

# JACL

## SEATTLE CHAPTER NEWSLETTER

Winter 2016

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

### Save the Date

**"Our Community: 75 Years After E.O. 9066"**

**95th Annual Seattle JACL Banquet**

Saturday, April 8th – 6 p.m.

*Doors open at 5:30 p.m.*

Bell Harbor International Conference Center  
Please join Seattle JACL and host Lori Matsukawa as we raise money for crucial social justice and civil rights programs, including opportunities for youth. Featuring a performance by acclaimed spoken-word poet Troy Osaki.



Board members of Seattle JACL. Back row: BiHoa Caldwell, Arlene Oki, Paul and Josh Tashima-Boyd, Theo Bickel Ken Kurata, Stanley Shikuma, Wendy Kimball, Elsie Taniguchi and Bill Tashima. Front row: Sheldon Arakaki, Sylvie Shio-saki and Sarah Baker.

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MEMBERSHIP!**

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## President's column

By Sarah Baker

Times are changing. As the landscape of Seattle shifts and staples like Ballard's Sunset Bowl, Capitol Hill's Half Price Books, and soon the International District's Bush Garden are crushed under the footprint of the current tech boom, I have to stop and wonder where that leaves our community. In the wake of losing some of our most influential figures – Uncle Bob Santos, Auntie Ruth Woo, and Justice Charles Z. Smith – the answer does not come easily.

Talking with other long-time Seattleites, we find ourselves reminiscing about what has been. But what about what will be? We have to mourn the loss of our family and the loss of the landmarks that were our home, but we cannot be overcome by these losses. We must stand tall and take strength in knowing that together, we are so much more than we are alone. People like Uncle Bob, Auntie Ruth, and Justice Smith have taught us that, and it is up to us to carry on their legacy. As this year of my presidency comes to a close,



## Sign up now for email updates!

In addition to a quarterly print newsletter, you can now get the latest news on all-things Seattle JACL through new, monthly e-newsletters. In addition to "liking" us and catching up with us on Facebook, we'll be emailing you about chapter get-togethers, volunteer opportunities, and more. We hope that with additional online outreach, we'll be able to better partner with you, members of our community, as we work together for social justice. To sign up, simply email us at [info@jaclseattle.org](mailto:info@jaclseattle.org).

I am so grateful for the community that the JAACL has brought to me. Not just within our organization, but outside of it as well. We have the power to inflict big changes. We can move to action rather than just react to the world around us. Yes, Seattle is changing. But not all change is bad, and we can rise to meet those changes. When we work together, we are capable of great things.

It is my hope that 2017 brings more collaboration, both in and outside of the JAACL. I have had the opportunity to meet some amazing people, hear some incredible ideas, and see dreams become reality. I know what we can do when we come together, and it is truly inspiring. While 2016 is not yet over, I ask that as members of the JAACL you take the time to reflect on why you are here, why you are a part of Seattle JAACL, and what truly matters to you. Where do you see your organization going in the next decade? I challenge you to help carry us forward in this time of tumult, and to help the Seattle JAACL continue to be great.

Thank you for continuing to support what I consider to be a fantastic organization. Our history has shaped us, and we must continue on our path to shape history.

## Honoring our late heroes:

Ruth Woo, Uncle Bob Santos, and Charles Z Smith



By Rod Kawakami

With the recent passing of Civil Rights heroes, Bob Santos, Ruth Woo and Charles Z. Smith our community has been left reeling with the triple loss of these beloved leaders. Bob Santos known by all as “Uncle Bob” or the “Mayor of Chinatown” was for decades, the face of the Asian American Community’s quest for social and economic justice. There was no one better at and no one I would rather want to represent our Community’s concerns than Bob Santos. He led by word, by example, by humor or by whatever strategy that was needed to unite our community and lead the fight for civil rights and to promote projects that would better the community.

Ruth Woo, was our political guru, who was, by

her own choice, never in the spotlight but always a valued adviser to people of color seeking political office. From elected offices ranging from the governor’s office and political appointments to judicial elections, Ruth was instrumental in helping office seekers to set up effective and successful political networks and gained the reputation as our Community’s political kingmaker. Charles Z. Smith was an original trailblazer and leader in the legal community who had a lifelong passion for social justice.

As an attorney, deputy prosecutor, Superior Court Judge, UW professor and Assistant Dean and ultimately as the first Supreme Court Justice of color he was a mentor and role model for generations of attorneys, including myself. I know that each of these icons knew, respected and supported each other and would frequently join together in promoting numerous civil rights issues and causes. Coupled with the loss just last year of Community Activist, Donnie Chin, the death of these long-time leaders in such a short period of time seems almost too overwhelming to comprehend and for me, the grieving will take a while to process. These leaders in their own ways had their fingerprints over all the Community advancements and we all owe a debt of gratitude to these fallen leaders for their sacrifice and leadership. Their quests for social justice has reached far beyond our Asian American Community as they have also significantly impacted communities of all colors and ethnicities as well as all of society throughout the region and the state. I will dearly miss each of them both professionally and personally for all that they have meant to me.

### Remembering three champions for our community:

“...They worked because work was needed. They worked because that was the right thing to do. They each operated with their big hearts and the commitment to action. Ruth Woo, Uncle Bob Santos, and Charles Z Smith were each inspirational heroes of our time. On top of the many above accolades that can be listed here, suffice it to end with the legacy we leave for the coming generations. ‘Learn from the past so we can better manage the future.’” - Mako Nakagawa

“...Ruth had a knack for making things happen and she believed the rest of us would carry on her legacy because she made sure we were educated and trained. She loved meeting with young people as she saw them as the next Dolores Sibonga, Gary Locke, Ron Sims, Sharon Tomiko Santos, Norm Rice, Justice Mary Yu or Justice Steve Gonzalez. Her most recent goal was to have an Asian Pacific Islander on the US Supreme

*Jack*

#### 2016 Seattle Chapter Board

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Court, although she would be happy with an API on the US District Court. I know she will be upset to not have a hand in making it happen. There you are, she has left it in our hands. Confident we will carry on. There have been many stories written about Ruth, but the one that Ruth is she loved your stories best.”

- Joan Yoshitomi

“I knew Uncle Bob as a wonderful ‘karaoke singer/performer.’ What a ham! I remember Judge Charles Z Smith as an eloquent, gentle spoken, caring person who stood for equity, justice and fair play.”

- May K. Sasaki

“I met Bob Santos when I moved to Seattle in 1988 and started writing for the International Examiner. What struck me immediately was how respectful he was of me. I had come from Los Angeles where I had worked as first, assistant editor, then later, acting editor, of the Pacific Citizen. And I often took a lot of heat from the community (leaders), who thought I was, at various times, stupid, too brash, crazy, too impatient, too young (I was 39-40), and of course, too angry. So the respect that Bob Santos gave me was very welcomed.

He was also very funny. A great sense of humor. Shortly after I started writing ‘Bull Session,’ a column for the IE (Ron Chew had picked the name for the column) that Bob proclaimed, ‘Well, we’re both BS’s, but remember, you’re BS-2; I’m BS-1.’ We had a good laugh about it.

What BS-1 didn’t know was that at the same period we were calling each other BS-1 and BS-2; my son Zenwa (and Alice too) had been watching this absolutely insane (and inane) cartoon series, Bananas in Pajamas, about, well, two bananas in pajamas, (named B-1 and B-2) who would get into these terrible jams at the beginning of the show but would sort of come out okay at the end. So every time we called each other BS-1 and BS-2, I was thinking of B-1 and B-2. Imagine that. Us two as bananas in pajamas.

I never asked BS-1 if he ever watched Bananas in Pajamas.

Principles I learned from BS-1:

1. It’s not about the yourself, it’s about the community
2. Never underestimate your ability to change community attitudes

One more, this one from Emma Catague who credited Bob Santos for a lot of her thoughts on community organizing, so this may have come from BS-1 too:

3. You gotta have passion

I was helping Emma write a community organizing manual and as we came close to finishing, I asked her, ‘What should we title the book?’

‘What should be in a title,’ she asked.

‘What’s most important about community organizing?’

‘What do you think?’

‘Trust.’

She thought a moment, then replied, “No, Bob, ‘passion’ is. You gotta have passion.”

The book was titled, ‘Organizing with Passion.’” - Bob Shimabukuro



## Eternal Vigilance Remembering Charles Z. Smith

By Bob Shimabukuro

In November of 1997 Henry Miyatake, the man who developed the Japanese American redress plan, was still not satisfied seven years after the first

redress checks were passed out. In a conversation/interview with Washington State Supreme Court Justice Charles Z. Smith, Henry expressed his disappointment that he couldn’t see that any of the events which had transpired during and after the campaign for redress would prevent a reoccurrence of the incarceration of any group of people without due process. So he asked Justice Charles Z. Smith, whether or not that was a correct assessment.

Justice Smith answered rather bluntly, “The President has unlimited authority to issue an Executive Order to do anything. The President has to suspend due process. There has to be a determination that there is a military necessity or it is being done in the interests of national security that the President can take extraordinary actions which are not controlled by Congress. So if you get the wrong President in, if the President decides that everybody born in Moscow, Idaho, should be put in a concentration camp, the President could do it.”

After a brief pause, Justice Smith continued, “What can we do? We sit back and keep our eyes and ears open and I think of Thomas Jefferson’s expression, ‘eternal vigilance is the price of liberty.’ How we remain vigilant is to put our politicians to task. We need to get more involved in the political process, [pay attention to] people running for significant offices like President of the U.S., attend political rallies, ask the questions, get commitments. I wish I can say that the temper of the times is such that these things would never happen again but I know otherwise. You never can anticipate the nature of human beings, whether they are Presidents of the United States, or members of Congress, mayors or members of city council, you cannot anticipate what they will want to do in the future. From a legal standpoint, the President can do it.”

After a lengthy discussion, Justice Smith summarized, “Can it happen again? Yes. Should it happen again? No.”

The family of Retired Justice Charles Z. Smith released a statement, about his death (“peacefully in his home on Sunday, August 28, 2016,” at the age of 89) and listed his accomplishments, including many for which he was the “first person of color”: Seattle Municipal Court Judge, King County Superior Court Judge, and Washington State Supreme Court Justice.

He also served as Deputy Prosecuting Attorney for King County, Special Assistant to then Attorney General of the United States Robert Kennedy, and Associate Dean/ Professor of Law at the Uni-

versity of Washington Law School.

"Throughout his career, Justice Smith was actively engaged in local, national and international programs and organizations related to education, human rights, family and children, religion, health, prison reform, military justice, and racial, ethnic and cultural awareness. He received numerous awards in recognition of his public service."

Yes, he was all that, and much, much more. Especially to Henry Miyatake, the man with the redress plan, and Shosuke Sasaki, the writer of the plan, and thus, to us too, the community. Both of them spent many hours with Justice Smith, getting help in drafting the legal underpinnings for redress.

In addition, Justice Smith also had a radio/TV show while he was the Assistant Dean at the UW Law School, and would, from time to time, talk about redress for Japanese Americans who were placed in concentration camps. He was a 20+ year member of the Seattle Chapter Japanese American Citizens League (JACL) and helped with the redress campaign whenever he could, including working with the mock hearings prior to the Commission on War-time Internment and Relocation of Civilians (CWIRC) Hearings.

Justice Smith was also a great orator. Clear, crisp, and often speaking without any notes. I remember a speech he gave when he was honored with the Seattle JACL Don Kazama Award. He told the history of the Seattle Chapter JACL from its early years to after the campaign for redress successfully ended. "Without any notes," emcee Lori Matsukawa pointed out.

I was mesmerized.

After 9/11/2001, all of us know now, that Miyatake and Justice Smith were right. Some of those imprisoned since then have been incarcerated (and tortured) for more than three times the duration of incarceration of Japanese Americans in World War II.

In his conversations with Henry, Justice Smith said that the CWIRC Hearings were very important to him personally. It was "an expiation of submerged anger; people shared for the first time, experiences they had chosen not to talk about even with their own families." He said he learned a lot about the community from those hearings.

Those hearings presented another reality than the government's false version of what happened. To me, Justice Smith's reminder about vigilance means that we cannot allow more false narratives about people. Especially the kinds of false stories that demean people's histories and cultures in ways that make them seem less human. These types of stories and stereotypes lead to mass incarcerations, killings without justice, and genocide.

In Bob's perfect world, everyone would have clean air (always first on my list), clean water, healthy food and a safe home. Everyone. There's no way I can see that happening with the current global economic system. Changes need to be made world-wide. Still, I'm very optimistic that the younger generations (well, at least younger than mine) of people of color are really learning the Fo' Real stuff, and that awareness will awaken many more people.

A lot has happened already. Learning the real stuff, that is.

Thanks for showing us the way, RIP Charles Z. Smith  
Let's Catch a Breath, Then Keep Movin



## In loving memory: Lily Shiosaki

Beloved wife, mother, and friend passed away peacefully Monday, July 4th, in Seattle, surrounded by her family. Lily was a gracious and steadfast presence to those around her, a woman for whom her family was unquestionably the center of her life. She delighted in her children and husband, celebrating their accomplishments, nurturing them through hardship, and bestowing upon them unconditional love and support.

Lily A. Nakai was born in Spokane, November 1, 1927, to Tei and Risaburo, immigrants from Japan who settled in Washington. An outstanding student and athlete, Lily was very much at the center of things at Lewis and Clark High School, playing basketball and volleyball, and graduating at the top of her class in 1945. After graduation she attended Kelsey Baird Business School, subsequently working as a secretary at several small businesses over the years. It was a few years later that a charming and highly decorated Nisei soldier, Fred Shiosaki, became smitten by the pretty and accomplished young woman, thus beginning a courtship that culminated in their marriage in 1955. They had two children, daughter Nancy followed by their son Michael.

Lily rarely spoke of the early years of her marriage when the young couple faced discrimination, and housing and employment were routinely denied them solely based on their Japanese ancestry. She possessed a quality of forbearance and stoicism characteristic to the Nikkei community. While self-effacing and modest, her strength of character was unmistakable to all who knew her. Underneath Lily's unflinching lady-like exterior was a force of nature that provided an unshakable foundation for family and friends.

Until 2014 Lily and Fred lived in their Spokane Valley family home, surrounded by life-long friends. Always athletic, Lily was an avid golfer, and was a long-time member of the Liberty Lake and Esmeralda Women's Golf Clubs. The Highland Park United Methodist Church played an important role in Lily's life.

Lily is survived by her husband Fred, daughter Nancy, son Michael and son-in-law Edward.

In lieu of flowers or koden, the family requests that memorial gifts be made to the [Alzheimer's Association](http://www.alz.org) of Washington, 100 W. Harrison St. N200, Seattle, WA 98119, [www.alz.org](http://www.alz.org) or Densho: The Japanese American Legacy Project, 1416 S. Jackson Street, Seattle, WA 98144, [www.densho.org](http://www.densho.org)

Editor's note: Seattle JACL regrets it cannot post an in memoriam for every valued member of our community. However, you may always email our newsletter editor with your family news of any kind.



Get ready for family: AN API LGBTQ gathering-2.0! Seattle JACL receives \$3,000 Legacy grant to reignite conference

## Family 2.0

An API LGBTQ Gathering will be the second event of its kind. First hosted in 2015, Family is a one day conference that celebrates the lives of API LGBTQ individuals and their allies. With the help of community organizations from across the states, this event will host workshops covering a multitude of intersecting identities, as well as surprise keynote speakers and live performances. Family 2.0 is set for Saturday, May 20th at North Seattle College.

If you are interested in helping or participating, please email the committee chair Sarah Baker at

## Seattle JACL Honored Twice!

Seattle Recognized with the George J. Inagaki Chapter Citizenship Award

On July 14, the Seattle chapter was honored with the George J. Inagaki Chapter Citizenship Award at the 47th National JACL convention awards luncheon held at the Monte Carlo Resort and Hotel in Las Vegas. This is the eleventh time the chapter was selected in the 22 conventions the award has been given.

The George J. Inagaki Chapter Citizenship Award, established by the Venice-Culver JACL Chapter at the 20th Biennial National Convention in 1968, is given in honor of George Inagaki, a past National JACL President, for his many years of unremitting efforts and outstanding dedication to the National organization.

As the title indicates, this is a chapter award, recognizing a chapter's promotion of better citizenship. "Better citizenship" is

defined as chapter participation in activities that may be social, civic, educational, environmental, or legislative that results in the betterment of society as a whole. The Venice-Culver JACL raises and administers the funds for this award, and has delegated the selection of the recipient to the National JACL Awards & Recognition Committee. A commemorative plaque and a check for \$500 are presented to the JACL chapter selected for this honor.

Seattle Chapter President Sarah Baker said, "We are represented by such a diverse membership base and board, and the work we do in the community is so critical. Past presidents Toshiko Hasegawa and Paul Tashima are such strong community leaders, having the past two years recognized by JACL National is an honor. Our chapter is so grateful for this award!"

The Seattle chapter most recently received the award at the 2014 San Jose convention.

Previous George J. Inagaki Chapter Citizenship Award recipients from the Pacific Northwest District also include Puyallup Valley (1972), Spokane (1980), Portland (1986 & 2006) and Lake Washington (2004).

The Pacific Northwest District Council is represented on the national awards and recognition committee by the Puyallup Valley chapter's Elsie Taniguchi.

Seattle JACL Receives \$5,000 Robert Chinn Foundation Grant



Picture - Robert Chinn Foundation Board Member, Peter Tsai, presenting the grant to Seattle Chapter President, Sarah Baker, at the October Seattle JACL Board Meeting.

Seattle JACL was awarded a \$5,000 grant from the Robert Chinn Foundation to stage a two-day workshop for young leaders in 2017. The grant was a part of a three-pronged 2016 initiative by a committee of past Seattle Chapter Presidents to raise \$10,000 this year for youth activities through a raise-the-paddle effort at the annual Chapter Banquet, via a direct mail appeal to other past Seattle Chapter Presidents, and through grant writing.

The committee is composed of former President Gail Tanaka, Chair, along with former Presidents Joy St Germaine, Arlene Oki, and Bill Tashima. The raise-the paddle brought in \$8,000, the direct mail appeal (with an anonymous match) brought in \$5,000,

and the Chinn grant of \$5,000--a total thus far this year of \$18,000.

Robert Chinn was the founder of United Savings and Loan, the first Asian-owned bank in the United States. His family honored Robert Chinn's community involvement and engagement by creating the Robert Chinn Foundation which established the Asian Hall of Fame along with the annual formal installation of new inductees and also established the Seattle Asian Resource Center. The Asian Resource Center was sold in 2014 and, subsequently, the Foundation established a formal community grant program. The Robert Chinn Foundation is headed by community activist and philanthropist, Karen Wong, daughter of the late Robert Chinn.

## Community Engagement

Seattle JACL activities, Summer - Fall 2016



Members of Seattle JACL representing at the 2016 Nisei Vets Luau at the Renton Pavilion Center, September 10, 2016



Stanley Shikuma, Seattle JACL Secretary, in front of the Seattle JACL display at Seattle Betsuin's Obon.



Seattle JACL was pleased to join members of our community for the annual Aki Kurose school cleanup

## Seattle JACL Joins ACRS Walk for Rice, Because Every Grain Counts

On June 25 at Seward Park, the 22 member strong Team Seattle JACL joined hundreds of participants in the 26th Annual Walk for Rice. Together participants raised over \$200,000 to provide culturally affirming food such as rice, tofu and bok choy for the Asian Counseling and Referral Service's (ACRS) food bank, nutrition and emergency feeding program. Veteran Walk for Rice chapter participant Bill Tashima added, "We also walk in memory of Elaine Reiko Akagi who always organized Team Seattle JACL." The chapter raised over \$3,000 from friends, family and the community with Team Co-Captain Stephanie Tsukiko Nomura's pacesetter efforts bringing in more than \$1,000 toward the team's total.

*"As someone who was sometimes a food bank kid," Stephanie said, "I think what ACRS is doing is magical. They provide culturally relevant food to the community they serve. My family sometimes relied on our local food bank in order to be able to eat dinner that night. While we were always grateful for what we received, it wasn't easy for my mother to transform lentils or canned vegetables into a meal she felt truly proud to serve her two little girls."*

ACRS is the largest multi-service organization serving all the different Asian American and Pacific Islander communities - immigrants, refugees and American born - in the Pacific Northwest offering a broad array of human services and behavioral health programs. Founded in 1973 from a grassroots effort to provide culturally competent mental and behavioral health services. ACRS today seeks to promote social justice and the well-being and empowerment of Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders and other underserved communities - including immigrants, refugees - by developing, providing and advocating for innovative community-based multilingual and multicultural services.

The Puget Sound JACL chapters have partnered with ACRS through the API Coalition in a variety of civic engagement activities ranging from API Legislative Day participation at the state capitol to sponsoring candidate forums and will partner again this year to execute the 2016 Coulter Foundation grants.



## Seattle JACL Meeting with Seattle Chief of Police Kathleen O'Toole

By Sarah Baker

On Thursday, August 11th, Seattle JACL President Sarah Baker, Civil Rights Committee Chair Toshiko Hasegawa, and Civil Rights Committee member Maria Leininger met with Seattle's Chief of Police Kathleen O'Toole and members of her staff. Items on the agenda included police accountability, hiring practices, and how the community can become more engaged with the SPD and vice versa.

Through a very candid and engaging meeting, it was found that the SPD to date has increased the diversity of their hiring pool by 30%, and is actively recruiting and promoting people of color through the pipeline into higher positions. They are also working dually on prevention and intervention within our neighborhoods in relation to crime, drugs, and homelessness. When questioned about the West vs. East precincts and how they cover the CID, an ongoing hot-spot for crime, the Chief assured us that she encourages cross-precinct work wherein officers are not limited to the areas that they may patrol.

It is apparent that the Chief is not afraid to tackle difficult issues, and is working tirelessly to serve the community. The Seattle JACL is looking forward to working with her and her staff on how we can problem solve to build trust amongst members of the community. Moving forward, we want to continue with these types of conversations; ones that build relationships, trust, and empower the people that the SPD serves.

## SENSEI-tional 3

Celebrating a Nikkei legacy at UW

With a deep sense of pride, gratitude, friendship, and respect, more than 200 people gathered at Blaine Memorial United Methodist Church on Saturday, August 27<sup>th</sup>, to honor three University of Washington professors: Tetsuden Kashima, Gail Nomura, and Stephen Sumida for their years of dedicated work in the American Ethnic Studies Department, to celebrate their recent retirements, and to wish them well in their future endeavors.

The SENSEI-tional 3 had a profound impact on furthering the inclusion of Asian American, and, in particular, Japanese American, contributions to the history and legacy of our American nation.

The afternoon was a perfect event of food, fun, and friends. The Blaine Ukulele Group Seattle (B.U.G.S.) provided background Hawaiian music with Elsie Taniguchi accompanying with her beautiful hula dances. The emcee host for the occasion was Harold Taniguchi who provided the light hearted tone for the afternoon as only Harold can do. Friends provided heartfelt and often humorous thoughts on the honorees during an open mic session.

Sean Shkurkan/SkurryAway Productions put together a moving video tribute to the SENSEI-tional 3, narrated by Lori Matsukawa that included interviews from the Professors friends and family. Irene Mano presented the three honorees with a plaque from the



Seattle Japanese American community to commemorate Professors Kashima, Nomura, and Sumida. The plaque will be placed in a display case at the UW Department of American Ethnic Studies.

The highlight was the responses and words of thanks from the three Professors as they opined on the impact of the years of teaching on their family, professional selves, and individual personas. Their words were thought provoking, poignant, and engaging. Their words brought out both tears and laughter.

Seattle JACL was honored to be the fiscal sponsor for this community event.

## SENSEI-tional 3 Donations: Major Sponsors (Includes in-kind donations)

Blaine Memorial United Methodist Church  
Sharon Fujii  
Gobo/Brenda Handley  
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 Frieda Takamura  
 UW Nikkei Alumni Association  
 Uwajimaya  
 The Wing Museum  
 Patsy Yamada  
 Christine Yorozu and Richard Smith



## Seattle JACL Celebrates a Successful 5th Annual Living Well Health Fair

On Saturday, October 22<sup>nd</sup>, 2016, Keiro Northwest and Seattle JACL held the fifth annual Living Well Health Fair at Blaine Memorial United Methodist Church. The focus of this health fair is to promote good health by living well by keeping engaged physically, mentally, and spiritually with healthy eating, outside activities, good everyday practices. With 79 vendors, 118 volunteers, and hundreds of participants, this year's health fair was the most successful to date.

Thanks to Board members: Sarah Baker, Ken Kurata, Toshiko Hasegawa, BiHua Caldwell, Paul Foley-Tashima, Arlene Oki, Sheldon Arakaki, Marcine Anderson, Theo Bikel, Josh Foley-Tashima, Tsuki Nomura-Henley, Elsie Taniguchi, Bill Tashima, plus Chapter members: Neil Shiosaki, Lily Eng, Jeff Saul, Reiko Kobayashi-Wagner, Dave Asamoto, Dave Cunningham, and Barbara Nagaoka for volunteering for this event.

Ken, Sarah, Reiko and Bill also served on the health fair planning committee.

Minna-san, otsukaresan deshita.

## Civic Engagement

Help immigrants gain their citizenship this December  
 By Theo Bickel

Next Citizenship Workshop:  
 Sunday  
 December 4, 2016  
 FREE  
 North Seattle College  
 9600 COLLEGE WAY N  
 SEATTLE, WA 98103

FREE help with your citizenship application!

I had the pleasure of volunteering with the City of Seattle Office of Immigrant and Refugee Affairs 'New Citizen Campaign' On Saturday, October 15. More than 100 volunteers from all walks of life came together to support applicants from all over the world start the path to citizenship. Together we served close to two hundred potential new Americans and assisted 75 other legal permanent residents.

With so much xenophobia and hateful rhetoric targeting immigrants in our country, I was so happy to support this great event, meet great people who volunteered and help excited applicants become citizens.

The city is hosting the next workshop on Sunday, December 4, 2016, from 10am-1pm at North Seattle College. Seattle JACL will be participating again and we hope that you can join us! More information: [seattle.gov/iandraftaffairs/NCC](http://seattle.gov/iandraftaffairs/NCC)

Civic Engagement more important than ever  
 By Theo Bickel

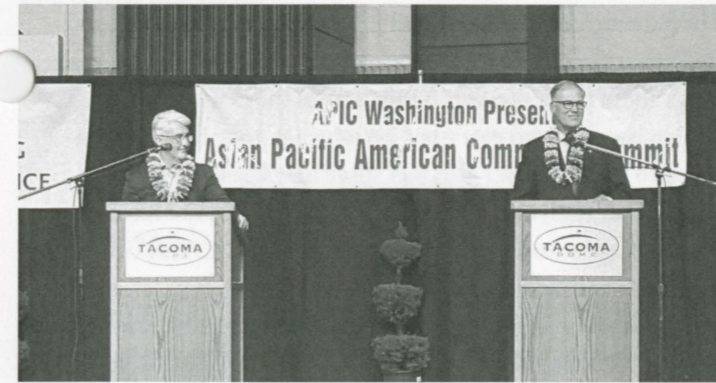


On September 27th we celebrated National Voter registration Day. Seattle JACL participated in a national, grassroots campaign for organizations of all stripes (social service, university student clubs, small businesses, non-profits, and many more) to work together to engage our fellow citizens in the voting process. This event represents a growing cooperation among communities and organizations to tackle issues of political alienation, apathy, and voting barriers.

Coincidentally, September 27, 2016 also marks the 95th anniversary of the formation of the Seattle Progressive Citizens League in 1921 which would be the precursor organization to the Japanese American Citizens League. The founders hoped to secure the civil rights for their community and future generations. They recognized that citizenship and the right to vote that came with it, provided the keys to security, dignity, and justice.

Today, 95 years later, United States voter turnout is abysmally low. United States voter participation rates in 2014 were the lowest since 1942. We are the only developed democracy in the world where elected officials are making it HARDER for people to vote and participate in politics. Voter participation rates are also disproportionately lower for people of color.

## Quadrennial API Democracy Summit



The candidate forum for governor had challenger and BCI Chairman Bill Bryant (left) and Governor Jay Inslee (right) address climate change, the minimum wage, education funding and social services for immigrants.

Celebrating unity and civic engagement, the third quadrennial Asian American and Pacific Islander Democracy Summit, organized by the Asian Pacific Islander Coalition (APIC) of Washington State, was held on September 15, just 54 days before the November 8 general election, and brought together 2,000 Asian and Pacific Islander (API) community members from across the state for a one day event. The Seattle and Olympia chapters of the JACL were among the 100 sponsoring or endorsing API community organizations which also included six Wallace H. Coulter Foundation grantees.

Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders (AAPI) are the fastest-growing minority group in Washington, and non-partisan groups like those comprising the Asian Pacific Islander Coalition work to inform and increase the API electorate across the state.

The 2,000 community participants from APIC of South Puget Sound, Yakima County (central Washington), Spokane County (eastern Washington) and King, Snohomish and Pierce Counties (western Washington) spoke 27 languages and dialects and came together to register to vote, to learn about the mechanics of voting in this state, their right and duty to exercise their votes as American citizens, -- all while celebrating and honoring the unique cultural identities that comprise the diversity of AAPIs through their language, music and dance.

The candidates' forum featuring Governor Jay Inslee and challenger Bill Bryant with all questions and candidate statements and responses translated in 27 languages. The candidates' responded on climate change, raising the minimum wage, education funding/tax revenue, and social service funding for immigrants.

ACRS Civic Engagement Program Manager Monica Ng summed up the day by stating, "The Summit was a power building moment. It's not everyday that candidate forums have translation for 27 languages. People care about civic engagement and when we make culturally and linguistically accessible, we give people the opportunity to be fully engaged in democracy."

The AAPI Democracy Summit is the product of coalition building to celebrate AAPI voices and the democratic right and responsibility of voting. Logistical planning started in the fall of 2015

and agenda planning began in earnest in the spring of 2016.

## JACL Youth Convention Experiences

Save the date for our annual banquet on April 8th to make these experiences possible

By Micah McCally

This past summer, I was honored to attend the JACL National Conference in Las Vegas. I was pleased and grateful to meet a variety of people, from Norm Mineta to our esteemed president, Sarah



(whom I hadn't had a chance to meet previously). In any case, I learned a lot from the conference, including more about the social justice work that the JACL is involved in at the national level and the debate over the fate of the Pacific Citizen, issues which will definitely inform the future of the JACL. All in all, it was a great trip, and an experience I certainly hope to replicate in Washington DC.

Moreover, going to the national conference reinforced how important it is to be involved with the JACL at the local level. These past few years, I know I haven't been very involved (the hazards of attending college in Bellingham) but that's something I want to change as soon as I graduate in one all-too-short year. However, in the near future, even though I'm away from Seattle, I want to mainly focus on being involved in what events I can attend, and making sure that the Japanese American students I know in college join the JACL. Once I'm back in Seattle, I certainly would be interested in stepping up to help however I can, including leadership roles.



By Audrey Remle

To say that the Japanese American Citizens League National Convention was a new experience for me would be an understatement. Not only was it my first time experiencing the intriguing and disorienting city of Las Vegas, but it was also my first time really getting to meet with JACL members outside of the few I had met

in my own chapter. And even that contact was limited since I had only officially joined the Seattle JACL Chapter two months prior to the national convention.

When I consider these different factors, I would have believed myself to be too timid to speak up on anything important to me. But as the days went on, I realized it was a space that not only wanted to hear the knowledge I had to offer, but also a place that needed to hear it. And it was also an event where I got to meet so many amazing individuals who taught me about their history and gifted me with amazing wisdom to carry going on into the future.

But the most amazing part of the convention for me was watching a new fire starting to spark within the youth of this organiza-

tion. And what made me really happy was that I seemed to be recruited right before the flames erupted. I often feel discouraged with society and the frequent discrimination and ignorance I am faced with every day. The influx of ignorant comments and recent violence had been draining my spirit prior to attending the convention. But to meet other youth that felt the same way and to actually watch that ignorance that plagues my daily life be confronted and turned to knowledge over the week was both empowering and healing at the same time.

I have a good feeling that going into the future, the youth of this organization will be strong leaders in uniting AAPI communities with other minority groups. I could feel the spark being lit and I'm almost certain that it will brighten the future of the JACL. While seeing it happen, I couldn't deny the strong feeling within me that knew I not only wanted, but needed to be a part of this movement. I want to take the empowerment that I received from other people from the convention and use that strength to continue doing what I can within my own local chapter.

By Rosida Mohamathno



In winning the Aki Kurose Memorial Scholarship awarded from Seattle JACL, I could not be more grateful that I was offered to apply to a second scholarship, which was to attend the JACL National Convention in Las Vegas. I really had an amazing time the five days spent in Las Vegas.

Visiting the city for the first time made everything more exciting; but the best part was being exposed to so many different people involved in the JACL. I met other youth who were also attending the convention on scholarship, and we all believed that it was important to give back to the organization that has done so much to help us. I was really impressed meeting the other youth and what the NYSC has been working on throughout the year. It overjoyed me when they decided to award the LA Black Lives Matter at the Youth Luncheon. It was not only well deserved, but it demonstrated the solidarity that the JACL has with its surrounding communities.

It is what I have always heard about the JACL, but to actually witness it and feel apart of it was especially moving. The act itself brought forth conversations among JACL members that might have been uncomfortable for some; but provided the learning and awareness necessary to combat these issues.

The Seattle Chapter really held it down! I could not have been more proud to have people look at my name tag and read that I was from the Seattle Chapter. The Seattle Chapter does really great work and I am so glad that they were recognized for it. In attending convention, I really do want to take on a bigger role within the

chapter. I would love to attend more events and continue to be a part of an organization that continues to strive for the rights of others.

In moving forward, I am glad I met other youth who shared similar passions about the Japanese culture. I heard lots of great things about the Kakehashi Project from those who have already been on the trip, and every person who has gone has really encouraged me to apply. I also met some new friends who are also planning on applying to attend this year. I would not have known about this opportunity if it were not for the JACL. This convention experience has pushed me to be more of an active member of the JACL, and also confirmed my desires to want to travel and teach in Japan. I hope that I can make it to convention next year! Thank you, Sarah Baker and the rest of the members for making this experience happen for me, I feel truly blessed.

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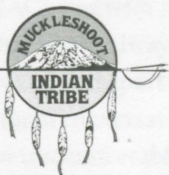
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