

JACL SEATTLE CHAPTER NEWSLETTER

THE NEWSLETTER OF THE SEATTLE CHAPTER OF THE JAPANESE AMERICAN CITIZENS LEAGUE

Chapter Co-President Report

March, 2012 by Elaine Akagi

Greetings to all our members, from your Seattle JACL Co-Presidents!

Thank you for all your support over the past several months. As incoming presidents, we knew that JACL would be challenging and exciting, but this year, we started the year off in a sprint. The chapter has already seen some successes, thanks to everyone's generosity and support. Our first chapter event, our annual fund raising dinner, exceeded our expectations, both in attendance and in monetary donations. Each year, our dinner supports our chapter's general fund and also our chapter scholarships. We were amazed and grateful that our scholarship desert auction raised a little over \$12,000 this year, and will be used to help students further their education through scholarships.

Our second "event" this year, was a bus trip to Olympia, to support our legislative representatives, Sharon Tomiko Santos and Bob Hasegawa, on the annual Day of Remembrance. There was a moving ceremony, observed by over 60 Nisei Vets, JACLers and friends. Lunch was hosted by Representatives Santos and Hasegawa, and the guests of the day, former Incarcerates and their families enjoyed the fellowship of all who attended.

We're most excited with the new chapter Board of Directors. There are many new faces, who bring fresh ideas to the table, as well as several familiar, longtime

board members, bringing history and wisdom to the board. Already, our board meetings have been filled with lively discussion and many sound ideas to move our chapter forward.

Our biggest project this year will be hosting the 43rd National JACL Convention, July 5-8, at the Bellevue Hyatt. We expect close to 250 delegates and their families to converge on our fair city. As hosts, we have planned a number of fun and exciting events to welcome our guests, and we hope many of our chapter members will help us make our guests feel welcomed. We encourage everyone to help us in some way to make this event a rousing success. You'll be hearing more about this exciting project over the coming months. If you would like to be a part of this event, please feel free to contact the convention general chair, Elaine Akagi at ReikoA@comcast.net.

Having two co-presidents is a new concept for the Seattle chapter, but because Bill and Elaine have both done this job, separately in the past, it was felt that two heads would be better than one, especially with the convention happening this year. The two co-presidents have known each other for more than four decades, and have remained friends since Jr. JACL days. 2012 should be an exciting year, and we count on all of you, our members and friends, to support us throughout these exciting times.

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...and Much More!

Gordon Hirabayashi Event by Mary Ann Goto

Seattle JACL was proud to support "The 25th Anniversary of the United States v. Hirabayashi Corum Nobis Case: Its Meaning Then and Its Relevance Now". The day-long conference was presented by Seattle University School of Law's Fred T. Korematsu Center for Law and Equality on February 11, 2012. Panelists included members of the legal dream team who argued and won this history-making case. Individuals like Peter Irons, Rod Kawakami, and Kathryn Bannai reflected on Gordon

Hirabayashi and how he inspired them 25 years ago. Hirabayashi's war-time act of civil disobedience in 1942 - his defiance of military orders to follow curfew and ultimately be incarcerated - will continue to inspire us today and many generations to come.

"If I were to register and cooperate under these circumstances, I would be giving helpless consent to the denial of practically all of the things which give me incentive to live. I must maintain my Christian principles. I consider it my duty to maintain the democratic standards for which this nation lives. Therefore, I must refuse this order for evacuation."

-- Gordon Hirabayashi



2012 Seattle Chapter Board

- Co-Presidents, Elaine Akagi, Bill Tashima
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- 3rd VP (Education), Ann Fujii Lindwall
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RENEW YOUR MEMBERSHIP!
Renew your membership online by going to www.jaclseattle.org

2012 JACL Scholarships by Ann Fujii Lindwall

This year, the Seattle JACL is offering five scholarships: Aki Kurose, Elaine Akagi, Mas & Cherry Kinoshita, and Bunshiro Tazuma & Minoru Tamesa scholarships. Each is \$2,000.

Here is a brief description of each scholarship:

1. **Aki Kurose Memorial Scholarship** is in remembrance of Kurose, who was an educator, peace activist and community organizer and embodied the principles of the JACL vision. After her death, the Seattle JACL established a scholarship in Aki Kurose's name to enable students to continue their higher education, which would enable them to give back to the community with the commitment shared by Aki Kurose and the Seattle JACL.

2. **Elaine Akagi Scholarship** was launched in 2011, intended to encourage people of color to enter the field of Special Education. This is an area of education, which unfortunately, sees many students of color, but an area where the students don't see role models that look like them. It is the goal of this scholarship to bring some equality to the ratio of students and teachers.

3. **Masao and Cherry Kinoshita Scholarship** will be given to applicants of Japanese ancestry or members of JACL families who plan to pursue or is pursuing a career in political science, law, education, journalism, Asian

American Studies or other field leading to service to community.

4. **Minoru Tamesa and Bunshiro Tazuma Scholarships** (2 separate scholarships) are in honor of two highly respected pioneers of the Seattle Japanese community. The Minoru Tamesa and Bunshiro Tazuma scholarships are available to applicants who are members of JACL.

The scholarship applications and information are available on the Seattle website: www.JACLSeattle.org. We are encouraging applicants to apply on-line. Scholarship application **deadline is Friday, March 23**. Please email them to: Fujiilindwall@comcast.net (Ann Fujii Lindwall, Scholarship Chair).

After applications are screened, we will notify selected candidates for interviews that will be held Saturday, April 7, at Aki Kurose Middle School in Seattle. The scholarship winners will be asked to attend a luncheon in their honor Saturday, May 5.

For questions or other inquiries, please contact Ann Fujii Lindwall at

JACL National Convention July 5 - 8, 2012, Hyatt Regency Bellevue by Arlene Oki

Chair Elaine Akagi and a dedicated Convention Planning Committee composed of Seattle Chapter members with great support from the Lake Washington and Puyallup Valley chapters have been meeting for over a year to organize informative, inspirational and fun-filled activities for the JACL National Convention to be held at the Hyatt Regency Bellevue from July 5 through July 8, 2012.

The theme for the convention "INFORM. TRANSFORM. PERFORM. -- Embracing JACL in an era of transformation" recognizes the changing face of the Japanese American Citizens League and the challenges it faces to be relevant in the 21st Century. An important contributor to a dialogue about the future of the JACL will be the National Youth Council which will also meet at the Convention.

Conventioneers will be welcomed at an Aloha Mixer featuring a Hawaiian band and hula dancing. More entertainment will be provided by the Portland Swing Band at the Sayonara Banquet and a theatrical offering, "Within the Silence," will be performed by Living Voices.

With an opportunity to reconnect with old friends and colleagues and attend a broad variety of workshops, there should be something of interest for everyone. An important part of the convention which was originally proposed

as a Health and Wellness Fair will instead be titled "Living Well" and will focus on diabetes and its prevention.

We hope all JACLers and friends in the greater Seattle area will mark their calendars to attend the 2012 Annual JACL Convention. And -- we would greatly appreciate any monetary and/or volunteer support for this major event. This will be the first time Seattle has hosted a national convention since 1988. A registration form for the Convention and more info should be available at www.JACLSeattle.org soon.

To donate or volunteer, please contact Elaine Akagi at

"See you in Bellevue in July 2012"

- JACL National Convention -

2012 Annual Banquet & Scholarship Fundraising Event

Smiles! Good friends! Great food! Standing ovations! Fabulous desserts! Tears! Legacy! Money for scholarships! Laughter! Good times! These were just some of the words used to describe the Seattle JACL's 90th Annual Banquet.

The banquet was held Saturday, February 4, 2012, at the Tea Palace Restaurant in Renton. Over 250 guests joined in celebrating the Seattle JACL's 90th year of existence. Colleen Fukui-Sketchley served as the evening's emcee and skillfully directed the banquet program in a timely and flawless manner.

Bill Tashima, incoming 2012 Chapter Co-President, began the program with a dessert auction to raise funds for the Chapter's five scholarships. Bill explained the origins of the Seattle JACL scholarships and prodded each table to contribute to our youth by pooling money to select some of Seattle's most delectable dessert items, contributed by various community individuals and area businesses. In the end, the auction netted more than \$12,000.00! Reverend Derek Nakano, Blaine Memorial United Methodist Church, delivered the invocation. And then we ate--a ten course Chinese dinner was served complete with soup, appetizers, shrimp, duck, chicken, pork, beef, tofu, veggies, fried rice, and fruit! Gochisosama!

The main program focused on honoring three legends of the Seattle community:

Admiral Herb Bridge - Patriarch of the Ben Bridge Jewelry family and noted philanthropist.

Diane Narasaki - Executive Director of the Asian Counseling and Referral Service (ACRS) and tireless advocate for the health, education and welfare of immigrants and refugees.



Al Sugiyama - Former Executive Director of the Center for Career Alternatives (CCA) and advocate for the civil rights/civil liberties for all people.

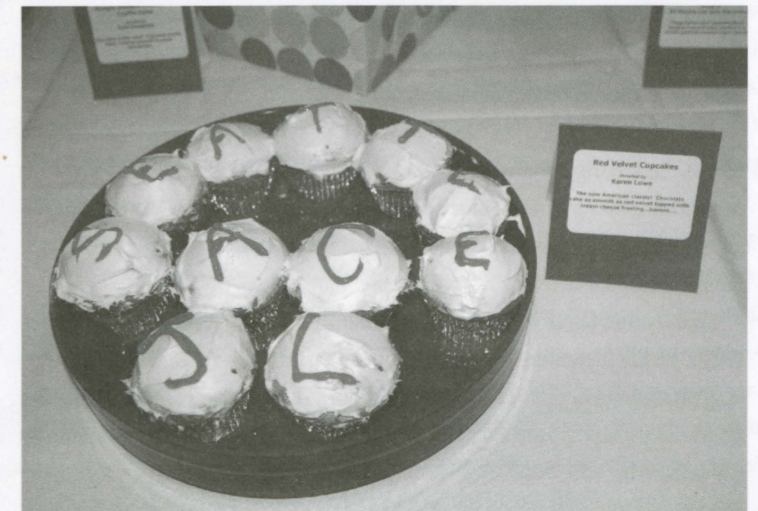
Kip Tokuda, former State Representative and former Seattle JACL President, presented Admiral Herb Bridge with the Sam Shoji Unsung Hero Award. Lua Pritchard, CAAPA Commissioner and well-known community activist, presented a Community Service Award to Diane Narasaki. Frank Irigon, indefatigable community leader, presented a Community Service

Award to Al Sugiyama. The presentations were especially moving due to the obvious sincere deep respect and esteem that each presenter held for their honoree. In turn, each awardee chose to honor and acknowledge their presenter as well as others in the community as they humbly accepted their award. Of course, whenever you get Frankie and Al in the same room, you can always expect some good humor and gentle jabs.



Elaine Akagi, incoming 2012 Chapter Co-President, gave the audience a special treat as she outlined the upcoming JACL National Convention to be hosted by the Seattle Chapter in Bellevue in July 2012. Elaine played a convention trailer on the big screen as she highlighted some of the convention events. Elaine is serving double duty this year as Chapter Co-President and Convention Chair.

As the evening ended, many guests commented favorably on the streamlined format of the banquet and the meaningful program. We thank our emcee, Colleen Fukui-Sketchley, and the many volunteers, donors, program booklet advertisers, and all the attendees who made this banquet a success. We give a special thank you to our Diamond Sponsor - Microsoft, Gold Sponsors - Evergreen Washelli and Union Bank, and Silver Sponsor - Frito-Lay.



Olympia Day of Remembrance

by Katie Cunningham

The morning of February 17th had hundreds of Japanese Americans across the country participating in Day of Remembrance activities. In Seattle, over 30 JACLers and guests traveled to the state capital to witness the state legislature formally recognize this day.

February 19th was the 70th Anniversary of President Franklin Delano Roosevelt's signing of E.O. 9066, which legalized the detention of roughly 120,000 Japanese Americans during World War II. This Day of Remembrance celebration was just one of many to commemorate these events.

The morning started off with stimulating conversation on the bus ride to Olympia and a light breakfast of doughnuts, yogurt, and bagels. After arriving at the capitol, interested members were led on a short tour of the legislative building, commencing at the balcony of the House meeting room. There, they joined the inspirational Nisei Vets, who were receiving special recognition regarding their recent Congressional Gold Medal.

The participants listened to a reading of Rep. Sharon Tomiko Santos' H.R. 4669, as well as moving speeches given by Glenn Anderson (5th District) and Seattle JACL board members Sharon Tomiko Santos (37th District) and Bob Hasegawa (11th District). The House Speaker recognized incarcerated Nikkei present, including Shea Aoki (Minidoka), Esther Furugori (Tule Lake), Kiku Hayashi (Rowher), Kimiye Hayashi (Rowher), Kazzie Katayama (Minidoka, Crystal City), Rose Kishi (Tule Lake), May Namba (Minidoka), Arlene Oki (Rowher), Shizue Watanabe (father incarcerated in Minidoka),

and Joan Yoshitomi (Tule Lake). The Vets and incarcerated Nikkei were given a warm standing ovation from the entire floor, after which the Day of Remembrance participants were received by the Democratic caucus.



The day ended with a delicious bento-and-sushi lunch provided by Santos and Hasegawa. Memories were relived and stories were told to old and new friends, and the energy in the room was exhilarating. This Day of Remembrance recognition, which had been standard House business for years, was a very informative and special day for all. The Seattle JACL hopes to make this an annual event. We hope to see you next year!

Civil Rights Committee

The Chapter is reconstituting the Civil Rights Committee. The committee will monitor current civil rights/civil liberty issues. When an issue is identified, the committee will research the issue, provide information to the Board, and suggest a potential action plan to the Board. Potential action can include

events, action alerts, Board letters, website/Facebook/Twitter postings or others. The committee will be a mostly virtual committee, communicating via email whenever feasible.

If you are interested in serving on this committee, please send us your name, phone number and email address to email@jaclseattle.org.

March Civil Rights Watch

Congress recently passed the annual National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA) which provides funds for the nation's defense and which details other aspects of national security. This year's act contained a provision in subtitle D of Title X of the Act which covered "Detainee Provisions." The gist of this small section provided for the indefinite detention of "covered persons," with a covered person being "A person who planned, authorized, committed, or aided the terrorist attacks that occurred on September 11, 2001, or harbored those responsible for the attack."

The National JACL, ACLU, and other groups opposed this section of NDAA as a dangerous weapon that could allow the President to lock up American citizens without charge or trial in times of hysteria over a concern for national security. Many cited the illegal incarceration of Japanese Americans during World War II as an example.

On the other hand, some in our community ask for a closer look at NDAA. They cite that there were two round ups of JAs during the war. The first beginning on December 8, 1941 with the detention of Japanese aliens (Issei) in the US to camps like Crystal City and others, and the subsequent mass detention authorized by E.O. 9066 in 1942. NDAA would not have applied in these situations. NDAA does not supersede existing laws or Constitutional rights,

as stated in an amendment to NDAA which states, "Nothing in this section shall be construed to affect existing law or authority relating to the detention of United States citizens or lawful resident aliens of the United States or any other persons who are captured or arrested in the United States." To some, the gist of NDAA is to provide authority to deal with non-citizens/aliens captured in non-US territory, and therefore, not subject to American laws, e.g., suspects captured in Afghanistan and held at Guantanamo. To this end, President Obama in his signing statement said, "...I want to clarify that my Administration will not authorize the indefinite military detention without trial of American citizens."

At the February 2012 Board meeting, the Board voted unanimously to oppose this section of NDAA. Regardless of the nuances of the law, the Board felt that "indefinite detention" is contrary to the fundamentals of American jurisprudence. Regardless of the crime, nationality, or place of detention, whenever the United States detains an individual for a suspected crime, that individual should be afforded the basics of American justice including the right to habeas corpus and the right to a trial. The United States should never condone indefinite detention without charge or trial.

The Board voted to send a letter of commendation to Washington Congressman Jim McDermott (D-7th District) for his lone vote in the Washington Congressional delegation against NDAA.

2012 Chapter Board Directors

We asked each Board member to write three sentences about themselves. Here are some short introductions to your 2012 Chapter Board of Directors. We will complete the intro's in the next newsletter.

ELAINE AKAGI, Elaine has been an active JACL member for over 50 years, starting as a Jr. JACLer in the 60's. She recently retired as a teacher of the visually impaired for Seattle Public Schools, and now keeps busy volunteering for a number of organizations, such as the Japanese Cultural & Community Center of WA, serves as a board of trustee member of the Washington State School for the Blind, helps with American Diabetes Association and of course, JACL. After a successful end to the 2012 JACL convention, Elaine hopes to relax and enjoy life.

BIHOA CALDWELL, I grew up in Seattle; went to UC Berkeley and to Kenya with the Peace Corps. I served in the Seattle schools for 37 years; the last 21 as principal. Education of all of our children is an important civil right.

NATE CAMINOS, Nate joined JACL in 2006 and is currently in his 5th year as a Board Member for the Seattle Chapter. During his time, he was the Vice President of Civil Rights and served as Chapter President in 2010.

RYAN CATABAY, Ryan Catabay is the owner of Rytek Grafx, a multi-service and innovative design company, based in Seattle. He serves clients from a wide spectrum of industries, including real estate, non-profits, fashion, and entertainment. The 30 year-old Filipino American believes in not only providing quality graphic and web services to clients, but in contributing to smaller non-profit causes. He also serves as the Creative Director for the International Examiner, the only non-profit Asian American news organization in the nation, based in Seattle.

KATIE CUNNINGHAM, Katie Cunningham is eighteen years old and currently a senior at Kamiak High School. In addition to community service, she enjoys reading, writing, and eating. This is her first year on the Seattle JACL board.

ANN FUJII LINDWALL, Native of Seattle and proud of it! Very proud daughter of Frank and Mich Fujii, who encouraged me in their special way to appreciate the community that has always been so supportive. I have been a lifetime volunteer, most recently Friends of Minidoka and the Minidoka Pilgrimage Committee. We must never be silent about this part of our history and must all work together.

MARY ANN GOTO, Born in Japan and raised in Hawaii, Mary Ann Midori Goto is a fund development professional who recently joined the Seattle JACL Board. Mary Ann is a graduate of Seattle University and the University of San Diego, where she earned a M.Ed. in Counseling. She loves her work handling donor relations and organizing special events for Town Hall and in her spare time, enjoys a good round of golf!

BOB HASEGAWA, Bob Hasegawa is a longtime labor and social justice activist. He currently lives on Beacon Hill in the house he grew up in and has two daughters, Mineko and Toshiko, that he's very proud of. Bob is a State Representative for the 11th Legislative District, and is running this year for the 11th District State Senate seat.

KIKU HAYASHI, Kiku is a professional community volunteer who is active in several organizations. Born in Rowher, Arkansas Relocation Center, she is a graduate of the now defunct Shoreline High School and the University of Washington. She is a retired Boeing "lifer" where she managed the

college recruiting program for the corporation's largest engineering organization. She lives in the Central Area of Seattle and is also active in the Squire Park Community Council.

WENDY KIMBALL, Wendy Kimball - K-12 educator and union president. I am committed to the civil rights of all especially those who are marginalized and under-represented. JACL is the organization in which I feel I can act on behalf of those groups.

KEN KURATA, Born in Seattle, raised and still residing in Bellevue, I felt I needed to learn and participate in, and be proud of, my Seattle JA heritage. I am honored to serve on the JACL Board and participate in our diversifying JA community; and excited to showcase Seattle/Bellevue and support JACL as we host the National Convention!

ARLENE OKI, Retired City of Seattle Human Services Planner. Long time JACL board member, and Vice-President overseeing the civil rights committee this year.

HEIDI PARK, Heidi Park is a 2012 Leadership Tomorrow Fellow, a 2010 Fellow at the Institute for a Democratic Future (IDF), and a board member of the Asian Adult Adoptees of Washington (AAAW). She received her BA from the College of Saint Benedict/Saint John's University in History and currently works as a community liaison. She joined the JACL board in 2011.

SHARON TOMIKO SANTOS, Sharon Tomiko Santos has served as a member of the Washington State House of Representatives from the 37th Legislative District since 1998. She earned her Bachelor of Arts degree from The Evergreen State College and her Master of Arts degree from Northeastern University. Sharon is a passionate leader on the national level, serving as Chair on the National American Caucus of State Legislators, founding Co-Chair of the National Asian Pacific American Women's Forum, and as Co-Chair of the National Conference of State Legislatures Executive Committee Task Force on Immigration and the States.

ELSIE "Leilani" TANIGUCHI, Elsie "Leilani" Taniguchi has been a JACL member for 54 years (now a Life & Millennium member), attended many National Conventions & served on several National committees. She is also currently President of the Puyallup Valley Chapter, Seattle Board member, Booster member of Lake Washington Chapter and Portland chapters and a PNW rep. Her current responsibility is Co-Chair of the "Aloha Welcome Mixer", July 5, 2012, for the National JACL convention.

BILL TASHIMA, Likes: family, friends, food, casinos, traveling, recreational biking, pets, Facebook and martinis. Past: office aide, factory gopher, vending machine repairer, working at Sea World, waiter, bartender, and government worker (Social Security Administration-32 years and retired!). Goals: A successful convention, winning the lottery, marriage, and losing weight.

KAILA YOSHITOMI, "I am a sophomore at the University of Washington pursuing a degree in American Ethnic Studies focusing on the modern problems facing Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders. In addition to school I have been working at a Seattle based communications and public involvement firm, EnviroIssues, Inc. for the past six years and hope to use my experience to work in the community when I graduate, more specifically with underprivileged urban youth. I am also a member of the National Youth/Student Council for the JACL representing the Pacific Northwest District."

Presidents' Council Message from 2011 Seattle JACL President, Ryan Chin

JACL Seattle, like just about every other Nikkei organization, is in a state of flux. While change is uncomfortable due to the unknown, it's also something that's natural. Simply reviewing the last 50-60 years, we've seen such changes as affordable air travel, the television, the personal computer, mobile telephones, and the Internet. Just with these few examples, think how much they changed our lives - in fact, think how they changed how people behave.

Pure and simple - the only constant in life is change. The minute you stop changing is the minute you stop thriving.

My goal last year was about making changes that would better prepare the chapter to continue to prosper for many years to come. However, change should not come at the cost of disregarding history - especially for an organization with the knowledge, experience and skills spanning nearly 100 years. I felt that it was proper to convene a meeting of past JACL Presidents to have a discussion on the direction of the organization.

Hosted by past President Tomio Moriguchi at the Tea House in the old Uwajimaya, the response and attendance to the meeting was encouraging. Leveraging the perspectives and knowledge of many Presidents from the past few decades provided some ideas that the chapter could use during this evolution. Furthermore, it created a forum that allowed for a frank discussion where the current board could hear some honest feedback that it needed to hear.

People change, and so do their needs. Few and far between are the people, businesses, and organizations that can maintain success over generations without evolving. It's not a matter of IF you need to change; it's a matter of what the change is, and how you arrive at it.

NOTE: Past Presidents Elaine Akagi and Bill Tashima were present at this discussion and as current 2012 Seattle Chapter Co-Presidents are in full agreement with Ryan and hope to continue the forum which Ryan began.

30th Annual Martin Luther King Jr. Rally and March

The Seattle JACL participated in the annual Martin Luther King (MLK) Jr. Celebration on Monday, January 16, 2012. In spite of the unusually harsh weather conditions, icy streets and snow, JACL members joined hundreds of other participants in the workshops, rally, and march. The Seattle JACL has joined in this celebration for many years and the chapter was again active on the MLK celebration planning committee.

This year's theme was "30th Anniversary Celebration: Recapturing MLK's Revolutionary Spirit!" The celebration began with workshops and a rally at Garfield HS in Seattle. Following the rally, participants marched downtown

for another rally at the Jackson Federal Building.

Seattle has one of the largest annual MLK Day celebrations in the nation. We honor the Reverend Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. for his work to promote racial equality and economic justice for all people, for his commitment to nonviolence, and his opposition against war and militarism.

"The problem of racism, the problem of economic exploitation, and the problem of war are all tied together. These are the triple evils that are interrelated."
- Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.

Remembering Shigeko Uno



Seattle JACL's First Woman President, Shigeko Uno

In November, the Seattle JACL Board voted unanimously to make a donation to the Seattle Keiro Garden Project in memory of the late Shigeko Uno. The donation will be noted on the permanent donation wall at the garden.

The Seattle Keiro Nursing Home is undertaking a \$500,000 project to provide a top class Japanese Garden for the residents and families at Seattle Keiro. The garden will provide a place where residents can experience quiet and tranquility in a non-institutional atmosphere. The garden will add another element of kimochi-ii in addition to the quality medical care that Keiro offers.

In 1948, Shigeko Uno became the first woman to be President of the Seattle JACL. Shigeko remained active with the Seattle JACL until her death a few years ago. Shigeko was involved with many community organizations and causes but her main passions were the Seattle JACL and Seattle Keiro. After her death, many people donated to the Seattle JACL in her memory. The Board separately identified these funds to be used in an appropriate recognition of her contributions to our chapter.

We miss Shigeko's vibrant presence and razor sharp recollections. We think Shigeko would be pleased to be remembered in the Keiro Garden. When the garden is dedicated, perhaps, we should toast Shigeko with her signature drink ... a shot of scotch with a water back.



New Keiro Garden in Winter's Beauty

Marriage Equality

The JACL board voted in November to join Washington United for Marriage, a coalition of organizations dedicated to ensuring that all loving couples in Washington State can marry. People from all walks of life, including gay and lesbian couples, share the same values of love, commitment and family. As we face the current economic challenges, no family should be confronted with additional burdens to care for their loved ones. Especially during this time of hardship, we should be doing everything we can to make all Washington families stronger.

JACL was one of the first national organizations to endorse marriage equality. Whether it is achieved through legislation, ballot measure, or court

decision, we support the right of all couples to marry and believe that denying marriage rights to gays and lesbians is discriminatory.

Thus, the Seattle JACL was pleased by the swift action of the Washington Legislature and Governor Gregoire in enabling the Marriage Equality Act in Washington State. Opposition groups are attempting to force the issue for a public vote in November. The Seattle JACL urges members to decline to sign any initiative proposal to place this civil rights issue for a vote.

The Seattle JACL is meeting with a broad based coalition of other Asian American civil rights groups to determine a united strategy to keep marriage equality in Washington.

Seattle JACL's Empowerment Series

2011 closed with two Empowerment Events bringing together API college students with community activists. The first event was at Seattle Central Community College in the classroom of Tracy Lai. Elaine Ko, Kip Tokuda, Thao Tran and Stella Chao shared their career paths and their long involvement in the Seattle API community with 30 students. Each presenter spoke to their passion for social justice and why they continue to volunteer.

The last 2011 Empowerment Event took place at the University of Washington with Sophia Aragon, Kurt Tokita, Linh Ngo and Liezl Rebugio. Introduction of the community activists was followed by small group discussions with questions to and from students and activists. Being able to informally share hopes for racial, economic and gender justice and life passions created animated dialogue.

Two Seattle JACL interns, Nathan Silpakit and Alek Kanetomi helped organize, advertise and lead these two events. Thank you to the Seattle Neighborhood Block Grant program for making these events possible.



Empowerment Panel - Elaine Ko, Kip Tokuda, Stella Chao, and Thao Tran

Educational Achievement

Late last year, Dr. Susan Enfield, Seattle Public Schools Interim Superintendent, met with about 40 members of the Asian Pacific Islander (API) community at the Rainier Vista Neighborhood House. This was the first occasion for Dr. Enfield to interact with the API community directly.

- At this meeting, community representatives raised many issues such as:
- What is the Seattle Public Schools (SPS) plan to recruit and retain API teachers, administrators, and principals?
 - How does the SPS intend to improve and inform the API community about bilingual assistance and interpretation services?
 - What is the Seattle Public School's plan to include the API community as partners?
 - What is being done about the high incidence of bullying against API students?
 - How can SPS manage to provide high quality educational opportunities with even more tax revenue cuts looming in the future?

Although Dr. Enfield has since announced her intention to leave the Seattle Public Schools to head the Highline School District, the community issues raised at this meeting remain. Later this year, the Seattle JACL will be forming an "Educational Achievement" committee of board members,

chapter members, and other interested community members interested in pursuing these issues with school board as well as to engage in other activities aimed at increasing educational achievement for all students. If you are interested in volunteering for this committee, please email the chapter with your name and phone number to email@jaclseattle.org.

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Banquet/Scholarship

Dessert Auction Donations

Carmelette Bentley
Central Market-Shoreline
Cheesecake Factory-Seattle
Cheesecake Factory-Tukwila
Costco-Aurora Village
Daniel's Broiler-Bellevue Place
Mary Beth Emert
Alexis Fujinari
Lillian Hayashi
Healing Grounds Massage

Hiroki's Specialty Bakery
Dale Kaneko
Maile Kaneko
Kyle Kinoshita
Rose Kishi
Karen Lowe
Macrina Bakery
Ali Meyers & Julie Stevenson
May Namba
Assunta Ng
Gail Nomura
Arlene Oki
Sam's Club-Aurora
Alysa Sugiyama
Mari Sugiyama
Ellen Suzuki
Emi & Kyle Suzuki
Paul Tashima
Karen & Michael Yoshitomi
Umai-Do Japanese Sweet Shop

Seattle JACL Day of Remembrance

Sunkie Oye
Shizue Watanabe

General Donations

Tosh Okamoto
Ken Tenino