

Summer 2018

# Berkeley JACL Newsletter

SERVING THE BERKELEY, OAKLAND, AND ALBANY COMMUNITIES

## Coming Events

- Jun 9, 23     **Berkeley Nikkei Seniors Group** at the  
Jul 14, 28     North Berkeley Senior Center, 1901 Hearst  
Aug 11, 25     Ave., Berkeley. This group meets every 2<sup>nd</sup>  
Sep 8, 22     and 4<sup>th</sup> Saturday of each month. For  
                    information contact Howard Fukuda  
                    ([howardfukuda@gmail.com](mailto:howardfukuda@gmail.com))
- Jun 15     **Baseball and Bento with Berkeley JACL;**  
July 18-22   **National JACL Convention;** observing the  
                    30th anniversary of the passage of redress;  
                    see [www.JACL.org](http://www.JACL.org) for more information

**Making Noise** is a means to exercise your right to express your views, humor, concerns, or anything else of interest. We will be happy to print it in our Newsletter. Please write to the JACL Berkeley Chapter newsletter, c/o Berkeley JACL, P.O Box 7609, Berkeley, CA 94707-0609. **MAKE SOME NOISE!!!**

E-mail the Berkeley JACL at: [berkeleyjacl@gmail.com](mailto:berkeleyjacl@gmail.com)  
Visit our Website at [www.berkeleyjacl.org](http://www.berkeleyjacl.org)  
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## College Corner

*College Corner provides chapter scholarship recipients a channel to provide feedback on their college experiences.*

### **Rachel Hirota**



When I arrived at UC Davis, there were only three things that I was worried about: missing my family, being in a hyper-competitive internship market, and failing all my classes. During the first week of instruction, I arrived at my 'Domesticated Animal and Man' class lab. I believe that my work at Berkeley High prepared me well for college. However, it never prepared me for flipping a sheep for class, milking a cow, or moving a pig. Also, I never carefully analyzed science fiction texts or films until my 'History of Science Fiction' course. Excluding the rather novel experiences, I felt comfortable with the workload of my classes. The biweekly responses to the sheer number of sci-fi readings, the constant chemistry lab reports, and 3-week gaps between midterms seemed daunting at first. But I did more than survive my first quarter at UC Davis. I took academic risks and diligently studied so that I could thoroughly enjoy these irreplaceable opportunities.

When I scheduled my courses for winter quarter, I registered for the Sheep Practices and Management course. Before coming to Davis, the only sheep I had ever seen were at the Tilden Little Farm,

but I gave the class a try. Now, I work at the UC Davis Sheep Facility as a volunteer, aiding in sheep and lamb management and husbandry. I also reached out to the Goat Facility manager by sending her an email asking about opportunities. So, I now have the delight of bottle feeding the adorable kids for my internship. Additionally, I'm learning how to handle laboratory animals like mice and rats in another Practices and Management course. This experience has led me to finding a student researcher position at the Hunter Lab in the Microbiology Department in practicing mouse husbandry and genotyping.

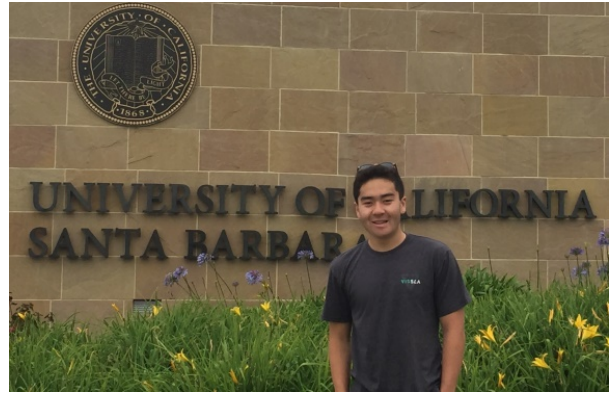
Back in the fall, I took the opportunity to join the Draft Horse and Driving Club. Although I still had never touched the steering wheel of a car, I was possessed by the desire to drive a horse-drawn carriage. At the first meeting I attended, the club officers thrust the lines in my hands. While I hesitated from the mere image of a 2,000 pound horse crashing the cart into a fence, I realized that I was given the chance of a lifetime, and I should embrace the opportunity right in front of me. In the end, I succeeded at not crashing the cart.

I am very grateful for the JACL scholarship. I would like to thank Ms. Carolyn Adams for the Carolyn Adams Family scholarship and the many members of the JACL who generously donate both monetarily and with their time and effort. Because of the Berkeley JACL's support, I have been able to purchase textbooks for my major courses like 'Introduction to Animal Science' and 'General Chemistry' as well as books for my GE classes. My personal library now contains copies of Beowulf, King Lear, and A Princess of Mars.

I guess that if there is anything I have learned at Davis that can't be found in my textbooks, it's to say 'yes.' I had never even thought about trying some of the things that I have done in college. When I came to UC Davis, I thought that I wanted to be a small animal veterinarian, but now I'm not sure. I might go into livestock, laboratory animals, or even exotics.

That's what is great about getting to explore opportunities that I never would have had if I hadn't come to Davis and if I had never stepped out of my comfort zone. I am extremely grateful for the JACL for allowing me to broaden my horizons both in my major and outside of it. In the end, I'm glad to say that I had nothing to be concerned over after all, besides missing my dad's sukiyaki and lasagna.

### *Toshi Steimetz*



I always hoped that if I stayed in California when I headed off to college things would not be that different. However, even though I am only a five hour drive from home, adjusting to life at University of California, Santa Barbara (UCSB) was not an easy task. I will never forget the pure exhaustion I felt just one week after I had moved into my dorm. Classes hadn't even started yet, but I had never been more tired in my life. I spent an entire week introducing myself, saying where I'm from, and making small talk with complete strangers. I attended club information sessions, rush events, and residential hall social gatherings. In a matter of days, I had met hundreds of new people and could only remember a small handful of their names. It was overwhelming and difficult, but ultimately it was beneficial and introduced me to all the close friends I have today.

Looking back on the beginning of the year, it is clear that the first few weeks were tough for all freshmen. Everyone was looking for their niche within a new and massive community. Luckily, it passed quickly and with the generous scholarship from the JACL I was able to join every organization that interested me without worrying about membership or application fees. Through this exploration, I was really able to find my place within UCSB. I have made close friends in clubs such as the Nikkei Student Union, the Red Cross Club, and the Ski and Snowboard Club. Additionally, I have been able to explore academically and take a diverse range of classes. After taking a lower-division economics course with a fascinating professor, I discovered I have it as a keen interest and am planning on pursuing it as my major.

My first year at UCSB has been an introduction to the countless opportunities the school provides. Between the beach, the school, and the community that surrounds it all I am simply trying to soak up everything UCSB has to offer.

### **50 Objects, 50 Stories helps Japanese American families across the country unlock the past**

*Excerpt from an article By Chizu Omori, International Examiner of Seattle*



Isao Learns To Roll The Dice

*Photo Courtesy of Jean Sogioka La Spina*

“50 Objects, 50 Stories” is a website project that explores the human impact of the mass incarceration of 120,000 American Japanese during World War II. Throughout this year and next, a selection of objects including a shell pin made at Topaz, a gold pocketwatch owned by a Heart Mountain issei and an electric hotplate used in a Manzanar barrack will be used to tell the human stories of the owner or maker of the artifact on a website.

The 50 Objects, 50 Stories team is led by Berkeley JACL board director Nancy Ukai and includes artist David Izu of Oakland, videographer Kimiko Marr of the Watsonville-Santa Cruz JACL board and Chizu Omori of Oakland. The project is funded in part by a National Park Service grant through the Japanese American Confinement Sites program.

The website has been launched at <https://50objects.org> and every few weeks, a new object and the story behind it will be put up. The search and the research involved has taken Nancy all over the U.S., tracking down families, combing archives, talking to dozens of people and doing some filming. She was astounded to find that one thing would lead to another and before long, whole family histories would become part of the project.

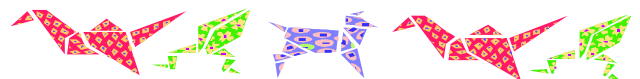
The first object is a series of paintings done by Gene Sogioka who had been a Disney artist before the war. He was given the job of illustrating day-to-day life in the camps for a study being conducted by an anthropologist, and this painting of fellows playing with

dice shows one of the pastimes that the inmates played to pass the time.

Any object can lead to many stories, and the personal story becomes a community story. In these ways, history is remembered; connections are made and become almost magical in opening up the past. They become prompts that jolt memories, make links, sometimes leading to insights and “aha” moments. So much was lost during that wartime period, but people did save some things, and these were probably saved for special reasons.

The truth is that many Japanese American families have not talked much about that painful traumatic period, and in their struggle to survive and reestablish their lives, didn’t have the time or inclination to reflect on it. It was something that was bigger than their individual stories and how to process what had happened to them was difficult. So, the stories often died when the people died, and the next generations grew up not knowing what had happened to grandparents and parents. But some things remain, stuck in garages and closets, or maybe displayed in a home but no one knowing the stories behind the objects.

The project attempts to preserve some of the stories through these objects and encourages others to look for remaining memorabilia in their family’s belongings. It doesn’t take much, maybe old photographs, bits of diaries and letters, and a whole old world can come to life.



### **Meet Your Berkeley JACL Board of Directors**

*We will be introducing you to your Berkeley JACL Board of Directors in the newsletters. Here are some of them:*

#### ***Nancy Ukai***





Nancy Ukai, Berkeley JACL's co-president, is the third-generation of her family to live in Berkeley. Her grandfather, an immigrant from Shizuoka prefecture, ran a cut-flower nursery on Sixth Street near University Ave. before the war. He took a JACL-sponsored citizenship class in Berkeley in 1953. Nancy graduated from UC Santa Cruz in 1976 and went to Japan where she lived for 14 years, working as a Fulbright English Fellow, a weaving apprentice at a Buddhist temple and as a journalist at the Tokyo bureau of Newsweek. In 2008 she received a master's degree in media anthropology from the School of Oriental and African Studies, University of London. She is project director of the "50 Objects/Stories" history website in which the incarceration history of Japanese Americans during World War II is explored through the stories behind 50 artifacts. <http://50objects.org>. She is a Topaz descendant.

### ***Cole Huster***



Cole Huster joined the board of the JACL in 2017 as a sophomore attending Berkeley High School. A staunch advocate for voting rights, Cole works with Vote16 and to fought lower the voting age in Berkeley to 16 for school board elections, successfully passing Measure Y1, first of its kind legislation, to do so. Cole is the president of Youth and Government Model Legislature and Court in Berkeley, where he enjoys planning meetings and attending conferences with his fellow delegates. A fifth-generation Japanese-American, Cole loves spending time volunteering and attending events in the Japanese American community. Attending NCWNP district meetings and National Convention in July 2018, he is proud to serve on the Board of the Berkeley Chapter of the JACL alongside his wonderful fellow board members, representing the diverse community in the city of Berkeley.

### ***Japanese American laundry in Berkeley keeps its landmark status***

The 120-year-old "University Laundry" building at 2526-2530 Shattuck Avenue, which was the site of a prewar Japanese American laundry, was in danger of losing its City of Berkeley historical landmark designation until community members including a Berkeley JACL director, spoke at a council meeting about its importance to the city's history.

The result was that the City Council unanimously upheld the historical landmark designation on April 3, 2018.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DoaUqiMs8lQ> .

The building was designated a landmark in May 2017 by the Landmarks Preservation Commission but an appeal to the decision was filed in Sept. 2017. At the public hearing in April, two people spoke against the landmarking citing the "low" architectural value of the building and that a plaque or other memorial would be a better marker.

The University Laundry began in 1914 as a consortium of five Japanese American families: the Fujiis, Kimbaras, Imamuras, Tsubamotos and Tokunagas. Family members lived on the premises and hot water from the laundry was recycled into bathwater for the communal ofuro. In the earliest days, laundry was delivered by a horse-drawn wagon and the work and living space drew newly-arrived immigrants from Japan who wanted company, sake and local advice. But when 120,000 Japanese Americans were forced out of their West Coast homes and businesses, the laundry founder, Kurasaburo Fujii, lost all his investments and three decades of work.

Leslie Tsukamoto, the granddaughter of Fujii, and the daughter of Michiko Uchida -- who was born at the Shattuck address -- said that the immigrant generation established businesses in an "environment of racism." She requested that the Council landmark buildings that have historical value and preserve evidence of the city's diverse community. Kazuko Iwahashi told Mayor Jesse Arreguin and the council that "when I was born, I was living at that address." She said that her father was a clerk there and "I have memories of going to the laundry and playing there." David Ushijima, a sansei, testified that "it's the last vestige of what remains of the local Japanese American community, which was thriving in the 1930s." His wife's family had an egg business on McGee and Delaware from the 1920s which they were forced to leave behind in 1942.

One citizen said that when he was a boy, his family drove in Southern California along the Palos Verdes peninsula where he saw fallow fields and little farmhouses. "My dad said those were farms and those empty farm houses were occupied by Japanese Americans who had been sent to internment camps." Now those properties are fancy condos, McMansions and one of the fields is now a Trump golf course, he said. "Those farmhouses are only in my memory," he said, and the Japanese American concentration camps have only replicas of guardtowers, but "the University Laundry is still here. It deserves to be preserved."



Early 20th century view of 2026-30 Shattuck Ave., Berkeley, CA. From California Japantowns website, courtesy of Uchida family.



From left, Kurasaburo, wife Kikuyo, John Naoki and Michiko. ca 1926.

### **Berkeley JACL Awards 7 Scholarships & Honors** **Lee "Cubby" Nakamura as Pioneer**

*By Ron Tanaka*

The Berkeley JACL chapter awarded scholarships to 6 high school seniors, one college undergraduate, and presented its Pioneer Award to Lee "Cubby" Nakamura during its April 29th awards luncheon held at Richmond Country Club in Richmond.

The chapter awarded scholarships to the following high school seniors based upon their academic achievements, community involvement, school activities, work history, JACL involvement, written essay, letter of recommendation, and group interview. Ryan Akiyama (Berkeley HS) will attend San Francisco State University and major in journalism. Alyssa Cho (El Cerrito HS), will attend Dominican University as an occupational therapy major. Kailee Nabeta (Rio Americano HS – Sacramento) will attend Boise State University as a kinesiology major – Kailee is also the recipient of the Terry Yamashita Memorial Scholarship. Alexander Tsuetaki (Durham Academy – North Carolina) will attend Tufts University and major in computer science/science technology and society – Alexander is also the recipient of the Dan/Kathleen Date Memorial Scholarship. Luka Uchiyama (Castro Valley HS) will attend Cal Poly SLO and will major in bioresource and agricultural engineering – Luka is the recipient of the Bea Kono Memorial Scholarship. Sydney Wong (El Cerrito HS) will attend San Jose State University and major in graphic design.

The chapter also awarded a college undergraduate scholarship to Maya Kashima. Currently attending Berkeley City College, Maya will transfer to UC Berkeley in the Fall as a media studies major.

Lee "Cubby" Nakamura, co-owner of the Tokyo Fish Market in Berkeley, was presented with the chapter's Pioneer Award. This award honors those with the vision, compassion, and energy to lay a foundation for building the Japanese American community into the active and vibrant one we share today, as well as linking past leaders with our future leaders.

The chapter recognized long time major sponsors Union Bank (Dimitry Bokman) and memorial scholarship donors: the Beatrice Kono family (George Kono), the Terry Yamashita family (Reiko Nabeta), and the Dan/Kathleen Date family (Gail Yamamoto).

The scholarship committee includes: Alix Ching, Mark Fujikawa, Tiffany Ikeda, Vera Kawamura,

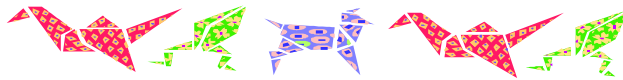


Neal Ouye, Al Satake, Sharron Sue, and Ron Tanaka (Chair).



*Photo (from left to right)*

*Seated: Maya Kashima, Sydney Wong, Luka Uchiyama, Alyssa Cho, Kailee Nabeta; Standing: Ron Tanaka, Lee Nakamura, Jared Akiyama, Alexander Tsuetaki, Reiko Nabeta*



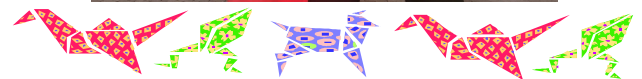
### **JACL/OCA Leadership Summit**

*By Evan Yoshimoto*



The JACL/OCA Leadership Summit was phenomenal. What an opportunity it was to meet with leaders across the nation and discuss the most pressing issues facing our community and communities we stand in solidarity with. Some highlights include having the opportunity to learn about participating in grassroots advocacy; engaging with the State of Civil Rights Panel which included leaders from PFLAG, the Anti-Defamation League, and the NAACP; the lectures on issues of education, immigration, and census that directly impact our communities; and our lobbying visit on the Hill.

It was incredible to meet with leaders who hold so much passion for their work, and I left the summit with a strong sense of community and hope for change in the future. Thank you JACL-NCWNP for this opportunity. It was an honor to be a part of this program and I am excited to bring back what I learned to the Berkeley Chapter and our district.



### **Kakehashi Project**

*By Evan Yoshimoto*



***Arigatou Japan, and hello JACL Berkeley Chapter!*** Here I am pictures above with heart full of traditional Japanese food, snowboarding in Hakuba, new community, and critical discussion on Japanese-American diasporic identity. I was fortunate to be selected in December as a participant of the JACL

Kakehashi Program, coordinated by the Japanese American Citizens League (JACL) and the Japan International Cooperation Center (JICE), and supported by funding from the Japan Ministry of Foreign Affairs. The program was designed to build bridges between Japan and the U.S., and to empower exploration of Asian-American identity.

During the trip we got to take part in cultural exchanges with Yokohama's Meiji Gakuin University peers to get to know one-another in the spirit of friendship. We were also invited to meet with Japanese professors, political leaders, and business executives to learn about different aspects of U.S. – Japan relations. The trip was really one in a lifetime, and I feel so fortunate to have learned so much and gained a new community. Thanks JACL, Japan International Cooperation Center (JICE), and Japan Ministry of Foreign Affairs for making this trip possible!



*Berkeley JACL Board Members- Evan Yoshimoto, Tiffany Ikeda, and Carolyn Adams at the Berkeley Buddhist Temple Bazaar*

<b>Co-Presidents</b>	Tiffany Ikeda, Nancy Ukai Russell
<b>Secretary</b>	Lindsey Kawahara
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	Howard Fukuda, Cole Huster, Vance Oishi, Vera Kawamura,
	Kaz Mori, Neal Ouye, Al Satake, Grant Shimada
	Alyssa Suzukawa, Ron Tanaka, Tara Umemoto,
	Ken Whang, Gordon Yamamoto, Evan Yoshimoto



#### Newsletter

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Ron Tanaka, Nancy Ukai Russell,  
Evan Yoshimoto

#### Production and Circulation

Jim Duff, Valerie Yasukochi, Carolyn Adams

#### Moving and changing your address?

Send us a *Change of Address* card at:

Japanese American Citizens League  
Berkeley Chapter  
Membership  
PO Box 7609  
Berkeley, CA 94707-0609



## **Berkeley JACL Membership Application**

Names(s) – primary and spouse/partner \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City, State, Zip Code \_\_\_\_\_

Phone# and Email \_\_\_\_\_

<b><u>Membership Category</u></b>	<b><u>Total</u></b>	<b><u>Description</u></b>
Regular/Individual	\$70.	National dues \$65+\$5 Chapter dues
Couple/Family	\$115.	National dues \$110+\$5 Chapter dues
Student/Youth	\$35.	National dues \$30+\$5 Chapter dues
Thousand Club	\$100.	Annual contribution
Thousand Club Life	\$3,000.	One-time payment for lifetime membership
Century Club	\$175.	Annual contribution
Century Club Life	\$5,000.	One-time payment for lifetime membership
Millenium Club	\$1,000.	Annual contribution

Your tax-deductible check payable to Berkeley JACL can be sent to our PO Box 7609, Berkeley, CA 94707-0609 or JACL National Headquarters, P.O. Box 45397, San Francisco, CA 94145-0397.

Your membership includes a digital subscription to the Pacific Citizen (be sure to include your email address). If you prefer a hard copy, please check the box below and include your check for an **additional** \$17/year.

☐ **MAIL** me the Pacific Citizen – enclosed is my check for an additional \$17.

*For more information, contact JACL National Membership in San Francisco at 415-921-5225 x25.*

*Payment by credit card can be made at <https://jacl.org/member/>. Please specify you want to be a member of the Berkeley Chapter*

**Japanese American Citizens League  
Berkeley Chapter  
P.O Box 7609  
Berkeley, CA 94707-0609**

**Join Berkeley JACL at its A's Baseball/Bento/Fireworks Event**