

September 2026

Berkeley JACL Newsletter

SERVING THE BERKELEY, OAKLAND, AND ALBANY COMMUNITIES

Coming Events

Sep 18-
Dec 27 **BeHere / 1942: A New Lens on the Japanese American Incarceration;** Great Hall of the Oakland Museum of California; see article inside

Email interim Director of the National Archives, Ed Forst, to Prevent Closure of National Archives in San Bruno and Chicago; see article inside

Nov 3 **Vote at the Midterm Election;** Let your voice be heard
open Berkeley JACL Grants available; see article

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/



Berkeley JACL Spearheads National Resolution at JACL Convention to Oppose the Closure of the San Bruno and Chicago National Archives

By Tiffany Ikeda

On July 30, 2026 the JACL National Council passed [Emergency Resolution 1](#) relating to the closure of the National Archives Centers in San Bruno and Chicago. The Berkeley JACL convention representatives spearheaded this resolution.

The National Archives and Records Administration ([NARA](#)) [announced plans](#) to close its San Bruno, California, and Chicago, Illinois, facilities within three years, with transfers potentially beginning as early as August 2026. The San Bruno holdings include important documents to our community including Japanese American WWII records like documents concerning the Tanforan Assembly Center incarceration, legal records related to Fred Korematsu's conviction, Japanese picture bride files, and the original case file from the *Wong Kim Ark* 1898 decision that helped establish birthright citizenship.

Recognizing the importance of this community resource, Berkeley JACL acted quickly to bring an emergency resolution at JACL's National Convention. The resolution called on JACL chapters to mobilize community resources to oppose the closure of these facilities. The National Council passed the resolution unanimously.

CALL TO ACTION:

All JACL members are requested to respond in one or more of the following ways:

1. Write letters to the interim Director of the National Archives, Ed Forst
 - Send via email to Director of NARA Ed Forst archivistoftheunitedstates@nara.gov, Chief of Staff Corey Cooke corey.cooke@nara.gov, or Executive for External Affairs and

Communications Grace McCafferty
grace.mccaffrey@nara.gov

2. Write a letter to your U.S. congressional legislative representative and email copies of your letters to Save OUR National Archives at saveournationalarchives@gmail.com.
3. Sign onto Stop the Closure of Chicago NARA [petition](#)

Picnic + Letter Writing

By Matthew Kojima

On Saturday, July 18, the Berkeley JACL Civil Rights Committee hosted a Picnic + Letter Writing event at Ohlone Park in Berkeley. Over 15 members of the community of all ages attended and enjoyed an afternoon of conversations over Sliver Pizza and delicious snacks prepared by attendees. During the event, we were able to sign numerous letters to representatives and senators in Congress asking for their support to repeal the Alien Enemies Act, restrict funding to ICE and CBP, reject the SAVE act, pass the War Powers Resolution, and preserve the Tule Lake National Monument and the National Archives in San Francisco. Additionally, attendees wrote letters in support of state and local issues such as protecting Oakland Unified School District elective programs and protecting the right to free speech for Palestinian rights in California schools. Overall, everyone had a fun time catching up and discussing important issues affecting our community, and the Civil Rights Committee is looking forward to hosting our "Get Out the Vote" event in October. More information to come soon!



College Corner



Dear JACL Community,

My name is **Charlotte Sandford**. I am a former youth board member of the Berkeley Chapter and I received the Mitsugi Murakami Kasai (Ret) Memorial Scholarship in 2025. I just finished my freshman year at Colgate University in upstate New York where I am planning to major in Asian Studies. This past year I took classes such as Elementary Japanese, Centering Asia, and South Asian Fiction and Food. As someone who has lived in the Bay Area her entire life, moving across the country to a tiny town in the countryside that spans two blocks was an exciting adventure. I saw the seasons change for the first time marveling at the vibrant fall colors in the fall and trudging through feet of snow when New York saw its worst winter in twenty five years. Luckily there are a surprising number of people from California at Colgate and with their advice my friends and I endured the cold together.

This summer I got to practice all of the Japanese I learned while visiting family in Japan. I am also doing an internship called Stories of the Alien Enemies Act in collaboration with the San Jose JACL to bring awareness to a piece of Japanese American History that is often forgotten. During the 2025 JACL national convention in New Mexico I discovered that my great grandfather, Chozo Saito of Vacaville, CA along with several community leaders was incarcerated a few miles away from the convention at a DOJ camp in Lordsburg. I never got to meet him, but I am working with my family to tell his story and uncover my family history in the process. I hope that his story will be published on the San Jose JACL's website to inspire people with similar family histories to tell theirs.

Thank you all so much for your support.

Charlotte Sandford
 Charlotte Sandford

BeHere / 1942: A New Lens on the Japanese American Incarceration Opening

Great Hall of the Oakland Museum of California (OMCA)

1000 Oak Street, Oakland CA 94607

Open Wed-Sun from 11AM-5PM

Friday, September 18, 2026—Sunday, December 27, 2026

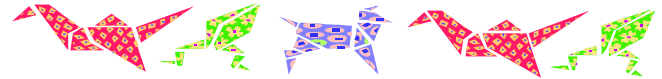
Can looking closely at photographs change what we see, know, and feel about this history? Japanese artist **Masaki Fujihata** explores this very question in *BeHere / 1942: A New Lens on the Japanese American Incarceration*. Through immersive installations of historic images and augmented reality (AR) experiences, the exhibition brings visitors into the moments of 1942—before Japanese Americans in Oakland, San Francisco, and Los Angeles were transported to concentration camps during World War II.

Fujihata has spent years combing through the archives of famed photographers Dorothea Lange and Russell Lee, who documented the forced incarceration of Japanese Americans in the Bay Area and Los Angeles, respectively. In this exhibition, he enlarges, zooms into, and activates their images to encourage visitors to look more closely—at the emotions of each subject and at the power dynamics at play between the photographer behind the camera and people in front of it.

Originally developed by the Yanai Initiative at UCLA and presented at the Japanese American National Museum in 2022, OMCA's exhibition features **new elements specific to the Bay Area**. Highlights include installations that draw from Dorothea Lange's 1942 photographs of San Francisco and Oakland, some taken directly across the street from what is now Oakland Museum of California. Fujihata also created a new three-screen video featuring local residents, some with connections to the story of Japanese American incarceration and others impacted by present-day anti-immigrant policies. Significantly, *BeHere / 1942* extends into Oak Street Plaza, where a life-size image of Japanese Americans lined up to board buses creates the basis for an AR experience. When visitors look at the AR app, they will see images of buses and people moving as they might have in 1942 layered over the plaza.



Video artist Masaki Fujihata (right) confers with camp survivors (from left) Eloy Maoki, Eizo Kobayashi and Ruth Ichinaga at the Oakland Museum. They read the 1942 Oakland Exclusion orders for a video installation.



Civil Liberties Protection and Advancement Grant Update

By Scott Kagawa

Last year, the Berkeley JACL created the Civil Liberties Protection and Advancement Grant to defend the U.S. Constitution and protect the civil rights of all people. Using money from our Issei Memorial Endowment Fund, we awarded a total of \$30,000 to Tsuru for Solidarity and the San Jose JACL for their vital work in this area. Six months after distributing these funds, we are sharing an update on the San Jose JACL's progress. The chapter received a \$19,000 grant to challenge the Alien Enemies Act (AEA) and encourage young people to explore their family histories. Through their internship program, the group is helping youth document the stories of AEA descendants to support legal advocacy efforts. The grant will enable the chapter to expand its efforts,

aiming to increase descendant sign-ons to a Supreme Court amicus brief from 38 to 100.

Thanks to a growing team of recruiters, 196 descendants have already signed on to support the brief. Currently, the legal project is waiting for the 5th Circuit Court of Appeals to issue a ruling. This decision will set the timeline for when they can appeal to the U.S. Supreme Court and file the amicus brief. Right now, the team expects to file during the next Supreme Court term, which runs from October 2026 to June 2027.

Well-known lawyer Ron Ikejiri recently added his name to the brief as both a descendant and a legal team member. Ikejiri previously worked as the JACL Washington Representative and led the push that resulted in the Civil Liberties Act of 1988, which provided reparations to Japanese Americans incarcerated during World War II. His father was detained at Tule Lake under the Alien Enemies Act after answering “No-No” on the government loyalty questionnaire and giving up his U.S. citizenship. Unlike some others who renounced their citizenship, his father did not return to Japan and remained detained under the AEA.

The chapter’s Alien Enemies Act Stories Project internship program has also expanded. After an intern asked to learn more about her own family’s history, students can now request their family’s Executive Order 9066 files from the National Archives. This opportunity was given to 12 existing interns, and in early 2026, it was offered to the NCWNP District Youth Board. Two new interns working on AEA stories are currently researching their families’ EO 9066 records with help from University of Colorado Professor Russell Endo. Unfortunately, this effort may be in jeopardy due to the proposed closing of the National Archives in San Bruno. If you have not yet signed the petition to halt this closing, [sign here](#) and get involved.

By March 2026, all six student internship spots for the program were completely filled. These students are currently researching original WWII documents, interviewing descendants, and writing story summaries with guidance from volunteer lawyers. Their stories are published on the JACL website to support a communication plan led by the Asian Law Caucus, which is serving as lead pro bono counsel for the AEA amicus brief on behalf of the JACL and 60+ AAPI organizations.

The San Jose JACL is still looking for eligible people to sign the amicus brief. To sign, you must be a

descendant of someone detained under the Alien Enemies Act during WWII. This includes Japanese Latin Americans who were brought to the U.S. and held as enemy aliens. However, it does not include people who were incarcerated solely under Executive Order 9066. If your family meets these requirements, please [fill out the sign-on form](#) to join the effort.

One Hundred Plays of the Noh Theater by Tsukioka Kogyo

*Asian Art Museum-Tateuchi Japanese Galleries
200 Larkin St, San Francisco, CA 94102
Thu 1-8PM, Fri-Mon 10AM-5PM*

Vivid colors and extraordinary costumes bring drama and grandeur to the Tateuchi Japanese Galleries in woodblock prints by Tsukioka Kogyo (1869–1927). The prints are selected from Kogyo’s One Hundred Plays of the Noh Theater series, published between 1922 and 1926 as a limited edition set of 100 images and luxuriously embellished with gold, silver, and mica. Each print captures a key onstage moment from a major Noh play.

As Noh Theater’s status in Japan evolved over centuries, its actors’ outfits grew into finely crafted works of art. Accordingly, Kogyo’s highly detailed portraits could double as a master class in costuming. Elaborately layered garments combine with wigs, headdresses, masks, fans, and other props to symbolically convey each character’s identity while radiating visual appeal.

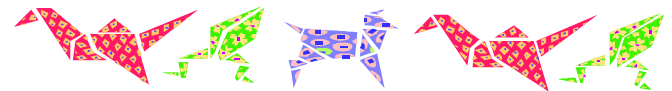
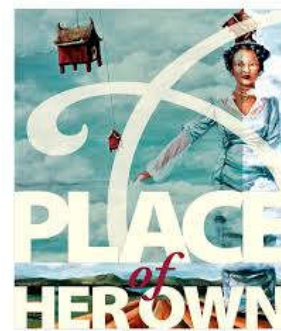
The exhibition is curated by Yuki Morishima, associate curator of Japanese art. All prints on view were donated by Mr. Philip Snell of San Francisco. The Asian Art Museum’s permanent collection includes a complete set of this series, 96 of which were generously provided by Mr. Snell.



JACL National Convention Report*by Kenji Tachibana*

Over the summer I attended the 2026 JACL National Convention. It spanned from July 29 to August 2 and took place in Las Vegas, Nevada. Over the course of the 5 days, many events took place such as forums discussing Nikkei youth, documentary screenings, and so many more incredible events. These conventions are held on an almost yearly basis for the board of directors to discuss national topics such as the national budget, resolutions for all of JACL as an organization to support, and any other topics that may arise. Also, it gives a chance for members of many different chapters to interact with each other and share ideas. This was also the first time many JACL members were able to hear from the new executive director Lily Simmering. Throughout the convention she delivered many speeches, but one of the most notable ones in my opinion, was at the Sayonara Gala where she closed the convention with a powerful speech igniting faith in everyone in attendance.

For the youth, there were many workshops and activities. One of my favorite parts was a panel discussing the future of JACL. The panel was composed of many members of the national youth board, who all had many amazing ideas and perspectives, especially on how to mobilize the youth. Another great youth event was a seminar talking about how to get youth engagement on both the civic and cultural side of things. I hope to be able to bring some of these ideas to the Berkeley chapter. Reflecting on my experience in Las Vegas, I feel the national convention was a revolutionary experience that taught me so much and brought me closer to my Japanese identity. Although there might not be another national convention for a couple years, when it is hosted again I would highly recommend it to not only the youth, but anyone who wants to be more involved in JACL.

**Illuminate PLACE-an exhibit by A Place of Her Own***J-Sei Inc**www.J-Sei.org**1285 66th Street · Emeryville, CA 94608**Curated by Cynthia Tom and Julie Andersen**Exhibit Dates: through Oct 18, 2026**Gallery Hours: M Tu Th Fr 2-5 pm or by appointment,*

Illuminate PLACE, a group exhibition features 26 found object artworks by intergenerational, multicultural visual artists who share their healing journeys and the art created in answer to the question, "If you had a place of your own, what would it be?" This exhibition is rooted in healing through ancestral patterns to resilience. Using found objects, their intuition and self-agency, they create works that speak to their healing journeys, imperfect, messy and gloriously full of epiphanies. These artists include alumni from Bay Area 2014, 2016, 2018, 2020, 2023 Central Valley alumni in partnership with 7GEN

ArtHouse- PAZ and 2025 Alumni in partnership with MARU.

J-Sei welcomes back the artists of PLACE for their healing art and resilience. Artwork will be on view with accompanying wall art statements, public programming, and interactive self-guided workstations.

Call for Berkeley JACL Endowment Fund Grant Applications

Berkeley JACL invites interested parties to apply for an Endowment Fund Grant. Grants up to \$2,000 are available.

Berkeley JACL Endowment Fund Grants are offered to support Japanese American community-oriented projects or programs that further the Chapter's goals and purposes. The Chapter's goals include: upholding the human and civil rights of Japanese Americans and all other people; promoting understanding, respect and appreciation of all cultures; and strengthening community ties and fostering coalitions with other groups sharing similar interests. More information about the grant program is included in the grant application.

Applications are available at the Berkeley JACL website, www.berkeleyjacl.org/endowment-fund-grants/. If you have any questions, please contact Jojiro Takano, jxtakano@gmail.com.

**2026 JACL
KAKEHASHI
PROJECT**

**APPLICATIONS
ARE OPEN!**

DECEMBER 9-16, 2026

APPLY TODAY!

To learn more and apply, visit
jacl.org/kakehashi
Applications due: 9/16/26 at
11:59pm HST



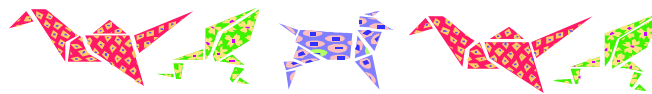
This year's Winter Kakehashi Project Trip will run from **December 9 to 16, 2026**. This year's cohort will comprise **55 participants** who will travel to Japan to deepen their understanding of Japan's economy, society, history, diverse culture, politics, and diplomatic policies through people-to-people exchanges. Participants are expected to play an active and

important role in the future of U.S.-Japan relations. We will also be accepting **applications for six chaperones!**

Changes to the Kakehashi Project that were implemented last year will remain in place. Participants of the trip must be between the ages of 18 and 27 years old and of Japanese American ancestry or adopted by a Japanese American family. All participants who attend will be required to be up to date with COVID-19 vaccines, including the most recent booster, before trip departure. Due to budget constraints, there will be attendance fee for this year's trip the same as previous years. For more information, or to apply, visit jacl.org/kakehashi.

Applications will close on **Wednesday, September 16th, at 11:59 pm Hawaiian Standard Time.**

The JACL Kakehashi Program is 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.



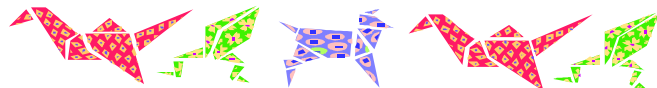
Board Member, Kaz Mori, Celebrated 90th

With friends and family, Kaz Mori celebrated his 90th birthday with a dinner at the Great China restaurant in Berkeley. A few days later, he extended his celebration by being surprised with a birthday serenade by the staff and customers of Bette's Oceanview while having breakfast.

Kaz is a long time member of the Berkeley JACL board and a recipient of Berkeley JACL Pioneer award for his years of community service in the East Bay community.



Nancy Ukai with Kaz Mori at Bette's



Berkeley Mayor Adena Ishii Featured at the Cal Alumni Website

Mayor Adena Ishii is the first Asian American and first woman of color to become the mayor of Berkeley. She is only 35 years old. She started at Berkeley City College, where she organized against California's 2009 education budget cuts and helped start a program supporting community college students transferring to four-year universities. She then transferred to the Haas School of Business at the University of California Berkeley. While at UCB, she took what she was learning in accounting, marketing, and organizational management and applied it directly to the Transfer Service Community program she was building on campus.

You can read the full article about Mayor Ishii at <https://alumni.berkeley.edu/the-city-that-made-her/>.



Co-Presidents Secretary Treasurer Directors:

Tiffany Ikeda, tara u
Karen Kiyo Lowhurst
Mark Fujikawa

Sandra Doi, Vera Kawamura,
Scott Kagawa, Matt Kojima, Ryan Matsuda
Clarisse Miko Nikaido, Kaz Mori, Neal Ouye,
Al Satake, Joe Takano, Kenji Tachibana
Ron Tanaka, Nancy Ukai, Gordon Yamamoto



Newsletter Editor Neal Ouye

Contributors Tiffany Ikeda, Scott Kagawa, Charlotte Sandford, Joe Takano, Kenji Tachibana, Nancy Ukai

Production and Circulation

Neal Ouye, Joe Takano

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
Bronze Premium	\$125	Annual contribution
Silver Premium	\$250.	Annual contribution
Gold Premium	\$500.	Annual contribution
Platinum /Millenium Premium	\$1,000.	Annual contribution
Sapphire Life Trust	\$3,000.	One-time payment for lifetime membership
Ruby Life Trust	\$5,000.	One-time payment for lifetime membership
Diamond Life Trust	\$10,000.	One-time payment for lifetime membership

Along with this form, your tax-deductible check payable to JACL can be sent to JACL National Headquarters,
P.O. Box 45397, San Francisco, CA 94145-0397.

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

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.

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

Vote in the November Election. Mail your ballots early.