

Education Initiative

In celebration of Asian Pacific American (APA) Heritage Month, the Seattle JACL is launching an education initiative that circulates a recommended reading list to all public high schools in the State and provides an APA Curriculum Guide to educators. The purpose of this initiative is to inform students and teachers about the experiences of people of Asian ancestry and to dispel ongoing stereotypes.

"We know hate crimes, xenophobia, and the perpetuation of stereotypes can be averted through education," said Ryan Chin, JACL Seattle Education Chair. "The JACL hopes to circumvent these problems by teaching our future leaders about APAs and the ramifications of exhibiting ignorant and hurtful behavior."

Within the past year there have been independent incidents where the internet has unveiled pictures of Cyrus (TV star more commonly known as "Hannah Montana"), Gasol (pro basketball player of the Los Angeles Lakers), and Joe Jonas (member of the Jonas Brothers boy band) pulling their eyes back to form a slant eyed look mocking Asians. Combating these types of behaviors and stereotypes is important to working together in a multi-cultural society.

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Exhibit at the Law Library of Seattle University School of Law: Fred T. Korematsu and the Pursuit of Justice

Beginning on April 18, the Law Library at Seattle University School of Law features an extensive exhibit about the incarceration of Americans of Japanese ancestry during World War II, and the legacy of Fred T. Korematsu's pursuit of justice. The highlight of the exhibit is a collection of Korematsu family photographs and Mr. Korematsu's personal memorabilia, never before on public display. In addition, the exhibit includes photographs and artifacts on loan from the Wing Luke Asian Museum, as well as photographs from the National Archives.

The exhibit is located on the main floor of the Law Library in the School of Law on the Seattle University campus, and the public is welcome. The exhibit may be viewed from April 18 to 29, and May 16 to 31. Please note that the Korematsu Family materials will be available for viewing only from 9AM to 4PM, Monday through Friday, during the above dates.



Charitable Bequests and Traditional IRAs

Are you planning to make a charitable bequest in addition to leaving assets to your heirs? If so, you might consider leaving appreciated securities to your heirs so they get a "step-up" in the original cost basis to the current fair market value and then donating your Traditional IRA to JACL Seattle Chapter.

As a qualified non-profit 501(c)(3) organization, Seattle JACL is not subjected to income taxes when the assets are distributed. For example, if an IRA beneficiary in the 35% tax bracket inherits a Traditional IRA with a balance of \$100,000, the beneficiary will keep only 65% of the balance. If the Traditional IRA is left to Seattle JACL, 100% of the balance would go to the non-profit due to its tax-exempt status.

You may wish to consult with a tax professional before making the decision to leave your Traditional IRA to a non-profit. Please contact us if naming Seattle JACL as your IRA beneficiary can help you fulfill your charitable bequests.

Support: Assure Our History

"In Japan, you are born owing ancestral debts that can never be repaid, and as you make your way into the world you accumulate more obligations, kindnesses and favors owed to family, friends, colleagues, neighbors, even strangers. This web of obligation connects people in ways that both include and transcend kinship and friendship."

--Stubborn Twig, a novel by Lauren Kessler

The Japanese Language School was a place where Americans of Japanese heritage learned to speak and write Japanese. Imagine what it would be like to walk the halls and hear the voices of the people who have come before us...our link to the past and to Japan, and our link to the present. We are proud to say the Japanese Language School was a national heritage site, written into the national book of historical places.

Farmers and leaders, scholars and karate champs, people who went on to design architecture and build businesses learned Japanese at the Language School. From Camp Harmony to Minidoka, if the walls of the Japanese Language School could tell their stories, what would we learn?

You cannot go there and see this national heritage site. You can learn nothing; it is gone. And in its place, something different rose. The University of Washington (UW) built the Tacoma campus directly over the land. Now, new generations of students learn, and fill the halls with their voices without understanding the significance of the campus site.

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Seattle JACL New Year's Eve Gala

This year Seattle JACL will host its first New Year's Eve Gala. Music and dancing will progress through the decades as the night goes on, giving a time for each member of our intergenerational family to shine. A quiet jazz lounge for conversation, door prizes, gambling for spectacular prizes, and special drinks will be available. Appetizers will be served throughout the evening and to make sure 2010 is a prosperous year, Ozoni will be served shortly after midnight.

**Save December 31, 2009 on your calendars now.
Details to follow!**

Volunteer: ACRS Walk for Rice

Seattle JACL is looking for walkers to join our team to raise money for the Asian Counseling and Referral Services Food Bank on June 20 at Seward Park. Please contact Akemi Matsumoto at (206) 937-2013 for more information.

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Through the generous support of State Farm®, the APA Curriculum Guide was created containing lesson plans, readings, and additional resources. This guide provides teachers with the materials that they need to educate students about APA history. Both the recommended reading list and the APA Curriculum Guide can be downloaded at: <http://www.jaclseattle.org/resources/jacl-materials/>.

"We understand the increasing pressure on educators to teach more curriculum aimed towards scoring well on standardized tests. However, teaching APA history and necessary core skills, such as reading, are far from mutually exclusive," added Elaine Akagi, JACL National Board Member and Seattle Public School teacher. "By fusing the two, we can fulfill not only the objective of furthering essential skills, but we can also meet another important need for students: preparing them to function more effectively in a global and just society."

The Seattle Chapter JACL is a non-profit, grassroots civil rights organization dedicated to empowering our local community through high-quality programs and strategic partnerships focusing on activism, education, and youth leadership development.

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The valleys of Sumner and Puyallup were graced with the lush green and bountiful color of the flower fields, grown by generations of Japanese farmers. When the Japanese Language School gave way to UW Tacoma, part of the negotiation was to build a Garden of Remembrance, a promise that remains unfulfilled to this day.

As you read this, remember your own part that you and your family play in Pacific Northwest History. What do you know about how your family came here from Japan to help build the legacy of Pacific Northwest? Now, several other old Japanese buildings, the heart of the Japanese American community, including the Tacoma Buddhist Church and Japanese American Whitney Methodist Church, may meet a similar fate as UW Tacoma campus expands. If you are a Japanese American living in Tacoma, the Buddhist Church and other surrounding sites may still serve you as a hub.

Many students of Japanese heritage and other Asian cultures attend UW Tacoma, but with their ranks (14.6% of the student population), there are no classes that allow the students to learn about Asian American cultures. As we all move forward in time, our heritage matters, and we need to make sure that the contributions are passed from generation to generation.

Kayomi Wada, a graduate student at UW Tacoma, has worked relentlessly at all levels of the administration to make sure our history as Japanese Americans and Asian Americans will be remembered in the curriculum of UW Tacoma. Native Americans, African Americans, and Hispanic Americans are all represented through coursework, but Asian Americans are not.



Kayomi Wada.

Ms. Wada has worked very hard to keep our history in front of the administration, but she cannot do it alone. Will you help? Ms. Wada has written letters, but she needs us to help write letters as well to persuade administrators that all of our stories are eternal and are apart of the history of this country. Help us by entering our web of obligation and pay down your ancestral debt.

Currently, there is a hiring freeze and UW Tacoma will not hire any new instructors. An outstanding Asian American professor, Peter Bacho, can bring Asian American studies to life! If we can lift the hiring freeze, we can help strengthen the web of life and honor those who came before us.

You can contact Chancellor Spakes at:

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Reserve your space now!

The Minidoka Pilgrimage provides an opportunity to share memories, ask questions, and learn more about the Minidoka experience. Consider participating in the pilgrimage as a way to bring your family together and reconnect with friends from the past. Participation will be limited.

Registration is \$250.00 per person including transportation and all meals - lodging is additional. A reduced fee is offer of \$200.00 for children (12 and under) and seniors (75 and above).

For those arriving to Twin Falls on their own: registration is \$100.00 + housing \$140.00 (double occupancy) = \$240.00. If you are interested in attending please e-mail or call by June 10 to reserve a space.

The 2009 Pilgrimage will include

- Guided tour of the Minidoka Internment National Monument by National Park Service staff.
- Visit to an original Minidoka barrack.
- BBQ dinner hosted by a local rancher with entertainment and speakers.
- Commemorative Ceremony at Minidoka
- New activities for 2009 are in the works - stay tuned!

In addition to the 2009 Minidoka Pilgrimage - A two-day symposium on Civil Liberties in Wartime will be held at the College of Southern Idaho will take place prior to the annual Pilgrimage.

The Pilgrimage

Sixty-five years ago, almost 13,000 people of Japanese-ancestry, many of whom were American citizens, were removed from their homes and sent to a desolate internment camp near Twin Falls, Idaho. During June former internees, their families, and friends will make a pilgrimage - from Seattle, Portland and across the nation - to the former Minidoka Internment Camp in Idaho.

The former internees spent nearly 3 years incarcerated at Minidoka and other camps over 60 years ago. Today, the site continues to hold a mixture of memories and strong emotions - feelings of denial, distrust, shame and joy. They will revisit the place and the memories amidst family, friends, supporters, and National Park Service officials. The intent is to honor the first generation of Japanese Americans who suffered most under institutionalized racist laws, to deliver the message of "Never Again," and to pass on the legacy to anyone who will listen.

Most of the 33,000 acres that once made up Minidoka has been taken over by farms. In 2001 however, 73 acres along the North Side Canal and near the entrance to Minidoka has been designated a National Monument.

The Seattle Chapter of the Japanese America Citizens League, the Nisei Veterans Committee, and the Friends of Minidoka invite former internees, their families and friends, and other interested persons to attend this year's Pilgrimage.

In Twin Falls, participants will have two chances to visit the grounds of the National Monument. On Saturday, there will be guided tours of what remains of the former site. On Sunday, a memorial service will be held at the National Monument to honor internees. Participants also have the opportunity to participate in workshops and forums during this time. Throughout the duration of the trip, there will be opportunities to share memories and stories with fellow participants.

Minidoka

Minidoka Internment National Monument was established in 2001 as the 385th unit of the National Park System to commemorate the hardships and sacrifices of Japanese Americans interned there during World War II. Also known as the 'Hunt Camp', the Minidoka Relocation Center was a 33,000-acre site with over 600 buildings and a total population of about 13,000 internees held from Washington, Oregon and Alaska. It was in operation from August 1942 until October 1945.

The Monument is located between the towns of Twin Falls and Jerome, Idaho in south central Idaho. There are no facilities or services at the site and the boundaries are not well marked. Many buildings and features that were a part of the center are located on private property surrounding the Monument. Please do not enter any private property. The National Parks Service is currently working to establish relationships within the community to preserve the significant remaining components of the Relocation Center and to provide visitor services.

For registration or additional information, please contact Jane at minidokapilgrimage@comcast.net. These details and more are available at the Minidoka Pilgrimage website, <http://www.minidokapilgrimage.org>.

Mission Statement: The Seattle Chapter JACL is a non-profit, grassroots civil rights organization dedicated to empowering our local community through high-quality programs and strategic partnerships focusing on activism, education, and youth leadership development. As a chapter of the Japanese American Citizens League, we strive to be a leading Asian American advocacy group for civil and human rights while promoting and preserving the values and cultural heritage of Japanese Americans.

Chapter Board Meeting: Our primary means of carrying out our mission is a monthly meeting, held at 6 PM on the third Wednesday of each month, except August, at the chapter office, 316 Maynard Ave. S, Seattle. Those wishing to make presentations or be added to the meeting agenda should contact President Dawn Rego prior to the meeting.

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Article and Event Submission: Board members should submit materials to the editor (ryanminato@hotmail.com) by the Friday after the monthly board meeting. Calendar items emphasize chapter or community events not likely to be covered by community newspapers or by other newsletters.

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