

# Berkeley JACL Newsletter

SERVING THE BERKELEY, OAKLAND, AND ALBANY COMMUNITIES

## Coming Events

TBD **Berkeley Nikkei Seniors Group** at the West Berkeley Senior Center, 1900 Sixth Street, Berkeley. This group normally meets every 2<sup>nd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> Saturday of each month. For information about restart, please contact Howard Fukuda

Jul 19 **Berkeley JACL Zoom Video conference:** Honoring Scholarship winners, Pioneer and Youth Leadership honorees; 12:00-1:15; see attached flyer for details

Aug TBD **Book Talk with Marilyn Chase;** Everything She Touched: The Life of Ruth Asawa; time and date to be announced.

**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)  
[www.facebook.com/BerkeleyChapterJACL/](https://www.facebook.com/BerkeleyChapterJACL/)



B E R K E L E Y

## 2020 Berkeley JACL Scholarships, Pioneer and Youth Leadership Awards

*By Ron Tanaka*

The chapter's annual scholarship and other awards event is **scheduled for Sunday, July 19**, from 12:00 noon to 1:15 PM, via Zoom video conference. RSVP with your name & e-mail by July 10 to Ron Tanaka. Zoom information will be e-mailed to you prior to July 19<sup>th</sup>.

### Scholarships

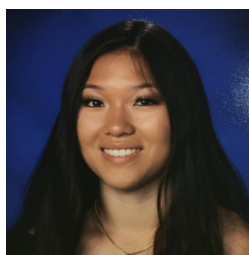
The chapter proudly announces presentation of scholarships to eight high school seniors who will be entering their college freshman year in the Fall:



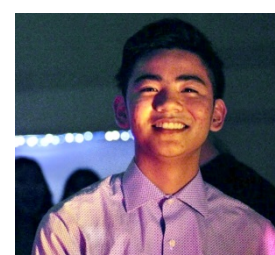
Charlene Tonai Din  
Oakland Technical HS



Anna Hamai -  
Berkeley HS



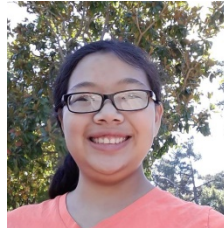
Danielle Kitaoka  
El Cerrito HS



Bryant Lee  
Castro Valley HS



Bryce Nakahara  
Albany HS



Allison Nakao  
Las Lomas HS -  
Walnut Creek



George Paoletti -  
College Preparatory  
School – Oakland



Peter Sullivan -  
Albany HS

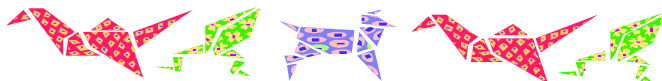
The Berkeley JACL recognizes **the Bea Kono, Terry Yamashita, Dan/Kathleen Date, and George/Yoshimi Nakamura families** for their major contributions to the chapter's scholarship program.

### ***Pioneer Award***

Valorie Yasukochi will be honored **as its Pioneer Award recipient**. Established in 1996, this award is presented to her in recognition of her long history of dedicated community service, and service to the Berkeley JACL. This award provides a link to those that have led us in prior years with our scholarship recipients, who are our future leaders.

### ***Youth Leadership Award***

Tiffany Ikeda will be awarded the chapter's 2nd Annual Youth Leadership Award. This award recognizes Tiffany for her desire, vision, and skills to make a positive difference in areas consistent with Berkeley JACL's mission.



### **Valerie Yasukochi- 2020 Berkeley JACL Pioneer**



Valerie was born and raised in Berkeley, the only child of Bess and George Yasukochi. Her father was the first post-war president of the Berkeley JACL and was instrumental in helping to write the chapter by-laws and create guidelines for the Issei Memorial Fund which offers financial support for college freshman scholarships, qualifying grants, chapter sponsored events and activities.

Val wasn't always passionate about JACL. In fact, similar to some of her generation at the time, she viewed the organization as something more geared towards her parents and grandparents and not relevant to her. But its civil rights focus piqued her interest. In snatches of conversation here and there, she learned about JACL's long history of fighting discrimination and advocating for social justice. The more she learned about JACL, the more interested she became. Today, her viewpoint is very different.

Val was elected to the Berkeley JACL Board of Directors in the late 1990's and immediately immersed herself in the Civil Rights, Membership and Grants Committees. Her leadership and enthusiasm were quickly recognized and acknowledged by the Berkeley JACL Board, and she was soon elected chapter co-president. She served several additional years as president.

Her strong organizational skills have been instrumental to the success of many chapter-sponsored events. You can count on Val to be there helping out in the background. For over 20 years she has encouraged and mentored youth to join and become active in our chapter. She strongly believes in the importance of developing future leaders for the organization and the Asian Pacific Islander community. Her outreach and dedication to that goal are admirable. Another valuable contribution is the incredible job she does handling our chapter holiday ads in the Pacific Citizen newspaper. It

is our largest fundraiser of the year and has been extremely successful.

As our long-standing JACL district representative, Val serves as the voice of our chapter and conveys to our chapter board what National JACL and the districts are doing, and how they vote on particular issues. She keeps our chapter updated with programs, events, and activities of the 31 chapters in our district, from Monterey to Oregon, Reno to San Francisco to Hawaii and Japan. Val was appointed Pacific Citizen Representative for the Northern California District, and she served a two-year term. She has represented the Berkeley JACL at the National JACL Conventions since 2002 and mentors our first time participants, especially encouraging youth to attend.

Val was a wild Berkeley High School kid of the Sixties, involved in the mobilization against the Vietnam War, the struggle for implementation of ethnic studies programs in school curricula, and other forms of political activism, followed by more peaceful interludes at holiday and special occasion gatherings with family and friends. She successfully fulfilled her journalism courses as the 1969 editor of Berkeley High School's yearbook, "Olla Podrida." After graduating high school, Val spent a month in Japan with her girlfriend Gwen, who was the lead dancer of the Berkeley High School African Dance group.

Though encouraged to check out institutions of higher learning outside of California, Val, a Berkeleyite since birth, was comfortable staying local. In 1973, she took a hiatus from UC Berkeley and found employment with a prestigious accounting firm in San Francisco. Val later graduated from St. Mary's College in Moraga with a degree in business management.

In 1989, Val began working for American President Lines, an ocean container shipping company headquartered in Oakland. She held various positions from Expatriate Tax Specialist to overseeing the IT finances of the Y2K Project. She took several business-related trips to Asia while working for the multi-national company and retired in 2009.

An avid skier from a young age, Val enjoyed recreational and competitive corporate ski races as an adult. Every year she and her father took an out-of-state ski vacation, traveling to resorts all over the U.S. and Europe. Val also participated in bicycling tours, many of them organized to benefit charities. For the past 10 years, traveling and exploring 6 of the 7 continents has become one of Val's senior passions. One of her

favorite countries is Africa - not only for the incredible wildlife, but also the heart, culture and traditions of the people.

Another passion after retirement was volunteering with her dog, a Miniature Pincher mix named Ashi (because her shelter name was "Legs.") In 2011 Val and Ashi received training in appropriate behavior and hospital protocols and were certified as a pet therapy team. For many years, Val and Ashi delivered J-Sei lunches to homebound seniors who were delighted to get a visit from the friendly pup. They began to make regular visits to local senior and assisted living facilities, much to the delight of the seniors. They also became regular visitors at the Adult Oncology and Pediatric departments at Kaiser Hospital in Oakland. At Kaiser, the young patients are always thrilled to see Ashi and gleefully ask her to sit on their beds. Of course, Ashi, the consummate professional, happily obliges.

Val is married to Jim Duff, also a Berkeley JACL board member and past president. Their family consists of 5 four-legged kids: Rusty, Hana, Mac, Jozu and Ashi (4 felines and 1 canine).

### **Tiffany Ikeda- Youth Leadership Award**

*By Beth Uno*



The Berkeley JACL Board of Directors is excited to award our 2nd Annual Youth Leadership Award to Immediate Past President Tiffany Ikeda. The Berkeley JACL Board of Directors recognizes the critical need to nurture the next generation of leaders. The Youth Leadership Award helps to fulfill the Berkeley JACL's commitment to growing and recognizing youth leaders with the desire, vision and skills to make a positive difference in areas consistent with Berkeley JACL's mission.

Tiffany Ikeda is a lifelong JACL member who has attended national conventions since she was an infant. Tiffany has been actively involved with the JACL since high school as the president of the Junior JACL Fresno chapter, the NCWNP National Youth

Student Council Representative in 2010 and 2011, and on multiple national JACL committees. Tiffany attended law school at the University of Iowa before moving to Oakland in the fall of 2015 to work as an attorney at a federal agency. Tiffany transitioned to civil litigation in December 2017 and currently works for the State of California.

Tiffany joined the Berkeley JACL Board of Directors in January 2017 and served as the chapter co-president from October 2017 to December 2019. Currently, she remains active on the Berkeley JACL Chapter board as the Civil Rights Committee Co-Chair and manages the chapter's website. She also serves as the JACL National Convention and Bylaws Committee Co-Chair. The Board recognizes Tiffany's multiple, invaluable contributions to the chapter and greater Berkeley-Oakland community. Congratulations Tiffany!

### **Refi Lazerson with ADL Talk to Berkeley JACL Board of Directors**

*by Kaz Mori*

Thanks to Beth Uno and Board president Karen Kiyo, the Berkeley JACL Board of Directors, had the pleasure of hearing about the Anti-Defamation League (ADL) from Mr. Rafi Lazerson, Assistant Regional Director of the Central Pacific Region on Tuesday, June 2, 2020. He reached out to the JACL because of the recent rise of anti-Asian harassment and violence due to the pandemic, and also because Refi, with an alert mind, kept abreast of other Asian events and offered us his condolences on the passing of Lillian Kimura.

At our board meeting Refi outlined the key features of the ADL, that it was founded in 1913 because of--yes, you guessed it --a rise in the occurrences of anti-Semitism and bigotry. While its timeless mission is to protect the Jewish people and to secure justice and fair treatment for all. Today, they continue to fight all forms of hate with the same vigor and passion.

ADL's commitment to a world in which no person or group suffers from bias, discrimination or hate overlaps in values and mission of the JACL, and, in the past both organizations have worked on projects of mutual concern. Mister Lazerson joined us today to outline some of the key features of ADL's organizational and program structure. It is reassuring that an organization such as ADL exists to help ensure our nation adheres to the path of justice and fairness.

### **Statement from the Berkeley JACL Board- Black Lives Matter**

*Posted on BerkeleyJACL.org website on May 30, 2020*

The Berkeley chapter of the JACL, the nation's oldest and largest Asian American civil rights organization, is deeply disturbed by the most recent spate of killings and threats leveled at African Americans, most recently:

*George Floyd, 46, Minneapolis, MN; Breonna Taylor, 26, Louisville KY;*

*Ahmaud Arbery, 25, Brunswick GA.*

More than any other minority group, African Americans continue to bear the burden of contemporary presumptions of guilt and police violence. This is abhorrent to our founding principles of equal justice under the law, and it must end.

We re-affirm our solidarity with the Black Lives Matter movement and will continue to speak out against, and resist, the ongoing attacks on the humanity of our African American fellow citizens, no matter who the perpetrator may be. We re-affirm that African Americans are our family members. Our friends. Colleagues. Neighbors. Political leaders. Classmates. That we share the same fiber of one community, and an attack on one is an attack on us all.

We agree wholeheartedly with the Organization of Chinese Americans, who stated:

*"The fact that Hmong American Officer Tou Thao stood to defend his colleague, and antagonized the bystanders who called for compassion, is not lost upon us. Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders must stand up for Black communities by calling out institutional racism and the anti-Blackness within our own communities."*

We will not rest so long as people of color in this country are singled out to be denied their full humanity and citizenship.

### **Berkeley JACL Supports Alameda County Community Food Bank**

*By Ryan Matsuda*

Since the Berkeley JACL Community Service Committee is not currently able to volunteer and help sort food at the Alameda County Community Food Bank, the Board of Directors voted through Zoom to make a donation on behalf of the chapter to the food bank. As a result, the chapter's donation was doubled through the ongoing program put on by the Food Bank



and Stephen and Ayesha Curry's *Eat. Learn. Play. Foundation*, in which all donations are being matched, dollar for dollar. The donation will go on to help provide much needed groceries to households that are in need and have been affected by the COVID-19 pandemic. Those who wish to donate to the food bank can donate virtually through food bank's virtual food drive, <https://www.vfd-accfb.org/>. The Community Service Committee would like to thank the Berkeley JACL for their support in providing the donation. We look forward to going to the food bank in the future to help make our community a better place.

Thank you for your gift of \$250.00 to Alameda County Community Food Bank, which was matched by Stephen and Ayesha Curry's Eat. Learn. Play. Foundation.

Thank you for your 6/2/2020 gift of \$250.00 to Alameda County Community Food Bank. During this unprecedented time, you are bringing hope and nourishment to our neighbors.

**You are providing critical support.**

Communities depending on the Food Bank are the most impacted by COVID-19: families who rely on school meals for their children, workers who are losing hours or even jobs, and vulnerable seniors who look to our Food Bank for groceries that keep them healthy.

**You are playing a vital role in keeping our community healthier and safer.**

Now, more than ever, as we navigate this critical moment, we do it together. Thank you, again.

In solidarity,

Alameda County Community Food Bank



*Food Bank Donation made during Berkeley JACL Board June 2020 Zoom Meeting*



*Berkeley JACL Volunteers in February 2020*

### Other Chapter Activities



*Berkeley JACL at a January 2020 Warriors Game at Chase Center*



*Berkeley JACL Volunteers at JSei Crabfeed*

### **Redress: Inside Story of the Successful Campaign for Japanese American Reparations**

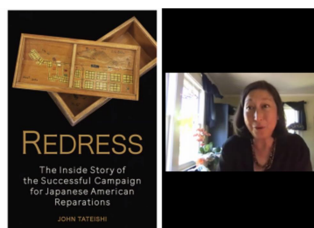
The Berkeley JACL held a book talk with John Tateishi in May 2020. Over 50 people listened in on a Zoom Video. Co-presidents Beth Uno and Karen Kiyo Lowhurst moderated the discussion.

The Berkeley JACL is currently discussing with writer Marilyn Chase about a book talk in August 2020. She wrote the book *Everything She Touched: The Life of Ruth Asawa*. The talk would be in conjunction with the US Postal Service release of Ruth Asawa Forever stamps. Email the Berkeley JACL at [berkeleyjacl@gmail.com](mailto:berkeleyjacl@gmail.com) if you wish to be notified about the Zoom meeting in August.

WELCOME!

A BOOK TALK WITH JOHN TATEISHI

HOSTED BY BERKELEY JACL



### **Berkeley JACL Awards Grants And Monetary Awards**

By Vera Kawamura

The Berkeley JACL awarded two grants and two monetary awards for a total of \$6,000. The first \$2,000 grant was awarded to "Tsuru for Solidarity", for the purpose of providing financial support for youth (with priority given to at least one Berkeley JACL youth), to attend the National Pilgrimage to Close the Camps, previously scheduled for June 5-6, 2020 in Washington, D.C. The second \$2,000 grant was awarded to the Shirley Kazuyo Muramoto Studio for the "NextGen Geijutsuka: Future Stars of Japanese Arts" live concert event, previously scheduled for May 30, 2020 at the Old First Church in San Francisco. The purpose of the grant was to cover production expenses for a program of young artists performing traditional Japanese arts including, Kabuki dance, Japanese koto and calligraphy. Third, the Berkeley JACL selected the Oakland Fukuoka Sister City Association (OFSCA) for

a \$1,000 monetary award for the purpose of supporting its July/August 2020 high school student exchange program with Fukuoka, Japan to promote cultural awareness and understanding. The fourth recipient, the UC Berkeley Nikkei Student Union (NSU), was selected for a \$1,000 monetary award for the purpose of enabling 20 or more UC Berkeley students to participate in the Pilgrimage to Manzanar, originally scheduled for April 24-26, 2020.

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, two of the awardees, "Tsuru for Solidarity" and the UC Berkeley NSU postponed their programs. The OFSCA high school exchange program was cancelled. The Shirley Kazuyo Muramoto Studio has "re-imagined" the "NextGen Geijutsuka: Future Stars of Japanese Arts" live concert. It is anticipated that the program will be presented virtually, over a period of several weeks in June and July 2020, with a recorded artist performance each week, followed by a live chat format.

The Grants Committee encourages applications which, for the next year, are due on March 1, 2021. The Grants Program prioritizes new programs as a means to provide "seed money" or as funds to augment ongoing programs for a limited period of time. Please see the Berkeley JACL website for further information and the application form.

<b>Co-Presidents</b>	Karen Kiyo Lowhurst, Beth Ono
<b>Secretary</b>	Tiffany Ikeda
<b>Treasurer</b>	Mark Fujikawa
<b>Directors:</b>	

Carolyn Adams, Jim Duff, , Howard Fukuda, Emily Itoku, Vera Kawamura, Ryan Matsuda, Kaz Mori, Estella Nakahara-Hemp, Neal Ouye, Al Satake, Tak Shirasawa Ron Tanaka, Marco Torrez, Nancy Ukai, Tara Umemoto, Gordon Yamamoto, Dani Yang, Valerie Yasukochi
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#### **Newsletter**

**Editor** Neal Ouye

**Contributors** Vera Kawamura, Ryan Matsuda, Kaz Mori,  
Ron Tanaka, Beth Uno, Val Yasukochi

#### **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

## **2020 Berkeley JACL**

### **Scholarship, Pioneer, & Youth Leadership Awards** **Via Zoom Video Conference**

#### **Honoring our High School Scholarship Recipients:**



Charlene Tonai Din (Oakland Tech HS)  
Anna Hamai (Berkeley HS)  
Danielle Kitaoka (El Cerrito HS)  
Bryant Lee (Castro Valley HS)  
Bryce Nakahara (Albany HS)  
Allison Nakao (Las Lomas HS – Walnut Creek)  
George Paoletti (College Prep School - Oakland)  
Peter Sullivan (Albany HS)



#### **Honoring our Pioneer Award Recipient:**

Valerie Yasukochi

#### **Honoring our Youth Leadership Awardee:**

Tiffany Ikeda

#### **When: Sunday, July 19, 2020:**

12:00 noon. to 1:15 p.m.

Zoom Video Conference (no cost to user)

#### **RSVP with your name & e-mail by July 10:**

To: Ron Tanaka ([ron\\_tanaka@yahoo.com](mailto:ron_tanaka@yahoo.com)) or call 925-932-7947

Name/E-mail: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Phone # \_\_\_\_\_

**RSVP required to receive**

**Zoom Video Conference Event Information**

(Zoom information will be e-mailed to you prior to 7/19)



## **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 the Berkeley JACL Board on Zoom to honor Scholarship Winners on July 19, 2020**