The Seattle Times, Seattle Post-Intelligencer, State Farm, UPS, Uwajimaya, Vulcan NW and Weyerhaeuser.

Thanks are due the Installation Banquet Committee: Elaine Akagi, Ryan Chin, Mark Fukeda, Marcia Lee Fukeda, Suzanne Hamada, Jeffrey Hattori, Kazzie Katayama, Mits Katayama, Joanne Kimura, Ann Fujii Lindwall, Akemi Matsumoto, Ryan Minato, Tama Murotani, May Namba, Shigeru Nishiwaki, Chizuko Norton, Arlene Oki, Joy Shigaki, Sam Shoji, Manaji Suzuki, Cal Takagi, Naoko Takagi, Linda Tanouye, Shigeiko Uno, Takako Yoda.

migration, recounts the fear which lead to discriminatory immigration laws and eventually to Executive Order 9066 during World War II. He defends the actions of JACL during this tumultuous time, observing:

"Today, some individuals contend that since the evacuation order was illegal and unjust, we as patriotic Americans should have defied the authorities in defense of our rights. JACL is accused of selling us out when it urged us to accept Evacuation as our contribution to the war effort."

However, at the outbreak of war, the national JACL leadership and Mike Masaoka acted in the JA community's best interest. "The mantle of leadership was not usurped by JACL, it fell by default on frail shoulders," in the wake of the FBI roundups of the Issei leaders. He asserts

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Student/Youth (up to 25 years of age)	\$20
Boosters (Seattle JACL only)	
Regular	\$20
Seniors	\$15

Membership questions should be directed to Bill Tashima at (206) 525-0531, or <buber@aol.com>.

## Hosokawa, continued from page 2

that "the decision to cooperate was not made without intense soul searching."

Further, he points out that JACL received pledges of support from the Buddhist Church of America, the Japanese Christian Federation of North America and the Northwest, Northern California and Southern California Young People's Christian Conferences indicating that the young, inexperienced Nisei leaders did not stand alone.

Post war years the JACL "citing the proud and bloody record" of the "magnificent ... Nisei soldiers offering their lives in defense of the country that had betrayed them," and the "record of civilians who had borne a cruel injustice..." achieved naturalization of Japanese and other Asians, anti-miscegenation laws were repealed, and ultimately redress. "Thank you, Seattle chapter, for leading the way."

Those wishing to obtain a copy of Hosokawa's speech, can send a self-addressed stamped envelope to the chapter office: JACL, P.O. Box 18558, Seattle, WA 98118-0558.

## MOH, continued from page 1

lives, above and beyond the call of duty. And in so doing, they did more than defend America; in the face of painful prejudice, they helped to define America at its best."

### William K. Nakamura Federal Courthouse Ceremony

Though final details have not been released by the U.S. General Services Administration, a dedication ceremony to name the federal courthouse after Medal of Honor hero William K. Nakamura is scheduled for the following day, March 26.

For more information, please call George Yamane, 206-362-7302 or e-mail at gyamane611@yahoo.com.

## Thank You!!!

The Seattle Chapter JACL Newsletter is sponsored partly through generous donations from:

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Seattle Chapter JAACL is a non-profit, grassroots civil rights organization dedicated to empowering our local community through high-quality programs and strategic partnerships focusing on activism, education, and youth leadership development. As a chapter of the Japanese American Citizens League, we strive to be a leading Asian American advocacy group for civil and human rights while promoting and preserving the values and cultural heritage of Japanese Americans.

Our primary means of carrying out our mission is a monthly meeting, held at 7 p.m. on the third Wednesday of each month at the chapter office (316 Maynard Ave. S., Seattle) except August. All are welcome. (Those wishing to make presentations or be added to the meeting agenda should contact President Akemi Matsumoto.)

### 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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Please let us know your concerns.

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