

Nate Caminos is currently in his second year as the Legislative Aide to the House Chair of the Community & Economic Development & Trade Committee - Washington State Representative Phyllis Gutierrez Kenney (North Seattle). Before joining her office, Nate delved into labor issues as a Campaign Lead Organizer for the Service Employees International Union (SEIU) Local 775. He majored in Political Science from the University of Washington, and became the first Asian American to serve as the Student Director of Government Relations for the University, lobbying on higher education issues down in Olympia. A native of the Hawaiian Island's, he enjoys cooking, spending time with his family, and is also fluent in Spanish.



Community forum in review: A Conversation with Lt. Ehren Watada

Seattle JACL led a coalition of partnering organizations to sponsor *A Conversation with Lt. Ehren Watada* on January 25 at 8 PM. Watada spoke to a group of 111 people about his stand against the war and his impending court martial. The trial was set to begin on February 6.

The National JACL Board determined in July that its defined mission of protecting the civil rights of Asian Americans is not expressed broadly enough to include Lt. Watada's circumstances.

The Seattle JACL Board voted in October to support the national stance. However, there was an expressed desire to provide opportunities to its membership to learn about and discuss Lt. Watada's perspectives. At the beginning of the forum it was made clear that this was not an endorsement of Watada's stand.

Watada spoke intensely. "It is my duty as a commissioned officer in the United States Army to speak out against grave injustices," he said. "My moral and legal obligation is to the constitution. Not to those who issue unlawful orders."

If you have comments or would like to share your perspective on this matter please send us an email at JACLSeattle@yahoo.com. We may also publish some of the comments and quotes we receive in our next month's newsletter!

The Seattle JACL is co-sponsoring three events for this year's Day of Remembrance.

On Monday, February 19th in Olympia, there is a Day of Remembrance ceremony. Arlene Oki () will coordinate a group to attend this ceremony.

On Tuesday, February 20 at 6:30 PM at South Seattle Community College, the JACL is co-sponsoring the northwest premier of *From a Silk Cocoon* (an internment and renunciation story). The showing is free and the producer, Dr. Satsuki Ina, will be available to answer questions. To find out more about the film, go to <http://www.fromasilkcocoon.com/>.

Also on Tuesday, February 20 at 7 PM in Smith Hall 120, the American Ethnic Studies Department and Seattle JACL are co-sponsoring an event to remind people of the unlawful imprisonment of Japanese Americans during WWII. This year's program will feature the world premier of Frank Abe's new film, *In Search of No No Boy*. The film is about the novel, *No No Boy* and life of author John Okada. Steve Sumida and Shawn Wong will lead a panel discussion after the film.

Seattle Chapter Scholarships

The Seattle Chapter of the Japanese American Citizens League is proud to announce the availability of three scholarships this year.

The Aki Kurose Memorial Scholarship is available to any senior student or graduate of a Seattle Public School, planning or attending a college in Washington State. Aki Kurose was a beloved teacher within the Seattle School District who loved teaching science and believed in peace, therefore the scholarship is usually awarded to someone who would follow her lead. The awarding of this scholarship is not based on academic achievement as much as on desire and need. This year the scholarship is \$2000.

The other two scholarships, the Minoru Tamesa and Bushiro Tazuma, are awarded to students of Japanese ancestry. These scholarships are \$1500 each. Both mister Tamesa and Tazuma were active in the Japanese American community and left funds to the JACL for the basis of these scholarships.

If you are interested in applying for one of the scholarships, please contact May Namba () or Ann Fujii Lindwall () or the applications can be downloaded from the Seattle JACL website (www.jaclseattle.org). The deadline to remit applications is March 24, 2007. Winners will be announced at a luncheon on April 28, 2007.

President's Message

by Kyle Funakoshi, President

Being JACL Seattle President has its perks. This will be the first, and only, time that I will selfishly abuse this power. I humbly ask for your indulgence.

For those of you who don't know, February 19 is the Day of Remembrance, the anniversary of Franklin D. Roosevelt signing Executive Order 9066, condemning Japanese Americans into internment camps during World War II.

For this Day of Remembrance, I want to tell my father Kenneth's story. He was 18 years old at the time of the internment camps, the third of seven children growing up in Colorado.

The Funakoshi family lived in Fort Lupton, a small farming community on the Platte Valley. A few Japanese families settled there after "Alien Land" laws took effect on the west coast. At the time, Colorado had a struggling economy, and Japanese American sugar beet farmers filled the niche quite nicely.

Be it a need to protect Colorado's economy or an act of heroism (there is a debate by some historians), Colorado Governor Ralph Carr took a stand. He decreed that all Colorado citizens of Japanese ancestry would not be put into internment camps.

My grandfather and grandmother decided to take advantage of this opportunity to help others. They decided to try to house other Japanese Americans who wanted to escape the camps. They sent my father, and his older brother Fred, to talk with the mayor of Fort Lupton to ask for permission.

On a side note, my father talks quite fondly of his days in Fort Lupton. He reminisces about the time he and Fred tried chewing tobacco in the back of the barn, or the time that he found a nickel and bought lots of candy, only to have it taken away by his school teacher...and then, to sneak into her drawer to steal it back.

However, this part of the story does not garner the same type of nostalgia as the chewing tobacco. The mayor told them, "We don't want any more Japs in this town."

It is also important to note that my father always backtracks after this part of the story, letting me know that "Wartime hysteria causes things like this to happen," and does not speak maliciously of the memory of that mayor.

Though the details get a little fuzzy after this incident, my grandfather and grandmother set up a dormitory for the boys in the barn, and the girls in the house.

My father remembers this time very fondly, when many boys around his age would stay up late and talk about the latest cars. I'm sure there was some squirrely behavior too...but my father never shares that part of the story. I'm also sure that having peers around helped to cope with the stress of wartime hysteria and racism. However, I haven't been able to coax those stories out of my father either so it remains speculation.

The California JA's helped on the farm until they could land on their feet and settle in Fort Lupton and the surrounding area. As far as I know, there was never any

retribution from the mayor for the Funakoshi family act of defiance.

I like to think about this story as the JA Underground Railroad; one of a billion stories of the effect of the internment on the Japanese American community. Be it the 442nd & 101st, the stand by the No No's, the plight of South American Japanese internment camps in Texas, the Korimatsu case, or the JA Underground Railroad, Day of Remembrance is an opportunity for these stories to be told.

I will always treasure this story from my father, and is a hallmark of our relationship. For the Nisei out there who haven't told your stories yet, I strongly encourage you to tell your story to your kids and grandkids. Though I realize that it is hard to open up, it's something that will stand out in their minds.

It's also important not to lose sight of what made us. Our survival shaped the JA community, and an important historical lesson for all in the annals of civil rights...a memory that should not be forgotten.

Recent Activities

Jan 10 – Two executive committee members attended the Shogatsu Celebration Luncheon at the Japanese Consulate-Generals House

Jan 15 – MLK March

Jan 16 – Executive Board Meeting

Jan 18 – Planning Committee Meeting for JACL Installation Banquet

Jan 18 – President attends the Asian Pacific Islander Coalition Meeting

Jan 20 – JACL New-Board Orientation Took Place

Jan 20 – JACL Board Retreat

Jan 22 – Civil Rights Meeting

Jan 25 – JACL Lead/Sponsored Event: A Conversation with Lt. Ehren Watada

Jan 25 – JACL Chinatown/International Districts Next Top Karaoke Idol Competition

Jan 27 – JACL Sponsors the Northwest Asian American Film Festival movie: on Activism.

Upcoming Activities

Feb 12 – Executive Board Meeting

Feb 13 – API Legislative Day

Feb 19 – Day of Remembrance

Feb 21 – Board Meeting

March 5 – Executive Board Meeting

March 21 – Board Meeting

...also look for JACL Financial Literacy Workshop and Office Clean-up Day.

Keep your eye on JACLSeattle.org for more details!



2006 Activity Report

Responding to Critical Civil Rights & Public Policy Issues

- Organized a public forum on the immigration debate and its connections to racist movements with speakers from all around the Pacific Northwest.
- Worked to advance legislative issues impacting communities of color.
- Supported and helped organize API Legislative Day.
- Joined the From Hate to Hope statewide coalition to oppose ballot initiatives threatening immigrant rights.
- Participated in both of the year's major rallies for immigrant rights (20,000+ demonstrators each).
- Joined the Washington Won't Discriminate coalition which succeeded in a decades-long effort to add the LGBT community to the state's civil rights statutes.
- Participated in Hate Free Zone-organized counterhearings to the U.S. House of Representatives Judiciary Committee hearings on immigration enforcement in Bellingham, WA.

Building Capacity of the JACL

- Performed a critical role in advancing and elevating the PNW Strategic Planning project to a national-level program and obtaining key national support for the work.
- Reinvigorated youth efforts by forming an alliance with the recently-established University of Washington Nikkei Students Association.
- Hosted our 2006 annual Installation Banquet.
- Organized Board Retreat to set goals for 2006.
- Conducted annual appeal for donations and memberships.
- Participant in National JACL/OCA Leadership Conference.
- Raised funds by participating in the Chinatown-International District Summer Festival and hosting an event with the Seattle Mariners at Safeco Field.
- Honored three high school seniors with scholarships.

Supporting Public Education Programs and Events

- Led workshops on the internment experience with teachers and students across the state—even including a group of international students from Japan.
- Hosted Day of Remembrance with "Gold Watch" reading.
- Supported & participated in the MLK Celebration.
- Sponsored the Japanese American Redress Symposium.
- Sponsored From Hiroshima to Hope.

Building Coalitions, Serving the Community, and Increasing Visibility

- Organized yearly Aki Kurose Academy Clean-up Day.
- Sponsored the Minidoka Pilgrimage.
- Continued to build effective relationships with NAACP, OCA, APALA, ACLF, Nisei Veterans Committee, Densho, Hate Free Zone, Comite pro Amnista General y Justicia Social, Arab American Community Coalition.
- Participated in dialogue with a broad group of Japanese-American community leaders along with the Consulate-General of Japan to build alliances across organizations.
- Attended and supported a number of community dinners and local functions.

Civil Rights Corner

API Legislative Day is Tuesday, Feb. 13 in Olympia. JACL is a co-sponsor, and encourages you to attend if you can! Events start at 10 AM at the state capitol.

Attend the rally and see multicultural performances and community speakers, and join us in supporting and advocating for the Asian Pacific American community!

Below are just a few of the Legislative Day issues:

Support Capital Funding for APA projects. The Nisei Veterans Committee, the Japanese Cultural and Community Center of Washington, Asian Counseling and Referral Service, and Korean Women's Association serve the various needs of Washington's rapidly growing APA population.

Fund Limited English Proficiency (LEP) Pathway. The LEP program's primary goal is to promote economic self-sufficiency for refugees and immigrants through job training, job search, English as a Second Language (ESL), work supports, and social services. The current funding is not adequate to meet the needs of LEP clients: community-based providers of ESL and job training are running out of state funds.

Support funding for naturalization services. Washington's naturalization program helps immigrants and refugees become citizens. The current level of funding is insufficient to meet the demand, resulting in immigrants and refugees not being able to pay the fees and not getting naturalization instructions.

Regulate the payday loan industry. Payday loans trap borrowers into a cycle of debt, where military personnel and people of color are disproportionately affected. The Legislature should pass legislation that caps the annual percentage rate, bans internet payday lending, and further protects borrowers.

Support Basic Health expansion. The State's Basic Health program provides affordable health care coverage through private health plans, in a cost-effective manner that emphasizes shared responsibility. In the past, the legislators cut and then capped enrollment in Basic Health. With over 600,000 people uninsured in Washington, the need for increased slots in Basic Health is greater than ever.

Fund health care for all children. The Legislature has declared its intent to cover health care for all children by 2010. Currently, our state provides coverage to citizen children up to 250% of the poverty level and to immigrant children up to 100% of the poverty level. The Legislature should pass and fund legislation to provide health care coverage for all children up to 300% of the poverty level.

Come out on February 13 and advocate for these and other important policies!

Newsletter Available On-line: www.jaclseattle.org

Mission Statement: The Seattle Chapter JACL 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.

Chapter Board Meeting: Our primary means of carrying out our mission is a monthly meeting, held at 6 PM on the third Wednesday of each month, except August, at the chapter office, 316 Maynard Ave. S, Seattle. Those wishing to make presentations or be added to the meeting agenda should contact President Kyle Funakoshi prior to the meeting.

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Article and Event Submission: Board members should submit materials to the editor [redacted] 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.

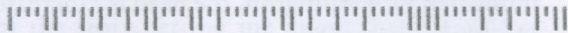
Seattle Chapter JACL website: www.jaclseattle.org
E-mail address: email@jaclseattle.org

2007 Officers and Board Members

- President Kyle Funakoshi
- President-Elect To be identified
- 1st Vice-President..... Dawn Rege
- 2nd Vice-President Binah Palmer
- 3rd Vice-President..... Elaine Akagi ([redacted])
- 4th Vice-President Akemi Matsumoto
- Treasurer Jeffrey Hattori [redacted]
- Corresponding Secretary May Namba [redacted]
- Recording Secretary..... To be identified
- Historian..... Kazzie Katayama
- PNWDC Board Delegate..... Doug Honma

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| Shea Aoki | Irene Ishii | Mori Kurose Rothman |
| Nate Caminos | David Iyall | Joy Shigaki |
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