



Hawai'i

Committed to the protection of civil and human rights of all

JACL-Honolulu Chapter

January 2011

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The Japanese Cultural Center of Hawai'i, JACL-Honolulu & Monsanto Hawai'i present

Day of Remembrance - Honouliuli Pilgrimage 2011

Honouliuli National Historic Site: Dream or Reality?

Sunday, February 27

9:30 am - 4:30 pm

Monsanto Kunia Facility

Twenty-five seats have been reserved for JACL members. Seats will be assigned on a first come, first served basis, with priority given to those with a connection to Honouliuli.

Please email Travis Agustin at tagustin@mac.com or call Jamie Yamagata at 429-3322 to RSVP (please be sure to share your connection to Honouliuli if you have one). Then mail the enclosed Registration and Waiver forms to JACL DOR COMMITTEE, P.O. BOX 1291, HONOLULU, HI 96807.

**Registration is due by February 4.
Please reply ASAP so we can reserve a seat for you!**

For more information, please see DAY OF REMEMBRANCE, page 8

Letter from 2008-2010 President

by Shawn Benton

First, I would like to say thank you to the members of the Honolulu Chapter for allowing me to serve as President for the past 2 years. I would especially like to thank the Executive Officers, who served with me: VP David Forman, Treasurer Michael Murata and Secretary Sean Ibara as well as the Board of Directors. As some of you may know, the Officers and Board of Directors commit their time to the organization on a volunteer basis. Even though everyone has other full time commitments, each and every one of them have allocated time to attend meetings, plan events and advocate with unceasing energy and passion. Without them, I as well as the Honolulu Chapter would not have made it through these past two years. To the Officers and Board of Directors, it was truly a privilege to work with all of you.

I am proud to say that the Honolulu Chapter has continued its tradition of being one of the most independent, progressive and racially diverse Chapters. During my term as President, we engaged in many efforts.

First, our Legal Defense and Advocacy committee has advocated for various issues these past two years. In January 2009, JACL joined with the Equal Justice Society in filing an amicus brief in the case of *State of Hawai'i v. Office of Hawaiian Affairs*. In that case, JACL and EJS urged the U.S. Supreme Court to affirm the Hawai'i Supreme Court's determination that, by unilaterally

selling ceded lands to which Hawaiians have "unrelinquished claims" and which are central to the reconciliation process, the State would breach its trust obligation under Hawai'i law, resulting in irreparable harm to indigenous Hawaiians. JACL and EJS asked that the Court leave intact the Hawai'i Supreme Court's unanimous opinion that the lands must be preserved intact until claims can be resolved. Unfortunately, on March 31, 2009, the U.S. Supreme Court stated that they did not agree with the Hawai'i Supreme Court's opinion and held that the Apology Resolution of 1993 created no substantive rights for Native Hawaiians.

The Honolulu Chapter also continued its outspoken support for the rights of the LGBT community by urging the passage of the Civil Unions bill through testimony and the media. When a vote on the bill was deferred on January 29, 2010, the Honolulu Chapter expressed its dismay through a letter to the editor by pointing out that the legislature hid behind politics instead of standing strong to ensure that no group is denied justice because of who they are. However, through the efforts of

Representative Blake Oshiro on April 29, 2010, HB 444 was brought back to the floor and the members voted to pass HB 444 on final reading.



PHOTO BY CLEM BAUTISTA

Shawn Benton gives her end of the year report at the Annual General Membership Meeting.

The Honolulu Chapter also submitted testimony on bills and resolutions, including bills recognizing Hawaiians as the indigenous people of Hawai'i and prohibiting the sale or exchange of ceded lands and resolutions urging the full preservation of the Honouliuli Internment Camp as well as the issuance of a postal

stamp honoring the WWII Japanese American Nisei soldiers. The Honolulu Chapter also provided testimony to the Board of Education on proposed amendments to its Civil Rights Policy and Complaint Procedure requesting greater protections for all students against discrimination based upon race, color, national origin, sex, disability, religion, gender identity, socio-economic status, physical appearance and sexual orientation and proposed amendments to the administrative rules permitting searches of student's lockers without cause.

The Honolulu Chapter's Education Committee also engaged with nu-

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merous groups to plan educational events open to the public. On October 21, 2009, the Honolulu Chapter along with JCCH and the Office of Multicultural Student Services at UHM, presented a discussion re-examining the criminal case involving Thalia Massie and Joseph Kaha-hawai and its relevance in modern day Hawai'i.

More recently, the Honolulu Chapter joined with Equality Hawai'i Foundation, JCCH and the Honpa Hongwanji Mission of Hawai'i in presenting a successful program with a keynote address by actor George Takei. While the event included both encouraging and unfortunate experiences in the Japanese American LGBT community, it was

enlightening and left a powerful impact on the attendees. I am thankful to these organizations for including the Honolulu Chapter and hope that we continue to collaborate in these ventures.

Finally, during these past two years, we have been able to bring the Honolulu Chapter into the 21st century. As you know, the internet, as a source of communication, has become a very important aspect in this day and age because it not only keeps everyone connected, but it allows the exchange of information in an instantaneous fashion. Our new website (www.jaclhawaii.org) allows us to do this by providing continuous and updated information to our members as well as the public. The Honolulu Chapter is also part of the social media revolution by using

twitter. Through twitter, we are able to send news and reports immediately. For example, Trisha Nakamura, the new president-elect, and I attended the JACL National Convention this year in Chicago, Illinois. We provided our followers with minute-by-minute updates about the debates and business during the Business Session. We received several "thank yous" from our followers for allowing them to be a part of the Convention. To follow us on twitter, go to twitter.com/JACLSHonolulu.

In closing, I would like to say thank you to the members of the Honolulu Chapter for their continued support. Without all of you, we would not be able to continue to fight for equality and justice for everyone. Thank you.

Annual General Membership Meeting Wrap

By Liann Ebesugawa & Sean Ibara

Nearly 300 people turned out on Saturday, October 2nd at the Japanese Cultural Center of Hawai'i for JACL's Annual General Membership Meeting (AGMM) and Awards Luncheon, co-chaired by Kathryn Inouye, Bill Kaneko, Colbert Matsumoto and Hoyt Zia and emceed by Barbara Tanabe.

In addition to conducting new business for the following year, JACL also presented its 2010 Distinguished Service Award to State Representative Blake Oshiro and the Honpa Hongwanji Mission of Hawai'i for their exemplary courage

and commitment to justice by their support of civil unions. Board members for the 2010-2012 term were also sworn in by Hawai'i Circuit Court Judge Sabrina McKenna. Attendees were treated to an excellent video presentation courtesy of Oceanic Time Warner Cable which detailed JACL's long history and some of the high profile issues the organization has tackled over the years.

JACL also awarded two scholarships to high school students who showed a commitment to civil rights and social justice. Ennsen Murao is currently a freshmen at Creighton University, and graduated from St. Louis High School on O'ahu. Sierra

Jacob is also a freshmen in college, and a graduate of Seabury Hall on Maui. JACL is proud to be able to award scholarship monies each year, thanks in part to those who support our silent auction held during each AGMM.

JACL would also like to thank our emcee, Honorary Co-Chairs and corporate sponsors who have supported our organization and its mission. We could not have done it without them! Be sure to be on the look out for our next AGMM event!

**SEE PICS FROM 2010 AGMM
THROUGHOUT THIS ISSUE!**

Letter from 2010-2012 President

by Trisha Y. Nakamura

As your new president, I am honored to welcome you to our first newsletter of 2011. The Honolulu Chapter of the Japanese American Citizens League has important work ahead and great plans for the next two years.

Over the last few months, our JACL board has met and begun important dialogue about our role in Hawai'i as we look to the future. Part of this dialogue includes our outreach to old friends and new members. The common theme that arises from this talk story is that our work is not over. The brutal history of the incarceration as a result of Executive Order 9066 still needs to be remembered. Those who are disenfranchised and marginalized still need to be supported by strong allies. And civil and human rights still need to be won.

Our big important work starts with the small important work. The Board is in the process of restructuring and setting up committees. We've always had a strong Legal Defense and Advocacy Committee—that will continue. This committee is particularly interested in immigration issues and broad civil rights. In addition to our ongoing work to support strong policies and

position that advance social justice, we're focusing on strengthening our infrastructure to make sure our organization can continue our work.

In November 2010, our Board came together at a retreat to examine the role of JACL Honolulu, our commitments as board members, and most importantly what we as JACL will be doing in the future. We revisited our JACL history. We talked story with advisory board members Colbert Matsumoto, Alan Murakami and Allicyn Hikida Tasaka. Thank you to them for sharing their time, perspective and expertise with us. And thank you to Vice President Liann Ebesugawa for hosting all of us!

On a personal note, thank you to Shawn Benton, our immediate past president, for her leadership for the last two years. And a welcome to our new board members, Travis Agustin, Craig Jerome, Nikki Love, Jace Mikulanec and Jamie Yama-



PHOTO BY CLEM BAUTISTA

Josephine Chang, Trisha Nakamura, Representative Blake Oshiro and Past President Bill Kaneko

gata. And welcome back, Yoshie Tanabe!

To you, our JACL friends and members, thank you for your support of civil and human rights. We hope to see you at the Day of Remembrance or other JACL events. Please feel free to email me at trishajacl@gmail.com if you want to learn more!

With your support and our collective efforts, JACL Honolulu Chapter will proudly continue to be a unique and strong voice in Hawai'i for fairness, equality and justice.

*"Our lives begin to end the day
we become silent about things that matter."*

- Martin Luther King, Jr.



PHOTOS BY CLEM BAUTISTA

(left to right) JACL supporters Henry Curtis, Kat Brady, Lea Hong and Bill Richardson; Bishop Thomas R. Okano and Alton Miyamoto, President of the Honpa Hongwanji Mission of Hawai'i, accept the 2010 Distinguished Service Award; the silent auction draws bidders

Thank you to the generous sponsors of our Annual General Membership Meeting

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Emerging Leader Scholarship Award

by Linda Ichiyama

The Japanese American Citizens League, Honolulu Chapter, would like to congratulate Ennsen David Joshua Murao ('10 Saint Louis High School) and Sierra Jayne Jacob ('10 Seabury Hall) as the winners of the JACL Honolulu Chapter's 2010 Emerging Leader Scholarship Award. Each student received \$1,000 to be used for college tuition and expenses. The students were required to submit a rigorous written application as well as demonstrate their commitment to civil rights and social justice. Murao intends to major in Pharmacology and Jacob will major in Education/English.

Applications for the 2011 Emerging Leader Scholarship Award will be available in February on our website.

JACL Honolulu Chapter Continues to Monitor Pacific Aviation Museum

by Trisha Y. Nakamura

The JACL Honolulu Chapter since 2007 has been working to right a wrong at the Pacific Aviation Museum. The issue first began with the "Ni'ihau Zero Incident" and continues with a fund solicitation letter sent by the museum that trivializes the incarceration of Japanese Americans during World War II.

The museum has incorrectly cited the Ni'ihau Incident as a basis for validating Executive Order 9066. As David Forman notes in an open letter to the Pacific Aviation Museum in March 2008, "To understand why the JACL Board is so deeply offended by the exhibit, it is necessary to understand the way the Ni'ihau story has been distorted through time to become a codeword for anti-Japanese American sentiment. This is not only a matter of historical, but also of contemporary concern, because the so-called 'Ni'ihau Incident' has been resurrected as a hot-button

codeword for justifying mass internment in the aftermath of the 9/11 terrorist attack on our country. Chapter One of the widely promoted book *In Defense of Internment* by Michelle Malkin describes the events on Ni'ihau in an inflammatory way. It quotes dubious and clouded sources and rushes to the conclusion that the 'Ni'ihau Incident' represented a significant cause for the authorization and use of Executive Order 9066."

JACL'ers Yoshie Tanabe and David Forman urge changes to exhibit

The Pacific Aviation Museum includes a "Ni'ihau Zero Incident" exhibit that features the wreckage of a Japanese Zero Plane. As part of the exhibit, docents share a story of a Japanese pilot who was forced to land his plane on Ni'ihau. A Nisei resident on the island is said to have aided the pilot.

In 2007, led by board member Yoshie

Tanabe and past president David Forman, JACL Honolulu urged the Pacific Aviation Museum to change its exhibit and the language used to describe the events on Ni'ihau. The museum agreed to convene an Exhibit Study Group that included Franklin Odo, Oswald Stender, Geoffrey White, Ken Sumida, Irene Hirano and Burl Burlingame.

The group of experts recommended that the initial language in the display claiming that the Japanese pilot and Nisei Ni'ihau resident "conspired" was unnecessarily misleading. The experts encouraged the Museum to focus on the aviation aspects of the incident rather than imply disloyalty. The group further recommended that the museum "design its exhibit so they do not reinforce historical bias."

JACL's national organization recently joined the Honolulu chapter's

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PHOTOS BY KAREN NAKASONE

(left to right) Past President Allicyn Hikida Tasaka and Judy & Bill Kern; Barbara Tanabe, Tom Coffman and John Radcliffe; Liann Ebesugawa, Past President Karen Nakasone, Sean Ibara and Susan Arnett.

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efforts to review this issue and ensure the Exhibit Study Group's recommendations are carried out.

JACL National Members Share Fundraising Letter

In October 2010, Clyde Nakayama and Chip Larouche, Pacific Northwest District Governor, shared a fundraising letter sent by the Pacific Aviation Museum. The letter generally warns that the legacy of the sacrifices made at Pearl Harbor during World War II by US service members is at risk and shares that "in today's high school and even college level American History text books, double the attention is given to the internment of Japanese

Americans compared to the deadly attack on our forces in Hawaii."

The letter not only provides false information, it minimizes the incarceration of Japanese Americans during World War II and fails to connect the important military service of Japanese Americans in the 442nd Regimental Combat Team, the 100th Infantry Battalion, and the Military Intelligence Service.

JACL Honolulu members worked with Greg Marutani, Patty Wada and Ron Katsuyama, Vice President of Public Affairs to draft and send a letter to the museum raising concerns about the exhibit and the letter. The museum sent a response in December 2010 apologizing for "any consternation that the letter may have caused" and noted they

sent a retraction letter to all recipients because the original letter did not express their views or feelings about the history of Japanese Americans during World War II. The Museum representatives also stated their belief that changes made to their storyboards after the Exhibit Study Group's recommendations were sufficient.

The JACL group continues to discuss next steps and will work to make sure potential mischaracterizations about the Ni'ihau incident and Japanese Americans during World War II are monitored and corrected. We cannot afford others to use mistruths to sanction wrongs done to Japanese Americans in World War II and wrongs done to others now in the name of national security.

Legal Defense and Advocacy Committee Focused on Making a Difference

by Jace Mikulanec

The New Year has brought with it a renewed focus by JACL-Honolulu's Legal Defense and Advocacy Committee to bring attention to a number of important issues that are at the core of JACL's mission to highlight threats to civil rights in our community. We will focus on instances of explicit and subtle discrimination facing Asian and Pacific Island communities, and other minorities. These issues include the following:

Immigrant Rights: Hawaii's immigrant populations face serious challenges with regard to employment,

housing, legal assistance and health care. Moreover, COFA migrants are facing curtailed health benefits and competition for resources within the safety structure set up to help them. While our state faces woeful budgetary cuts, we can't let economic disparity result in the neediest of our community bearing most of the burden.

Day of Remembrance: JACL-Honolulu continues to support the ongoing work that highlights the internment of Hawai'i residents as a result of Executive Order 9066. We will support work to document, explain and synthesize the internment experience at

Honouliuli camp and elsewhere continue to be important work for JACL.

Civil Unions: The state of Hawai'i is on the brink of becoming one of a handful of states to grant equal rights to couples regardless of gender. Equal rights for citizens in our state have, and will continue to be, a focus for JACL-Honolulu.

We hope our advocacy around these issues heightens the attention given to them in public discourse, and by our own JACL members. We look forward to updating you on our progress. Best wishes for a happy and healthy 2011.

Day of Remembrance

by Denise Park

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In collaboration with the Japanese American Citizens League – Honolulu Chapter and Monsanto Hawai'i, the Cultural Center will present the 2011 Day of Remembrance (DOR) and second Honouliuli Pilgrimage titled "Honouliuli National Historic Site: Dream or Reality?" The event is scheduled for Sunday, February 27 from 9:30 am – 4:30 pm at the new Monsanto facility in Kūnia.

The all-day event will include updates on the status of the site, a keynote speech by acclaimed historian Gary Ohikuro, breakout sessions on various Hawai'i internment-related topics, the debut of the new Hawai'i Internment wayside exhibition and an opportunity to visit the Honouliuli camp site.

The day will be divided into two parts. The morning session will be attended by all and will begin with Professor Okikuro's keynote address titled "Honouliuli: Remembering for Democracy's Sake." Okikuro is a professor of International and Public Affairs at Columbia University and the author of 10 books, including *Cane Fires: The Anti-Japanese Movement in Hawai'i, 1865-1945*. There will also be a presentation by Frank Hays, Pacific area director of the National Park Service titled "Historic National Parks and Their Impact on People"; he will also provide an update on the ongoing

Honouliuli Special Resources Study. Brian Niiya, JCCH director of program development, will give an overview of the Hawai'i Internment Story and show a short video titled "Honouliuli: Hawai'i's Hidden Internment Camp," produced for the Cultural Center by Kinetic Productions and directed by Ryan Kawamoto. There will also be brief presentations by the creators of the wayside exhibition, Arnold Hiura and Stephan Doi of MBFT Productions.

After lunch, Senator Will Espero will share his insight into the historical and cultural significance of a historic national site, such as Honouliuli, to the growing Kapolei community. There will be a variety of breakout sessions, along with small group tours of the Honouliuli site. A partial list of the breakout sessions includes:

- (a) "Forgotten Internees Remembered: German Americans at the Honouliuli Detention Camp" by Professor Alan Rosenfeld of the University of Hawai'i – West O'ahu (UHWO)
- (b) UHWO's Multi-Disciplinary Research & Education of Honouliuli Internment Camp by UHWO professors and students
- (c) "Family Torn Apart: The Internment Story of the Otokichi Ozaki Family" by Gail Honda
- (d) "From Injustice to Service" – the internment experiences of Reverend Paul Osumi by Norman Osumi

(e) "Early Honouliuli History" by Shad Kane, author of the Cultural Kapolei blog

(f) A public scoping session led by National Park Service Planner Suzanne Bott

(g) A teacher workshop highlighting the Hawai'i internment instructional units

Note: All attendees will also have the opportunity to visit the Honouliuli Site.

Days of Remembrance are held annually around the country on or around February 19 to commemorate the issuing of Executive Order 9066 by President Franklin D. Roosevelt on February 19, 1942. This Executive Order authorized the mass exclusion and detention of all Japanese Americans on the west coast during World War II. In Hawai'i the event is held between February 19 and March 1, the latter date marking the anniversary of the opening of the Honouliuli detention camp on March 1, 1943. This pilgrimage follows the successful first pilgrimage to Honouliuli in 2008.

Due to space restrictions, reservations are required to attend the event. First priority for the event goes to teachers and internee family members. The cost of the event is \$10, \$8 for JCCH/JACL members, and includes lunch and bus transportation from the Cultural Center or the Kūnia Park & Ride.

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Funding for the Day of Remembrance / Honouliuli Pilgrimage 2011 is provided by a grant from the Education through Cultural and Historical Organizations program, Monsanto Hawai'i, the Honolulu Japanese Junior Chamber of Commerce and the 'Iolani Community Action Network. This project/

program is part of Education through Cultural & Historical Organizations (ECHO), a collaborative education partnership of museums and cultural institutions in Hawai'i, Alaska, Massachusetts and Mississippi. Support is provided by the U.S. Department of Education, Office of Innovation and Improvement. Funding for the wayside exhibition is provided by a grant from the

Japanese American Confinement Sites Grant Program and from the Island Insurance Foundation.

JACL MEMBERS: Please email **Travis Augustin** at **tagustin@mac.com** or call **Jamie Yamagata** at 429-3322 for reservations (please see page 1 for details).



PHOTOS BY CLEM BAUTISTA & KAREN NAKASONE

(top row, left to right) Governor Neil Abercrombie & Lieutenant Governor Brian Schatz join the JACL for the afternoon; Debbie Shimizu, Representative Chris Lee & Past President Allicyn Hikida Tasaka; Councilmember Ann Kobayashi & Dale Kobayashi; (middle row, left to right) Past President Colbert Matsumoto & Rene Koga enjoy a conversation; JACL 2010-12 Board of Directors; Alan Murakami, Jackie Young & Vanessa Chong; (bottom row, left to right) Retired Hawai'i Justice Steven Levinson; Senator Roz Baker, Bill Hoshijo & friend; John Radcliffe, US Representative Colleen Hanabusa and Yoshie Tanabe

Islamaphobia and Homophobia Focus of JACL Sponsored Forum

by Jacce Mikulanec

JACL Honolulu co-sponsored a forum organized and hosted by the William S. Richardson School of Law's Lambda Legal Association. The forum featured a panel discussion on December 2nd examining prejudice facing the Islamic and gay communities in this country.

The event, standing room only, was well attended by law students and community members. Discussants focused

on prejudice facing people of Islamic faith in urban, multi-cultural communities, the recent radicalization of Islam and the extension of that radicalization to homosexuality, and how new interfaith discussion is helping to break the stereotypes and prejudice facing both populations in post 9/11 America.

Thank you to the Lambda Law Student organization for inviting JACL to support this thought-provoking and important forum.



PHOTOS PROVIDED BY ADAM CHANG

Panelists and organizers of Giving Voice: Overcoming Islamaphobia and Homophobia.

Board Member Feature Travis Agustin



1. What attracted you to JACL?

I was attracted to the role that JACL has played in achieving milestones in fighting for the civil rights of Asian Americans. Through law school I was involved with the National Asian Pacific American

Law Student Association serving as its Northeast Regional Director where I worked with the National Asian Pacific American Bar Association to plan its annual convention. Those experiences heightened my awareness

of the Asian American Movement, and my understanding of the struggles and achievements that have blazed a trail for young Asian Americans like myself. At my law school graduation Harold Koh, legal advisor of the State Department, simply said to my fellow graduates, "to go where you are most needed". I returned home to Hawai'i, motivated and inspired to serve the community that has shaped my life. The JACL Honolulu chapter met my expectations of an active organization that has played a significant role advancing civil rights for Asian Americans in Hawai'i for a long time.

2. What civil and human rights issues are you most interested in? Why?

I am most interested in advocating for immigrant rights

Please see TRAVIS, page 11

JACL Honors the Legacy of Martin Luther King, Jr.

by Trisha Y. Nakamura

Our chapter proudly joined the Martin Luther King, Jr. Coalition of Hawai'i in its 23rd annual parade to honor the legacy of Dr. King. The parade featured more than fifty contingents including the Hawai'i Civil Rights Commission, Local 5, ILWU, HSTA, the American Friends Service Committee and the NAACP.

The parade's theme was "We must learn to live together as brothers, or perish together as fools." Our contingent of 21 was diverse, echoing the theme celebrating diversity and unity. From our most junior folks (Trent, Abbie, Ellie & Shylar) to our most advanced activists, our group had fun holding the massive banner the entire way. Perhaps we'll see you next year!



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issues because the immigrant population in Hawai'i is an extremely vulnerable segment of society that is essential to the vitality and success of Hawaii's community. I am motivated by my Filipino Grandparents' immigration experience which has inspired me to focus my energies on advocating for immigrant rights. There are many



PHOTOS BY JAMIE YAMAGATA

Abbie and Ellie march in the MLK parade.

issues surrounding the immigrant population, from access to basic health care, to navigating the complex immigration laws, to Human Trafficking and Domestic Abuse.

3. In the next five years, where do you hope JACL will be?

In the next five years I hope JACL will consist of a new generation of young advocates with a vision that will continue the legacy that the JACL has built.



JACL

Japanese American Citizens League

Founded in 1929, JACL is the nation's oldest and largest Asian American civil and human rights organization with a 25,000 membership base. JACL has 112 chapters nationwide, 4 regional offices, a Washington, D.C. office and a national headquarters in San Francisco. JACL's mission is to secure and uphold the human and civil rights of Japanese Americans and all Americans while preserving our cultural heritage and values.

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PHOTO BY JAMIE YAMAGATA