

Speak to Me: Asian American Women in Public Service

by Kayomi Wada, Puyallup Valley JACL VP

As the fight for Asian American Studies at UW Tacoma continues, dedicated staff and students have been organizing events for students and community members to learn about Asian American heritage and history outside of the classroom.

May 7, five amazing women came to UW Tacoma to share their stories in "Speak to Me: Asian American Women in Public Service" a panel moderated by Bernie Liang, Associate Director for Student Involvement at the UW Tacoma. Liang has continued to advocate for Asian American activities on campus, "This is something we're trying to make into an annual tradition - where people from the API community can come together to empower the younger generation of API college students." The panel included Executive Director of Tacoma Community House Liz Dunbar, Puyallup Valley JACL President Elsie Taniguchi, President of the Chinese Reconciliation project Theresa Pan, President of the Asian American Dragon Boat Association Chanda Sovan, and Founder of the Asia Pacific Cultural Center Patsy Surh O'Connell.

These women were an inspiration to many young Asian Americans in the audience such as Zoe Shen, "Since I've been in America for more than three years, I've noticed many differences between Americans' and Asians' values, culture and lifestyles...Moreover, due to the fact that there isn't an Asian Studies program on campus, I've felt not welcomed or appreciated to share the differences or just being who I am but instead to assimilate. Hence, I was really grateful that we were able to have Asian American Women in public services to speak at the forum. One thing I took away from the forum was that even though we may be very different from each other, we can always learn from each other: put in practice of the virtues and reminding ourselves not to make the same flaws others have. This way, we will not only be able to improve ourselves, get to a better stage of civilization as a whole, but also accomplish the purpose of cultural exchange."

The panel encouraged young people to become more involved with their communities and offered suggestions on how to do so. Bernie Liang believes, "If we can change the perspective of one API student who attends this event, it's worth it. API Heritage Month should be a celebration of the past and the present and this panel certainly helps us to see how far we've come and how far we have to go."



Kayomi Wada.

Save the Date

February 20, 2010
88th year of the JACL Banquet.

Memorial Day

Memorial Day (originally called Decoration Day), the day when we honor those people killed in war or battle since the Civil War, is here again. Southern women began decorating the graves of the fallen with flowers and ribbons, and it was officially declared a holiday on May 5, 1868. Since that time, each year we honor the memory of those who have come before us.

See "Memorial Day" on page 3

2009 Scholarship/Past President's Luncheon

May 2, the four scholarship recipients of the Seattle JACL chapter were introduced to a crowd of 35 people at the fourth annual Scholarship/Past President's Luncheon. Scholarship winners, their parents, current board members and six past presidents were on hand to enjoy lunch and get to know one another. Emcees Emi Sumida Suzuki and Alison Shkurhan moved the program along at a steady pace. Both were past scholarship winners who met at one of our luncheons and have become great friends. Past Presidents Lloyd Hara, Mako Nakagawa, Arlene Oki, Bill Tashima, Joy St. Germain and Elaine Akagi were introduced. Current board members were introduced and President-Elect Nate Caminos extended greetings from the chapter.

Aki Kurose Scholarship went to Emiko Kobayashi, a senior at Ballard High School. She plans to attend the University of Washington and eventually study to become a veterinarian.

Minoru Tamesa Scholarship went to Alexander Anderson who attends Lakeside School. He is heading to Swathmore College in Pennsylvania in the Fall.

Bunshiro Tazuma Scholarship went to Kyle Yamamoto, a senior at Roosevelt High School. He plans to attend the University of Washington in the Fall.

Cherry and Masao Kinoshita Scholarship went to Jonathan Fujimura, a student at Olympic College who will attend the University of Washington.

All of the scholarship winners were outstanding examples of our youth today. These young people were the best out of more than thirty scholarship applicants. The decision was a difficult one since there were many well deserving applicants. We hope these young scholars will achieve their dreams and remain active in our community.

Coffeehouse Coaching

"The world is waiting for you to unveil your unique gifts and talents...what are you waiting for?"

—Lori Tsugawa Whaley



Lori Tsugawa Whaley.

Whether it's because of the economic downturn, considering your options, or you're doing some soul-searching, we go through periods where we want change in our lives. What do you do to create this change? Do you keep your thoughts to yourself, do you talk to friends—or have you ever considered a life coach?

Here in the Japanese-American community, Ms. Lori Tsugawa Whaley offers Coffeehouse Coaching, a series of get-togethers with other like-minded individuals. Known as the 'Queen of Connecting', Lori offers an "empowering evening of solutions, strategies, resources and connections." With her distinct blend of Japanese and American values, and her Samurai heritage, she gives you the tools to change your life.

What do you want out of life? Lori creates a fun, thoughtful atmosphere in which to explore this question. She is a Certified HNLP Life Coach and Master Practitioner who uses a powerful collection of language-based tools and techniques to help maximize performance and human excellence. Coaching seems to be a luxury service that few people can afford, especially during hard times like these. Yet, the Coffeehouse Coaching sessions are very affordable. You may reserve a spot for \$10 or \$15 at the door. The sessions are around two hours and offer a variety of different life tools to help you see the world differently. How we view the world is the key to personal transformation. As Ms. Whaley's mentor, David Martin says, "If you shape it in your mind, you will find it in your life."

Lori Tsugawa Whaley is a member of the Puyallup Valley JACL and will be speaking at the Puyallup Valley Graduation Banquet on June 6, 2009. She would like to thank the JACL for encouraging her in connecting with the Japanese-American community and offering her the opportunity to give back. Lori and her husband are looking forward to accompanying her parents on the 2009 Minidoka Pilgrimage in Idaho. You may learn more at www.LoriWhaley.com

Question of the Day

You may think that the contributions that you or others make in this community are invisible, or few—but our contributions to the Pacific Northwest are so vibrant and strong that to pull even one thread from our community fabric would make a large difference. As part of an ongoing series, we will display a photo along with questions about a certain Asian-American behind the photo. Answers will be provided in a following issue of the newsletter.

- What is pictured in this photo?
- Where is it located?
- Why was it built?
- Who built it?



Courtesy of Pacific Science Center.

Tea Ceremonies in Tacoma

The Tea Ceremony provides a time-honored way of meditation to find inner peace, relaxation and harmony with nature. People in contemporary societies hastily order a cup of coffee : Starbucks, then rush out to go to work or run errands with their cups in hand without appreciating the essence. However, in Korea, China and Japan, they approach and enjoy tea with relaxation in mind. Learn about the history, the wide spectrum of teas, and the manners of drinking tea in each of these cultures.

Patsy Surh O'Connell, founder of The Asia Pacific Cultural Center, hosts the monthly Tea Ceremony classes in Tacoma from 10 to 11 AM.

June 13 - Korean Tea Ceremony

Presenters: Patsy Surh O'Connell and Joyce Yoo

July 11 - Japanese Tea Ceremony

Performer: Reiko Hoyt

August 1 - Korean Tea Ceremony

Presenters: Patsy Surh O'Connell and Joyce Yoo

September 12 - Chinese Tea Ceremony

Presenters: Zin Fei and Neal Sawyer

October 3 - Korean Tea Ceremony

Presenter: Jung Hee Park, Patsy Surh O'Connell and Joyce Yoo

November 21 - Japanese Tea Ceremony

Presenter: Naoko Turner

Location

Fircrest Community Center in Tacoma
555 Contra Costa
Fircrest, WA 98466
253-238-4160

Registration

The participation fee is \$10 each time.
APCC member will get 50% discount.
Call to make your reservation.

Contact: Patsy O'Connell

Joyce Yoo

Memorial Day, continued from page 1

Comprised of Nisei veterans who fought during WWII, the 100th Battalion/442nd Regimental Combat Team is the most decorated unit for its size and length of service in the history of the U.S. Army. How many medals for heroism and bravery did they earn? The Unit earned more than 18,143 medals not including purple hearts. They were awarded 21 Medal of Honors, awarded by the President in the name of Congress. Veterans from the 442nd were awarded 3,600 purple hearts, and together with the 100th Battalion (Hawaiian Nisei veterans) earned 9,486 purple hearts.

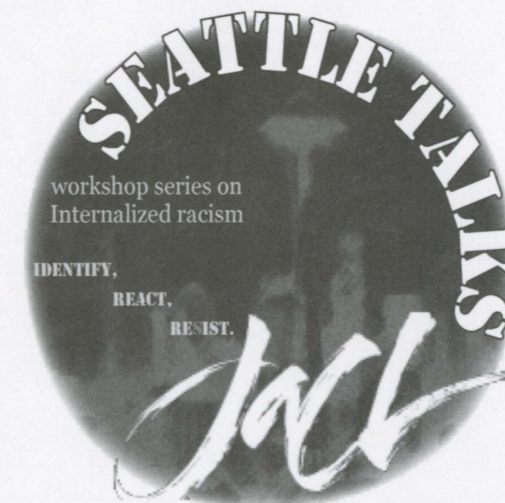
The 100th Battalion, or "the One Puka Puka," was comprised of the Hawaiian Nisei vets. Despite the fact that they were ineligible for the draft because as Japanese-Americans, they were branded as "4C" (enemy aliens), their deep sense of loyalty changed how many Americans viewed them. Since they were excluded from military service, they strove to do any menial task regardless of how humble, including grounds keeping and building structures to support the war effort. Influential Americans began a letter writing campaign to the President and the War Department to convince them that the Nisei should be allowed to defend our country. This is how the 100th Battalion was born; and from there, the 442nd Regiment was formed.

Did you know that the 442nd helped liberate Dachau concentration camp in Germany? Not many people know this, because our print media throughout the United States did not want Japanese-American soldiers photographed; only the American soldiers of European descent were photographed as the liberators.

President Roosevelt authorized Evacuation Order 9066, which created 12 internment camps to imprison all persons of Japanese descent. As we know, many of the Japanese-American soldiers came from these 12 internment camps across the United States. Many did not return. The 442nd suffered heavy casualties. At least 9,486 Japanese-American soldiers were killed in eight major campaigns over a two-year time period.

We can be very proud that while the rest of the American Army had a 15 percent desertion rate, the Nisei had no known desertions. We will honor our veterans by sharing their stories with you. These stories are written and will be shared by Ms. May Sasaki, NVC Education Chair for the Seattle Nisei Veterans Foundation, beginning in the next issue.

Source: The San Francisco Nisei Veterans website, Internet link for "Memorial Day", and Ms. May Sasaki, Seattle Chapter of the Nisei Veterans.



Japanese American Citizens League Seattle Chapter

with a generous gift from the Massena Foundation present

The SEATTLE TALKS Internalized Racism Workshop Series

CHICANO/A & LATINA/OS AND

THE ASIAN PACIFIC ISLANDER AMERICAN COMMUNITY

Saturday June 27, 2009

10am to 5pm

Nobi Chan Education Center
South Seattle Community College

Facilitators: Cleo Molina and Allison Lau
Cost: \$20.00 (Please inquire about scholarships)

Co-sponsored by South Seattle Community College Diversity and Retention Office, Asian Pacific American Labor Association (APALA), King County Civil Rights Commission and the Peoples Institute Northwest. Endorsed by the Latino Education and Training Institute. Supported by Khmer in Action.

Please contact Angela Taniguchi, Seattle Chapter Board member, at [redacted] to inquire about sponsorship.

SEATTLE TALKS SERIES: 9/12 workshop for API and the Black/African Communities. To be scheduled: Jan 2010 workshop for API and the American Indian/Alaskan Native Communities and an April 2010 workshop for Mixed Race Communities.

We need you! See our Blog: <http://seattletalks.blogspot.com/> to be part of the discussion.

Information

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 Dawn Rego prior to the meeting.

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


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

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