

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 2nd and 4th Saturday of each month. For information about restart, please contact Howard Fukuda

Oct 19 **Deadline to register to vote by mail.**

Nov 1 **Deadline for Holiday Ads for Pacific Citizen;** Berkeley Chapter's major fundraiser; see article inside

Nov 3 **Election Day;** Please remember to vote. See article inside
Contact JSei to volunteer for driving to deliver meals

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

Visit our Website at www.berkeleyjacl.org

www.facebook.com/BerkeleyChapterJACL/



An Important Message About Voting From The Civil Rights Committee



Our Chapter Civil Rights Committee has identified some of the 12 upcoming ballot initiatives of interest to the Committee. While many of the November initiatives touch on Civil Rights, the Committee wants to highlight the following four for your consideration when you vote:

Proposition 16: Repeals Proposition 209. As you may remember, Proposition 209, enacted in 1996, prohibited remedial preferences in state government education, employment, and contracting to persons on the basis of race or gender. A YES vote on Prop 16 would allow such remedial preferences to again be implemented.

Proposition 17: Restores the right to vote to persons convicted of felonies who are on parole. A YES vote on Prop 17 would expand voting rights to parolees, whereas now they are prohibited from voting.

Proposition 18: Allows 17-year-olds, who will be 18 by the general election, to vote in the immediately preceding primary or special election. A YES vote on Prop 18 would expand voting rights to some 17-year-olds, allowing them to vote a little sooner than they would otherwise be able under current law.

Proposition 25: Replaces the current system of "Cash Bail" with judicial risk assessment for suspects awaiting trial. A YES vote on Prop 25 would transfer the question of whether a suspect may await trial out-of-custody to a judicial risk analysis instead of whether the suspect has the financial means to make bail.

For further information on these and all the upcoming initiatives, the following sources are available:

<https://lwvc.org/sites/default/files/downloads/EVG-Nov2020-Eng.pdf>

<https://calmatters.org/explainers/california-november-2020-ballot-propositions-final-list/>

<https://www.sos.ca.gov/elections/ballot-measures/qualified-ballot-measures>

https://www.latimes.com/california/story/2020-07-01/propositions-on-california-november-2020-ballot?_amp=true

Did you know that only 47% of eligible Asian Americans voted in the last election? If you want assistance registering or have any questions about how or where to vote for the 2020 elections, please contact the Civil Rights Committee through <https://www.facebook.com/BerkeleyChapterJACL> or email us at admin@berkeleyjacl.org and we will assist you.

FAST FACTS ABOUT VOTING:

- Election Day is Tuesday, November 3, 2020.
- The deadline to register online to vote is Monday, October 19, 2020.
- The deadline for registering by mail to vote is (postmarked by) Monday, October 19, 2020.
- The deadline to register in person to vote is Tuesday, November 3, 2020.
- Eligible citizens can go to their county election office, polling place, or vote center to register and vote conditionally. These ballots will be processed once the county elections office has completed the voter registration verification process.
- All registered voters will automatically be mailed a vote-by-mail ballot for the November 3, 2020, General Election.
- The early voting period runs from Monday, October 5, 2020 to Monday, November 2, 2020, but dates and hours may vary based on where you live.
- You can also register and vote conditionally on Election Day! Conditional voter registration is a safety net for Californians who miss the deadline to register to vote or update their voter registration information. Voters can use the conditional voter registration process from the day after the deadline all the way through Election Day.
- All active registered voters in California can vote by mail (also called “**absentee voting**”). Vote-by-mail ballots will be mailed to all

registered voters beginning **29 days before the election**. Voters can return their voted vote-by-mail ballots by **mail**, at their **county elections official’s office**, or at **any ballot drop-box location, any polling place, or any vote center** throughout the state.

Let Us Help You! If you're voting absentee, be sure to **vote early** and **sign your envelope**. If you are concerned about your ballot getting lost in the mail please consider dropping it off in one of the **official drop boxes** **OR** contact Berkeley JACL and we will pick up your ballot and deliver it for you. If you would like your ballot to be picked up, please email admin@berkeleyjacl.org.

Additional Voting Information

Official ballot information will be on its way to you starting **October 5**.

Your “Vote By Mail” packet will include:

- **Your ballot card**
- **A return envelope**
- **Instructions for returning your ballot card**
- **Your “I voted” sticker**

If you require a **bilingual ballot**, please visit acvote.org/mvp to update your language preference.

Yes, in-person voting options **are available!** Go to your normal polling place or any vote center in your county on **November 3, 7:00 am-8:00 pm**. Some cities may have in-person early voting centers open in October. These locations should be published in your county’s *Sample Ballot*. **The Civil Rights Committee encourages everyone to take the time to exercise one of our most important and cherished civil rights: the right to VOTE!**

Three Chapter Members Awarded 2020 National JACL Scholarships

By Ron Tanaka

The chapter is proud to announce that three chapter student members have been awarded National JACL Scholarships for 2020.



Charlene Tonai Din, has been awarded the 2020 National JACL Paul & Katherine Ohtaki Memorial Freshman scholarship. This \$2,000 National Scholarship was established by the estate of Paul & Katherine Ohtaki. Mr. Ohtaki, a resident of San

Francisco, was a successful businessman dedicated to the Nikkei community. When incarcerated in camp as a teenager, he wrote articles for his hometown newspaper on Bainbridge Island, and is featured in his book titled "In Defense of Our Neighbors". The legacy of Paul and Katherine Ohtaki reaches far beyond their lifetimes to help students achieve their educational goals and dreams.

Charlene is a June 2020 graduate of Oakland Technical High School and was also awarded the Berkeley Chapter's Dan/Kathleen Date Memorial Scholarship. Among her major high school accomplishments are: 1) recognized as a College Board AP Scholar, 2) served as President of her high school's Asian Student Union 3) Co Captain of the JV and Varsity Volleyball team, 4) actively participated in the Bay Area Day of Remembrance from 2013 to 2020, and 5) volunteered her time to the National Japanese American Historical Society (NJAHS) with teaching youth about their culture at youth summer camps and the annual oshogatsu table.

Charlene will attend the University of California Los Angeles in the Fall as an Environmental Science major. She is the daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Grant Din of Oakland. Congratulations Charlene!!!!



Hope Fa-Kaji has been awarded the 2020 National JACL Dr. Thomas Yatabe Memorial undergraduate scholarship. This \$1,000 National Scholarship was established to honor and remember Dr. Yatabe, who holds the distinction of being the first National President of the JACL

after the founding of the organization in 1929. It was Dr. Yatabe who stepped forward to provide visionary leadership to the JACL in those early and formative years

Hope is a June 2017 graduate of Berkeley High School and was also awarded a Berkeley Chapter Scholarship that year. She enrolled at Rice University in the Fall 2017 and is now a senior majoring in mechanical engineering. She is enjoying her time at Rice and has appreciated the significant learning experiences in engineering and the social sciences, as well as developing a fondness for the Houston, Texas area. In addition to participating in intramural sports and attending area sporting events, she has worked in the research labs and machine shop on campus.

Hope is the 4th daughter of Dr. Troy Kaji and Ms. Marguerite Fa-Kaji of Berkeley. Congratulations Hope!!!



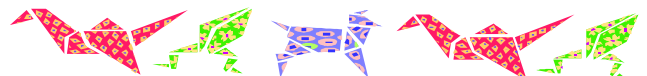
Marco Torrez has been awarded the 2020 National JACL Dr. George Goro and Nettie Muramoto Memorial Student Aid graduate scholarship. This \$2,500 National Scholarship was established by Dr. Goro and

Mrs. Muramoto, who were longtime residents of Sacramento, CA. Goro graduated from UC Berkeley and the UCSF School of Dentistry. He served as president of the Sacramento JACL from 1941 to 1943, during the years of the World War II incarceration of Japanese Americans. He, along with his chapter board, provided leadership and guidance to the local Japanese American community during a time of great prejudice and injustice. Guided by the *Yamato-damashi* spirit, Goro strived for the American dream of equality, human dignity and happiness for all. Nettie was raised in her hometown of Stockton, CA. She was one of the first Nisei (second generation JA) on the California State payroll in the mid-1930s as a stenographer at the DMV in Sacramento. She lived her life with dignity, grace and kindness.

Marco relocated to the Berkeley area in the Fall 2019 and is currently a graduate student at UC Berkeley majoring in Journalism with a concentration in short form broadcast visual communication. His expected graduation is between May – Dec 2021.

Originally from New Mexico, Marco obtained his undergraduate degree in Journalism and Mass Communication at the University of New Mexico. He also studied Japanese language and culture in the Summer of 2017 at the Akita International University in Akita, Japan. Active in the New Mexico JACL chapter, Marco served as the chapter's Youth Representative Board member and helped host events throughout the state. Continuing his active JACL participation, Marco now serves on the Board of Directors of the Berkeley chapter and functions as the Assistant Secretary and on the membership committee.

Congratulations Marco!!!!



2020 Berkeley JACL Scholarship, Pioneer, & Youth Leadership Awards

By Ron Tanaka

The Berkeley chapter held its Scholarship, Pioneer, and Youth Leadership awards ceremony via Zoom on Sunday, July 19. The chapter was proud to present scholarships to eight high school seniors, recognize its pioneer recipient, and present its second youth leadership award.

Scholarships

Eight high school seniors who will be entering their freshman year in college in the Fall were presented scholarships. The chapter recognized the Bea Kono, Terry Yamashita, Dan/Kathleen Date, and George/Yoshimi Nakamura families for their major contributions to the chapter's scholarship program.

- **Charlene Tonai Din** (Oakland Technical HS) will attend UCLA and major in environmental science. Charlene is also the recipient of the Dan/Kathleen Date Memorial Scholarship.
- **Anna Hamai** (Berkeley HS) will enroll at UC Santa Cruz as an undeclared major. Anna is the recipient of the Terry Yamashita Memorial Scholarship.
- **Danielle Kitaoka** (El Cerrito HS) will attend the University of Pacific as a psychology major. Danielle is the recipient of the George/Yoshimi Memorial Scholarship.
- **Bryant Lee** (Castro Valley HS) will enroll at UC Riverside and major in business.
- **Bryce Nakahara** (Albany HS) will attend UC Berkeley where he will major in molecular and cell biology. Bryce was named the recipient of the Bea Kono Memorial scholarship.
- **Allison Nakao** (Las Lomas HS - Walnut Creek) will enroll at Diablo Valley College as an undeclared major.
- **George Paoletti** (College Preparatory School—Oakland) will study chemistry at UC Berkeley.
- **Peter Sullivan** (Albany HS) will attend Diablo Valley College and study computer science.

Pioneer Award

Valorie Yasukochi was honored as the chapter's Pioneer Award recipient. Established in 1996, this award was presented 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 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.

The scholarship committee members are Mark Fujikawa, Tiffany Ikeda, Vera Kawamura, Karen Lowhurst, Ryan Matsuda, Neal Ouye, Al Satake, Sharron Sue, and Ron Tanaka (chair).

November 1 Deadline for Holiday Ads in the Pacific Citizen!

Holiday Ads in the Pacific Citizen -- will kick off in October. This year end issue will celebrate JACL's 92nd Anniversary. Please support the Berkeley JACL by submitting a "Season's Greeting" or advertisement in this year's Pacific Citizen Holiday Issue. This is our chapter's largest (and only) fundraiser for the year.

Your support helps us continue awarding grants and scholarships, support activities for our seniors, sponsor youth involvement in the Nikkei community including participation at the JACL National Convention, host relevant and culturally sensitive events, maintain civil rights and hate crime awareness and print our wonderful newsletter. This year we also hosted movie nights and hosted two virtual author events: John Tateishi on his book, *Redress: The Inside Story of the Successful Campaign for Japanese Americans* and Marilyn Chase, author of *The Life of Ruth Asawa*.

We count on your generosity to assist us in these worthy endeavors by placing a holiday ad in the Pacific Citizen.

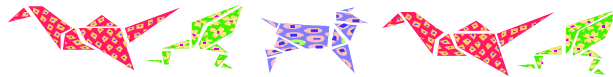
The ad rate remains unchanged at \$25 per column inch. A 2 column x 2 inch (business card size) ad costs \$100. There are a variety of ad sizes to choose from. Each column is approximately 1¾" wide. We encourage you to increase the size of your ad – the additional income for the chapter is appreciated! Please don't hesitate to contact us with any questions. **The deadline for the holiday greetings is November 1.** However, if you need additional time, please give one of us a call and we'll work with you to ensure your submission appears in the Pacific Citizen Holiday Issue. The Berkeley JACL receives a percentage of our sales

proceeds (based on total column inches sold) and your participation is a reflection of our past success.

New ads are encouraged and welcome! Renewals are as simple as (1) sending us your approval via email OR (2) calling by phone to give us “the go ahead” OR (3) returning the ad form to the address noted below. Please let us know if you have any changes (new graphic, change greeting, update year, etc.). Renewal forms will be emailed/snail mailed to you in early October. If you wish to place a new ad, please email us your ad copy or business card and graphics, if any.

Payment: Your check should be made payable to **Berkeley JACL** and mailed to PC Holiday Ads – Berkeley JACL, c/o Valerie Yasukochi, 2840 Steinmetz Way, Oakland, CA 94602. Sorry, but we are unable to accept credit card payments. Contact details for our holiday ad coordinators will be provided soon. In the meantime, you may call or email Valerie Yasukochi: 510-336-3371 (preferred), 510-387-8335 (text/call).

Thank you very much for your generous support!



Making Noise

Making Noise is a means to exercise your right as a member to express your views, humor, concerns, or anything else of interest.

COVID-19: A Syndrome and Natural Selection

*By K. Ken Yabusaki,
Berkeley JACL Chapter Member*

Since reaching my Golden Years, everything seems a philosophical issue. The opportunity to ante my two-cents about the Sars-CoV-2 (COVID-19) pandemic is much appreciated. It helps break the monotony of “groundhog days.” I reflect on three notions that have become even more self-evident since the COVID-19 pandemic.

First, Edward Murrow once said, “A nation of sheep will beget a government of wolves.” We witness it in our partisan Congress as they vote on issues led by those in power and from fear of voting with their consciences. Unfortunately, the leaders of some states follow the Whitehouse, and Americans as a people are “eaten.” I presume this is what politics entails. Former Oakland City Council member, Wilson Riles, once told me, “Politics and crime are inseparable.”

Secondly, in 1999, Psychologists David Dunning and Justin Kruger coined an “effect” where a person believes he/she is smarter and more capable than they are. We repeatedly see this in our dysfunctional leadership that ignores medical and scientific experts’ opinions in response to the pandemic, and call objectively reviewed concerns as “Fake News,” resulting in unnecessary deaths and continued deaths from COVID-19.

Thirdly, without placing blame, there is a price to democratic “Freedom” and the Law of our Land. Some Americans feel mandating wearing a mask is a violation of their “rights” under the Constitution, and we see the consequences of our Nation’s leadership, not setting the example. “Stupid is as stupid, does” what happened to “common sense?” What happened to “respect for others”? The indigenous people of North America once said, “In the old days there were no fights over hunting and fishing territories. Back then, there were no laws, so everyone did what was right.” Sadly, our Constitution, for some, creates a selfish excuse to violate and ignore another’s life and right to live.

The points I’ve made are not independent of each other, but intertwined. The moment COVID-19 invaded our cells as the tiniest of lifeforms, we were doomed to pay the consequences from within our Nation’s fallible leadership that reeks of incompetence, blaming, and denial. The incompetence in refusing to heed the advice of experts and scientists. Blaming China for COVID-19 even to the point of naming it the “Chinese virus” and unintelligence of cultural relativism leading to prejudicial views and behaviors. Finally, denial such as Nikki Haley, a Republican and former U. N. Ambassador stating publicly at the Republican National Convention, “Racism does not exist in America.” Tell that to Rodney King, George Floyd, Breonna Taylor, and countless other Black Americans. Tell that to the 120,000 Japanese/Japanese Americans forced into concentration camps during WW II. Or in the 1990s, when my family lived in Albany, California, we received phone calls on December 7, with someone yelling, “Remember Pearl Harbor!” then hang up. The late Senator, John Lewis knew this when he saw the giant “Black Lives Matter” mural painted on 16th Street, NW, leading to Lafayette Park and the entrance to the Whitehouse and said, “We’re getting there...”

Charles Darwin once said, “Ignorance more frequently begets confidence than does knowledge.” Many Americans continue to be led like sheep by our

Nation's leadership and choose ignorance and belief over fact and knowledge. The premise of Darwin's theory of Natural Selection is lifeforms that eliminate unfavorable traits and adapt to favorable ones survive and perpetuate. Amid this pandemic, refusing to wear a mask, gather in large crowds, ignoring the facts, knowledge, and recommendations by experts, and not doing what is "right" are unfavorable traits. Wearing a mask, practicing physical distancing, etc. as recommended by experts and scientists, are favorable traits to practice. I imagine Charles Darwin is either turning in his grave or jumping for joy seeing Natural Selection in real-time. PLEASE VOTE early as possible! Thank you.

**Shirley Kazuyo Muramoto Studio Presents:
"NextGen Geijutsuka: Future Stars of Japanese
Arts" Virtual Event, Five Presentations**

By Vera Karamura

In March 2020, the Berkeley JACL awarded a \$2,000 grant to the Shirley Kazuyo Muramoto Studio for the originally planned, in person event: "NextGen Geijutsuka: Future Stars of Japanese Arts". Due to the pandemic, Ms. Muramoto and her team reimagined the program as a series of five virtual events presented as video performances followed by artist interviews. Additionally, to support San Francisco and San Jose Japantown businesses, and East Bay programs, each week featured a different entity to encourage patronage, when safe and appropriate. "NextGen Geijutsuka: Future Stars of Japanese Arts", featured the following artists, businesses and organizations:

- June 30, 2020, Featured Artist, Kuniharu Yoshida, shodō calligraphy, Los Angeles, series host and emcee, Lauren Kawana, Niji Virtual Obon Collage, San Francisco Japantown business, "Sharaku".
- July 7, 2020, Featured Artist, Isabella Kazuai Lew, koto, Oakland, Guest Artist, Isako Kajun Kashino, koto, Sacramento. Game of Thrones, Isabella Kazuai Lew, Shirley Kazuyo Muramoto, Brian Mitsuhiro Wong, koto and bass koto, Vince Delgado, Egyptian Tabla, Sacramento San Jose Japantown business, "Kogura".
- July 14, 2020, Featured Artists, Kyle Abbott, tsugaru shamisen, Santa Cruz, and Su Bunjamin, Berlin, San Francisco Japantown business, "Neat Asian Things", East Bay Non-Profit Organization, "Daruma-No-Gakko".

- July 21, 2020, Featured Artist, Brian Mitsuhiro Wong, koto, Oakland, Special Guest Artist, Bando Nao Yamashita, koto, Kobe, San Francisco Japantown business, "Asakichi Stores", San Jose Japantown business, "Nikkei Traditions".
- July 28, 2020, Featured Artist, Bando Hirohichiro, buyō classical Japanese dance, Los Angeles, Special Guest Artist, Bando Nao, Tokyo, San Francisco Japantown business, "Benkyodo". Finale virtual Niji Obon, all the artists and crew included.

According to Ms. Muramoto, the combined cumulative 5,573 Facebook Live concert views and YouTube concert views was approximately fourteen times greater than the originally planned live concert audience at the San Francisco Old Church (400 capacity). The events may still be viewed on YouTube under the NextGen JCA channel and the NextGenJCA.com website under "Past Events". Ms. Muramoto further reports that viewer feedback was overwhelmingly positive, and "... we are encouraged to find and implement new strategies to both preserve Japanese Cultural Arts and support our local Japantowns and businesses that work toward preserving Japanese culture".

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. Please see the Berkeley JACL website for further information and the application form.

Paper Cranes for Solidarity

By Nancy Ukai

The SF hub of Tsuru for Solidarity, a national group of activists who fold paper cranes to close the detention camps for asylum seekers, folded nearly 2,000 paper cranes in a show of support for Jacob Blake in Kenosha, WI, who was shot in the back seven times by local police.

Members of the Berkeley, Florin and Contra Costa JACL chapters joined with 40 individuals and groups including Japantown for Justice, Presbyterian Church of SF Chinatown, JCYC, Nikkei Resisters, Bay Area Border Relief and Jas4Justice.

The cranes are being mailed to Ron Kuramoto, president of the Wisconsin JACL, whose chapter will deliver the cranes to Blake family members in a show of support for Jacob's healing and fight for justice.



Everything She Touched: The Life of Ruth Asawa- by Marilyn Chase

The Berkeley JACL held a book talk with Marilyn Chase in August 2020. Over 70 people listened in on a Zoom Video. KG Ouye and Devon McLaughlin moderated the discussion. The talk was held in conjunction with the US Postal Service release of Ruth Asawa Forever stamps.

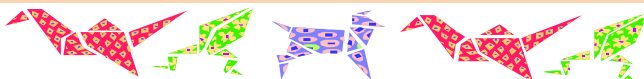
The Berkeley JACL gave away Marilyn Chase's book to 5 viewers. The Zoom meeting was recorded so you can still watch this presentation. Email the Berkeley JACL at admin@berkeleyjACL.org ask to receive the Ruth Asawa link.



Newsletter by Snail or Email?

Berkeley JACL chapter newsletters are now being sent electronically to all current members with emails on file per their membership information. If you would prefer to receive a paper copy or both a paper and electronic copy, please email Val at val@berkeleyjACL.org and let her know your preferences. She is helping to coordinate our chapter database for future newsletter distributions. We also periodically send "JACL Berkeley Blast" (email only) to alert you of timely events and chapter activities.

Your feedback is welcome!!
May you continue to stay safe, healthy and well.



URGENT! Volunteer drivers and kitchen help needed

If you are available on weekdays and are not in an elevated risk group for COVID-19 we want to hear from you!

Sign up today to help prepare & deliver hot Japanese lunches to homebound seniors in the East Bay

Contact Kathleen Wong
(510) 654-4000 x16 or kathleen@j-sei.org
Or visit our website www.j-sei.org/signup

J-Sei, 1285 66th Street, Emeryville CA, (510) 654-4000, www.j-sei.org

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Tiffany Ikeda
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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 _____

<u>Membership Category</u>	<u>Total</u>	<u>Description</u>
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**

November 3, 2020- Vote For the Candidate of your Choice