



# SEATTLE CHAPTER NEWSLETTER

September/October 2012

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

## JACL 2012 National Convention & The Power of Words

**Brief Background** The Power of Words (PoW) concept was born in Seattle. It was first presented to the National JACL Council at the 2010 Convention in Chicago. PoW encourages people to replace misleading euphemisms that distort history, and use terms which more accurately describe our Japanese American incarceration experience during WW II. False notions of this history persists in misleading people by use of these euphemisms. Two well-known falsehoods is (1) Nikkei were held in confinement for their protection, and (2) the incarceration of the Nikkei population was a "military necessity". By encouraging the use of more accurate terminology when describing the Japanese American WW II incarceration experience, the reality of this part of history can be examined and understood with much improved clarity. With the truth, the constitutional principles which failed us in our time of need, can be strengthened.

**The JACL Convention** The 2012 National JACL Convention was particularly exciting for supporters of the PoW resolutions. The first order of business at the Saturday morning (7:30 AM!) Council Session was the PoW Handbook and the companion paper, the PoW Implementation Plan, both produced by the National JACL ad hoc PoW committee. The Council approved both of these documents and the vote was UNANIMOUS ( 86 "yes" votes and 0 "no" votes). We were delighted but had to hurry because our convention workshop dealing with the PoW concept was scheduled to begin just minutes after the vote. This workshop was the product of our Seattle JACL Chapter Power of Words committee and was co-chaired by Joan Yoshitomi and Stanley Shikuma.

**The Workshop** We were delighted with the strong support demonstrated by the National JACL Council. We were again delighted when a number of people began filling up the room allotted for our PoW workshop. One worry we had was that we may not attract enough people to avoid

being embarrassed. That worry quickly disappeared. Stanley Shikuma began the session with the introduction of our panel of speakers. Lane Hirabayashi set the tone of the panel with booming style mixing his scholarly information with his quick and friendly humor. Barbara Takei followed Lane with an update of activities going on currently by drawing on her extensive involvement as a 'community organizer extraordinaire'. The third speaker was twenty year old Kaila Yoshitomi who spoke with "kimochi(feeling)" and wisdom amazing for a person with so few years on this planet. She spoke from a youth perspective and she had written a poem for this occasion. The panel was a huge success.

Then Dawn Rego and Mako Nakagawa turned the tables from the focus on the presenters back on the audience. If the Power of Words is going to have an impact on the use of more accurate and more effective terminology, we will need more people willing take on the role of PoW speaker/promoters. Dawn spun her magic with her charming personality and our worry of audience participation was put to rest. Finding people to speak their piece was not a problem at all. In fact, when the workshop ended, it took plenty of time to clear out the room due to people continuing their comments on becoming a PoW promoter. Over a dozen of the people in the audience raised their hands when asked if the workshop session had the effect of changing their position from being unwilling to speak on the issue in public, to a willingness to potentially trying out becoming a PoW promoter. The Seattle PoW committee was very proud of the audience response to the workshop.

**The Future** The Seattle PoW committee would like to use the momentum from the convention to launch a PoW speakers recruitment drive. Discussions also included possible search to find funds to promote our work, participating on the National Social Studies Convention due

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### 2012 Seattle Chapter Board

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to take place in Seattle this year, and the possible submission of a grant proposal to the Japanese American Confinement Sites Grant Program sponsored by the National Park Service. The discussion is still wide open. Anyone wishing to work with our committee would be welcomed.

**In Gratitude** We do thank the National JACL and the Aratani Foundation for their support in funding portions of our workshop. We thank all the people who attended our workshop for their interest, for the great ideas so many people offered, and for the encouragement they gave us. We are grateful to see so many people are fully behind this PoW effort. Arigatoo gozai masu!

Submitted by the Seattle Chapter Power of Words committee: Joan Yoshitomi – co-chair, Stanley Shikuma – co-chair, Freida Takamura, Arlene Oki, Dawn Rego, Karen Yoshitomi, Lane Hirabayashi, and Mako Nakagawa.

## JACL National Convention - July 7, 2012: Workshop Summary

**Identity is not a Math Equation: Multiracial, Multiethnic and Mixed Identity.** With the election of the first multiracial president and the ability to check more than one box on the 2000 Census, the multiracial movement in America is growing. Yet the way race and ethnicity are perceived in our society ignores the complexities of racial classifications that are exposed by the multiracial experience. Participants will explore their own sense of racial/ethnic identity, examine the issues involved in racial identity formation, learn about the history of racial categorization and mixed race in America, and focus on the unique experience of multiracial and multiethnic Asian Pacific Americans. The workshops aim to help participants realize that they have the right to choose and claim their own sense of identity.

### BIOGRAPHY

**Christine Munteanu** is the Ford Program Coordinator for the Japanese American Citizens League, the nation's oldest and largest Asian Pacific American civil rights organization. She helps coordinate JACL's leadership, education and anti-hate programming.

### Summary:

The workshop began with a discussion question: When was the first time you were aware of race? Was it positive or negative?

Most responses shared were stories from elementary school, but their experiences were neither positive nor negative – they were mostly about noticing that their friends were of a similar race, and that like races grouped together at school.

Two definitions were shared:

**Race** - a classification based on skin color and outward appearances.

**Ethnicity** - a classification based on shared characteristics such as language, culture, and geography.

The workshop participants engaged in an activity. They looked at a series of photographs and decided who was an Asian Pacific American, then read some background information about the person, to see if the original classification changed. After this was done individually, the participants gathered into smaller groups, compared answers, and then came up with the criteria that appeared to be used to classify the individuals as Asian Pacific American. Some example criteria that were listed off during the discussion included: physical characteristics, cultural background, geographical location, self-identification, and bloodline.

A key point discussed was that self-identification is a very important factor when talking about YOUR own race and ethnicity, but skin color is hard to defeat when it comes to other people classifying you.

Factors Affecting Identity include:

- Racial ancestry
- Physical appearance
- Cultural knowledge and attachment
- Immigration status
- Family experiences

Childhood experiences with racism

Dimensions of Identity include:

- Cultural identity: internalized cultural values
- Ascribed racial identity: how you are racially identified by others

Racial identification: how one labels oneself publicly

Racial self-identification

Situational Racialization

Multi-racial Identity was discussed:

Singular: example – Asian American

2 or more: example – Japanese and Romanian

Multiracial: example – mixed, hapa

Opting out of racial categorization: example – other, human

Situational identity

Conflicts for Multiracial Individuals were discussed:

Essentialized racial characteristics

Racial spy experiences

Acceptance by the community

Are you authentic enough?

Choosing one side over the other

The workshop was engaging and thought-provoking, and was skillfully presented and facilitated by Christine Munteanu.

## Annual Clean-up at Aki Kurose Middle School

Saturday, August 25th, was the fourteenth annual Japanese American Citizens League Aki Kurose Middle School grounds clean-up. Over 45 JACL members, school staff including City Year volunteers who will work at Aki Kurose this year, members of Aki Kurose's family, and a school district gardener worked on the grounds so the students will return to an attractive yard.

South Shore Middle School (now the rebuilt South Shore K-8) moved to the Sharples building on Graham during the summer of 1999, and was renamed Aki Kurose Middle School Academy. The first cleanup was in August of 2000. There was a lot of work to be done the first four summers. The clean-up sessions have become maintenance and beautification sessions.



There are raised beds on the west side of the school. Students plant vegetables and herbs that are donated to a local food bank. Some of the crew cleaned up the beds.

From left to right: Kristen Cunningham, Katie Cunningham, Ciara Asamoto, Colby Bentley and Dave Asamoto



From left to right: Kathleen Vasquez (daughter-in-law of Aki Kurose; wife of Paul Kurose who organized the clean-up; and Seattle schools literacy supervisor); Mori Rothman (grandson of Aki Kurose who came from the East Coast for the event and the weekend); Mia Williams (principal of Aki Kurose Middle School); Nick Hernandez (City Year supervisor at AKMS); Jazelynn Goudy (City Year corps member at AKMS)

## The Start of "Living Well" Health Fair Series

The Seattle Chapter Japanese American Citizens League (JACL) and Nikkei Concerns recently created a new partnership and venture... the "Living Well" Health Fair Series to support disease state awareness and health and wellness of the Japanese American, and Japanese and Asian Pacific Islander (API) communities. JACL is the oldest API civil and human rights organization in the country and have made health care issues a top priority. Nikkei Concerns is the second largest Japanese American health care organization in the country providing primarily elder health services (e.g., Seattle Keiro Rehabilitation and CareCenter) and is expanding its scope of programming to include health and wellness education and services for all ages throughout the Puget Sound area.



On Saturday, July 7, 2012, the Seattle Chapter JACL and Nikkei Concerns launched their inaugural "Living Well" Health Fair Series that focused on diabetes at the Hyatt Regency Hotel in Bellevue. The fair was held in conjunction with the National JACL convention. Japanese Americans are quietly yet profoundly being impacted by this disease at a prevalence rate higher than other race/ethnic groups. The "Living Well with Diabetes" health fair served as an informal, fun but impactful forum for disease state education (vendor booths/tables and speakers), healthy living demonstrations (healthy meals preparation), interactive activities (light exercise), and much, much more!

Plans are underway for the second Health Fair that will focus on healthy lifestyles in 2013.

## Plans Underway for 2013 Seattle JACL Banquet!

While the date or venue has not been selected yet, one thing is for certain – the 2013 Seattle JACL Banquet is going to be the most unique event to date! Proceeds of the annual banquet will benefit the Seattle JACL Scholarship Fund. Members of the business community will want to consider becoming a corporate sponsor and advertise in the banquet pro-

gram. We are expecting over 300 attendees and this will be an opportunity to increase visibility among an ideal target market! For corporate sponsorship information, please contact Bill Tashima at [buber@aol.com](mailto:buber@aol.com). If you would like to be part of the 2013 Banquet Planning Committee, please contact Mary Ann Midori Goto at

## Civil Rights Committee

### Wards Cove Workers Act

Kudos to Committee-member Heidi Park for writing the Wards Cove Workers Act resolution which received the unanimous approval of the National Council at the JACL National Convention. The Act introduced by Congressman Jim McDermott passed the U.S. House of Representatives and awaits approval from the U.S. Senate.

### Sikh Community Tragedy

The Seattle Chapter sent messages of condolences to the local Sikh gurdwaras (temples) and the Sikh Coalition following the terrible tragedy at Oak Creek. The Chapter's Board of Directors also voted to support efforts to include Sikhs as a distinct group that the FBI should track and report for hate crimes. Currently, there are no statistics on hate crimes committed against the members of the Sikh community. Letters have been sent to Attorney General Eric Holder, Senator Patty Murray and Senator Maria Cantwell to request such actions.

Several Chapter members joined the local Sikh community at a memorial service for the victims of the Oak Creek shooting at the Gurudwara Temple in Renton.

### R-74/Washington United for Marriage Initiative – Vote to APPROVE!

The required number of signatures has now been collected to put R-74 (Marriage Equality) on the ballot this November. The Seattle Chapter JACL has endorsed efforts to support the initiative which will ensure that same sex couples have the same rights that heterosexual couples have.

Chris Bentley, Bob Hasegawa, Wendy Kimball, Ken Kurata, Ruthann Kurose, Akemi Matsumoto and Bill Tashima represented the Seattle JACL in

the Gay Pride Parade this Summer.

### I-1240/Charter School Initiative – Vote NO!

Wendy Kimball of our committee presented an excellent paper on the pros and cons for Charter Schools at our Board meeting last month. Based on her research, the Board voted to oppose I-1240, an initiative to allow non-profit organizations to establish publicly funded charter schools. The Board approved statement can be seen in this newsletter.

### National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA)

The JACL supports legislation that will end ambiguous language included in the National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA). The Act was passed by Congress and signed by President Obama in 2011. Congress passes the NDAA every year to allocate funds for the Department of Defense. Section 1021 is a new policy included in the NDAA that gives the president the authority to put Americans in military detention "under the law of war without trial until the end of the hostilities." Under this provision, the military can determine who is considered a threat without answering to the judicial system or Congress.

Several bills have been introduced that will address the ambiguity of the NDAA's indefinite detention provisions and clearly state that all people will receive due process rights and liberties as mandated by the U.S. Constitution. The Smith-Amash bipartisan amendment was introduced to strike the provision empowering the president to indefinitely detain American citizens without the due process of law. However, the amendment failed to pass.

Committee members will continue to track the bill and work with the National JACL staff in the coming months.

## Co-Presidents Column by Bill Tashima

I hope everyone saw the Pacific Citizen edition that gave in-depth coverage to the successful national convention that the Seattle Chapter hosted. We should all pat ourselves on the back for a job well done!

The Seattle JACL has been busy this summer. As you read through this newsletter, you get a good idea of the wide range of activities that we have conducted recently. The Chapter has been involved in several important civil rights issues, that is, the Approve R-74 (Marriage Equality) campaign, the No on I-1240 (Public Money for Charter Schools) campaign, and being proactive and standing by the Sikh community after the Oak Creek, Wisconsin, tragedy.

Our deep civil rights/civil liberties engagement is the hallmark of our organization and, in particular, of our chapter. The Seattle JACL is working hard to carry on the legacy of Clarence Arai, Shigeko Uno, Min Tsubota, Don Kazama, Chuck Kato, Cherry Kinoshita, Tatsuo Nakata and the many other good people who strived so hard on behalf of this organization. The Seattle JACL is regarded for our commitment to all communities. I hope this continues.

There are two ways to ensure that the Seattle JACL stays the course. **One is for more people to become involved and help out.** We would love more members on our Board... new members, returning Board members, members who have never been on the Board before. Please come to our meetings

on the second Tuesday of each month at 6:00 PM at the Japanese Cultural and Community Center of Washington (1414 S Weller) or contact us [info@jacleattle.org](mailto:info@jacleattle.org). Want to help or volunteer without being a Board member? Send us an email, again at [info@jacleattle.org](mailto:info@jacleattle.org). We are always looking for volunteers.

**The second way is to support our annual appeal.** (See related block) We will be sending you a request in the next few weeks. Your donations help the Chapter fund its activities and programs.

On a somber note, my co-President and longtime friend, Elaine Akagi, is currently battling numerous tumors stemming from her pancreas. Elaine was diagnosed a few weeks after the July National Convention. She is undergoing an experimental clinical trial via the National Institute of Health in Maryland. These struggles are not easy, yet Elaine continues to be as positive, cheerful, and active as her situation permits. Needless to say, we are in awe of Elaine's fortitude, but, at the same time, this is exactly why Elaine is loved by so many.

Elaine wants to thank all those who have sent her well wishes! Your thoughts do help. Elaine and her friends have set up a "CaringBridge" site on the web where Elaine can post updates on her condition and friends can relay their thoughts. If you would like to be included on this CaringBridge site, please send an email with your name to [info@jacleattle.org](mailto:info@jacleattle.org).

## Local and National Sikh Community Supported

The tragic shooting that took place on August 5, 2012, at a Sikh gurdwara in Oak Tree, Wisconsin, shocked and saddened so many of us. An armed man entered a place of worship and began firing at innocent people in the congregation killing 7 and wounding 4 others. Seattle JACL immediately contacted our Sikh community here in the region and the Sikh Coalition, a fellow civil rights organization, to give them our condolences and support.

Vigils took place across the country on August 11, 2012, to honor those who were killed. The local Sikh community held vigils at gurdwaras in Bothell and Renton. Many elected officials, law enforcement representatives, as well as members of the Seattle JACL attended the vigil at the Gurudwara Singh Sabha of Washington to show solidarity. We were there to show that we will not tolerate violence against any group of people because of their race, religious beliefs, or physical appearance.

During the ceremony, and even while dining together, all sit on the floor, as it is believed that all people are equal, and no one is higher than another. Information on Sikhism and some background on the Sikh community in the Pacific Northwest was provided. Sikhs have been an integral part of life here in the Puget Sound region for over 150 years. Yet today, Sikhs are still targets of hate crime and experience job discrimination. Sikh children are often bullied in school and are victims of physical assaults by other children. The Seattle JACL is committed to supporting the Sikh Coalition in its efforts toward promoting tolerance and understanding within our community.

On a national level, the JACL and OCA (Organization of Chinese Americans) have established a joint fund to raise money to support the victims of the mass shooting at the Sikh temple in Wisconsin. All contributions are tax-deductible and will be used to defray the costs of medical bills, funeral

expenses, psychological counseling and sustaining the lives of the family members left behind. We learned the heartbreaking, personal stories of each of the victims during the candlelight vigil. One of the victims had not seen his family for years and was just recently reunited with his family for only 45 days until the day he was shot. Another was a mother of two young boys. One victim was the founder of the temple and was killed while fighting off the gunman, saving the lives of many others. If you would like to make a



contribution to this fund, visit [www.jacl.org](http://www.jacl.org) or [www.ocanational.org](http://www.ocanational.org). Thank you for your compassion and support.

After the program, attendees went outside around the fountain for a candlelight vigil.



Sharing dinner at the Renton Gurudwara, (foreground-back) Chris Bentley and Colby Bentley; (opposite l-r) Nate Caminos, Frank Irigon, Sheldon Arakaki, and Mary Ann Goto.

## JACL Seattle Board votes "APPROVE R-74"

This November, Washington voters will be asked to approve the law passed by a bi-partisan majority of the Washington Legislature and signed by the Governor which provides for the freedom to marry for all citizens, including same sex couples. The Seattle JACL enthusiastically endorses this measure and asks all members vote to "Approve R-74!"

The Seattle JACL is the nation's oldest and largest Asian American civil rights organization. We advocate for the civil rights and civil liberties of all peoples. This year, we have marched with a coalition of people in the annual Martin Luther King Jr. parade, we stood by our Sikh brethren after the Oak Creek, WI, tragedy, and now we stand with the LGBT community.

JACL has a history of fighting for marriage equality going back to 1968 when JACL filed an amicus curiae brief in the Loving vs. Virginia Supreme Court case which struck down anti-miscegenation laws, thus allowing marriage between all races. Our National JACL endorsed same sex marriage in 1994 at our national convention in Salt Lake City. JACL is acknowledged as the first national non-LGBT organization to urge Marriage Equality for all people.

JACL perceives Marriage Equality as a civil rights issue. A civil marriage

accords rights, responsibilities, and public status to couples acknowledging their commitment to each other. In addition, one in four gay and lesbian couples with one Asian parent are raising children. The state protections of marriage offer legal and economic safety nets that families need. Although Washington State does have a "domestic partnership" law, this "separate but equal" status is inherently unequal. For example, in a hospital, domestic partners may be asked for proof or documentation of their relationship and still may not be accorded the rights and recognition automatically assumed for married couples, yet no one questions that status of a spouse. We urge that all couples in a committed relationship have the opportunity to equal recognition by the state.

There are some who opposed same sex marriage on religious grounds even though many churches have endorsed R-74. Some feel that the Marriage Equality law will force a church to conduct a religious ceremony for which their religion does not condone. The new Washington law would not affect religious marriages. No church would be "forced" to conduct a religious ceremony outside of their faith tradition. No church would be "forced" to redefine their church's religious interpretation of marriage.

...continued on next page

Ultimately, the JACL believes that providing for same sex marriage recognizes the contributions, the dignity, and the value of all committed couples in our state. We believe that like the Issei when the Alien Land laws were repealed, and like the Nisei when WWII Redress and an apology from the government was issued, the freedom to marry in Washington permit our

gay and lesbian friends, sons, daughters, uncles, aunts, cousins, and neighbors to be complete and whole as citizens of our state.

**For these reasons, the Seattle JACL urges everyone to vote to APPROVE R-74!**

## JACL Seattle Board votes "NO on I-1240"

Initiative I-1240 is the fourth attempt to bring Charter Schools before the citizens of Washington. Three times it has been voted down. The JACL Board of Directors took a position of opposition to the initiative at their August meeting at the request of the Civil Rights Committee.

The compelling reasons for this position rest in the following areas: public student needs; and efficacy, cost, and accountability.

Public education of children is a civil right. Public schools are required to accept and teach all children without question of ability, race, ethnicity, language and economic status. I-1240 allows non-profit organizations to set up charter schools which are free from many state regulations including setting the curriculum, defining the size of the school and establishing the location. Research data shows that public charter schools across the nation enroll English Language Learners and Special Education students in significantly lower numbers than public schools. Charter schools can set alternative type curriculums that may not appeal to minority groups. The research also shows that **only** 17% of charter schools do better than public schools overall. This lack of success and disproportionate representation of minority and special needs students was critical in the decision by the JACL Board of Directors to take the position against I-1240.

Last year the State Supreme Court found that the State was not meeting its Constitutional mandate to amply provide for the general education of Washington students. The State Supreme Court ordered the legislature to come up with a plan for meeting the needs of public school students. I-1240 will require 3.1 million dollars to set up the bureaucracy to implement the

charter school plan. That is money coming out of public education resources. Once the charter schools are set up, the State of Washington will provide the funding for each charter school student at the same level as public school students. The JACL Board of Directors felt these costs would have a negative impact on public school funding which the Supreme Court ruled was already underfunded.

Public schools have been pressured to increase their accountability for each student's learning for the last 10 years. One can view the annual progress made by state public schools by checking the data on the Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction website. There is much more work to be done and educators across the state continue to find ways to make improvements.

Charter schools will have many state regulations waived. They will be directly accountable to the State Board of Education which will set up a Charter Schools Commission of appointed persons who will accept or reject charter applications. Charter schools will be free to set their own budgets including employee salaries, class sizes and management costs. The individual charter schools may contract out the management of the school to private companies or organizations. This provision of I-1240 makes it possible for individual contractors to make a profit from taxpayer education dollars. The JACL Board of Directors is concerned about public dollars supporting charter schools especially without rules governing budgetary best practices.

**Vote NO on I-1240 for the sake of our children and our public schools.**

## JACL Joins APIs at the Tacoma Dome Community Summit!



Senator Patty Murray addressing the Summit

The Seattle JACL joined the multitudes of people who converged on the Tacoma Dome Friday, September 21st, for the 2012 Asian Pacific American Community Summit. Busloads of APIs from every corner of the state - Spokane, Yakima Valley, Vancouver, Bellingham, King County, and more - came to "Celebrate Unity and Civic Participation." The community summit event is a periodic event of the Asian Pacific Islander Coalition of Washington State (APIC).

The purpose of the summit was to increase API political engagement and political empowerment. APIs comprise 10% of Washington State's population and we want our voices heard! The four hour program included greetings from Washington Senator Patty Murray, and other distinguished guests. Mee Moua, President, Asian American Justice Center, gave a rousing keynote address. One special feature was the Candidate Forum for Governor with Republican Rob McKenna and Democrat Jay Inslee. During the program, the audience sat in areas designated by different language signs. Translators were on hand to instantly translate the program into a variety of languages.

The Seattle JACL was one of the more than 120 API organizations endorsing this event and was also an early financial sponsor for the summit. Several JACL members, Elaine Akagi, Ken Kurata, Akemi Matsumoto, Arlene Oki and Bill Tashima attended APIC meetings throughout the year to help in the summit planning. Summit Theme - NATURALIZE! REGISTER! VOTE!

## My Trip to Japan by Katie Cunningham



Me (second from the left) and the other participants

*Note: Katie Cunningham is a 2012 Seattle JACL Board member. Katie is also a recipient of the Seattle JACL Minoru Tamesa Scholarship and the National JACL Paul and Katherine Ohtaki Scholarship. Presently, Katie is a freshman at Whitworth University in Spokane Washington.*

On June 29, 2012, I set off on an incredible, once-in-a-lifetime opportunity. I was lucky enough to be one of five American teenagers selected by the Japanese Consulate system to visit Japan through the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (and the International Friendship Association). While there, I had unforgettable experiences and learned a lot about myself and my heritage.

After a quick orientation in San Francisco (where we got to meet members of the San Jose JACL), we arrived at Narita International Airport outside Tokyo. Our first big excursion (and one of my favorites), was our visit to Yokosuka Sogo High School, where each of us was paired with a Japanese

high school student. While at the school, we learned some basic kendo moves and made lots of friends. It was such an amazing experience to be able to share our stories and our cultures. In Tokyo, we also visited Asakusa, Shinjuku, and Akihabara.

While I enjoyed Tokyo, my favorite part of the trip was definitely our study tour in Kyoto. Kyoto has such a wonderful, traditional feel, and while we were there, we were able to visit amazing sites (Kiyomizudera Temple, Nijo Castle, and Kinkakuji) and learn about traditional Japanese arts (tea ceremonies and yuzen-dyeing). We even got to try making our own matcha!

It was such an incredible experience to be able to visit Japan and to be a part of its traditional and modern culture. While I was there, I gained an



Learning Kendo at Yokosuka Sogo HS

increased appreciation of myself and what it means to be Japanese-American. I also made many friends - Japanese and Japanese-American - that I hope to have for many years to come. It was truly a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity!

## Elaine Akagi Recognized at the National JACL Gala

Elaine Akagi, our 2012 Chapter Co-President was the recipient of JACL's highest honor, the JACL Ruby Pin. The 2012 National JACL Gala was held at the JW Marriott Hotel on Thursday, September 27, in Washington, DC. Since 1998, only eight individuals have been presented with the Ruby Pin. Elaine was recognized for her over 50 years of exceptional service to JACL. Her accompanying citation read as follows:

*The Japanese American Citizens League is honored to award the Ruby Pin to Elaine Reiko Akagi for exceptional service to JACL and the Japanese American Community for over fifty years. Her total devotion to furthering civil rights, social justice, and cultural preservation have marked her as a community treasure, and her commitment to youth development and educa-*

*tion have inspired countless students to become leaders in their own right. Elaine Akagi's diligence is singly responsible for incorporation of a civil rights curriculum in Washington State, including its adoption by the Seattle Public School system.*

*Her zealous collaboration with educators and Human Rights Organizations have ensured that access to community resources were always available.*

*Elaine continues to lead and inspire. Her advocacy skills and contributions are in keeping with the highest traditions of JACL, and her lifetime of service is a credit to herself and the Japanese American Citizens League. Congratulations Elaine! We love you!*

## Hiroshima To Hope

Members of the Seattle Chapter again participated in the annual Hiroshima To Hope ceremony at Green Lake on August 6th. The event is held each year on August 6th, the date when the first atomic bombs ever used killed hundreds of thousands of people and totally destroyed almost every building and the infrastructure in Hiroshima. A second bombing a few days later devastated the city of Nagasaki.

Following a series of performances by a diverse group of people, everyone placed their lighted Japanese lanterns onto the still waters of the Green Lake. The lanterns honor those who died in the horrific bombings, as well as fam-

ily members and friends who have passed.

Japan is the only nation to suffer the effects of this weapon of mass destruction. During a time when more nations have the capacity to develop nuclear bombs, let us hope that they will never be used again.

The Seattle Chapter has donated funds and sponsored the event with many community organizations in the Greater Seattle area for many years.



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**November 6<sup>th</sup>**  
**Vote "APPROVE R-74" / Vote "NO on I-1240"**



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**August / September Donations:**

Art Oki, Umai-Do Japanese Sweets  
 In Appreciation for the Seattle National JACL Convention  
 Thank You!

**Wanted: Info on Seattle School District Plaque**

During the hysteria against Japanese Americans during World War II, 27 young Nisei clerks working for the Seattle School District were pressured to resign by the School District. In 1986, this horrendous act was redressed by the Washington State Legislature with an apology and monetary amount. The Seattle School District commemorated this occasion with a plaque placed at their office "for perpetuity" to acknowledge this injustice. Unfortunately, during a recent move this plaque appears to have been inadvertently lost.

The Seattle JACL will be working with the Seattle School District to remedy this action. However, it would help if we had more information on the plaque and dedication. If anyone has any documentation on the plaque, such as a picture, a program, or other item, please contact the Seattle JACL at [info@jaclseattle.org](mailto:info@jaclseattle.org) or 206-622-4098.

Thank You!

**2012 Annual Appeal Letter Campaign**

If you are receiving this newsletter in the mail, then you will be receiving a letter from the Chapter in the new few weeks. Autumn is the time for our annual appeal letter campaign to raise funds for our Chapter activities.

This year, we have accomplished a lot from sponsoring a bus to Olympia for the Day of Remembrance, to enabling Chapter youth to attend the National Convention, to offering five scholarships, to promoting engagement to Approve R-74 and defeat I-1240, and much, much, more.

Please consider supporting the Seattle JACL by sending in a donation to the chapter when you receive our request.

Thank You!