Japanese American Citizens League

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JACL members attend
January 14, 2005
Martin Luther King, Jr.
Dinner/Dance

In addition to JACL’s co-sponsorship of the MLK dinner and dance, our organizations was well represented by an energetic group of JACL Education & Events committee members and Directors purchased seats for a “JACL Table” to show our support for the NAACP. It is our hope that JACL members will consider attending future events involving our sister organizations, because it is clear that we must join with others as we all struggle to promote civil rights and achieve equal justice.

Over the past few years, the Honolulu Chapter of the Japanese American Citizens League has joined communities across the country in organizing Days of Remembrance commemorations every February. These events note the anniversary of Executive Order 9066, issued on February 19, 1942 by President Franklin D. Roosevelt. This executive order led to the mass exclusion of all Japanese Americans on the West Coast, being forced removal and incarceration of all 110,000 Japanese Americans on the West Coast, being imprisoned at Jerome, Arkansas. At these annual commemorations, we try to raise awareness about this history, which is still unknown to some of misunderstanding by others. We also try to link this history with contemporary issues. Thus, recent Days of Remembrance in Honolulu have focused on the impact of the Patriot Act and hate crimes on Arab and Muslim Americans, on the plight of Japanese Latin Americans, and other related issues. As a Japanese American organization, we recognize that we have a responsibility to speak out in support of other groups that experience racial or ethnic scapegoating and violations of civil rights given our own historical experiences.

That’s why we are so happy to be able to bring the legendary Nisei activist Yuri Kochiyama to Honolulu to be the keynote speaker at the 2005 Day of Remembrance. For over forty years, Yuri has championed civil rights, protested racial inequality, and supported political prisoners in the United States and throughout the world, in large part because of her own experience as a Japanese American during World War II.

She was born Mary Nakahara in San Pedro, California in 1921, a fishing community where her family operated a fish market. Self described as “provincial, religious, and apolitical” her world, and that of many of her fellow Japanese-Americans, came crashing down in the aftermath of the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor in 1941. In the immediate aftermath of Pearl Harbor, her father was picked up and imprisoned. Later, she and the rest of her family became caught up in the mass forced removal and incarceration of all 110,000 Japanese Americans on the West Coast, being imprisoned first at an “assembly center” hastily constructed on the site of the Santa Anita horse racing track, then in an American style concentration camp at Jerome, Arkansas.

Making the best of the situation, she taught school and organized a young woman’s club at Jerome internment camp. Making the best of the situation, she taught school and organized a young woman’s club at Jerome internment camp. Making the best of the situation, she taught school and organized a young woman’s club at Jerome internment camp. Making the best of the situation, she taught school and organized a young woman’s club at Jerome internment camp. Making the best of the situation, she taught school and organized a young woman’s club at Jerome internment camp. Making the best of the situation, she taught school and organized a young woman’s club at Jerome internment camp. Making the best of the situation, she taught school and organized a young woman’s club at Jerome internment camp. Making the best of the situation, she taught school and organized a young woman’s club at Jerome internment camp. Making the best of the situation, she taught school and organized a young woman’s club at Jerome internment camp. Making the best of the situation, she taught school and organized a young woman’s club at Jerome internment camp.

Day of Remembrance Commemoration to Feature
Legendary Nisei Activist Yuri Kochiyama

Brian Niiya, Education & Events Committee

THE DAY OF REMEMBRANCE COMMEMORATION
MONDAY, FEBRUARY 21, 2005
AT THE ARCHITECTURE AUDITORIUM
AT UH MANOA
AT 2:00 PM.
Happy New Year JACL members!

This year, I hope to continue to build our membership base and heighten awareness in our community about JACL's mission and activities. I also hope that more of you, our JACL membership, will step up and become active participants in our organization. A few of you responded to my call to action in the last newsletter, urging the membership to become more active. Join the various committees we are trying to build up. Thank you for your positive response.

Announcements. Welcome to our newest Board member Mark Yabui. Congratulations to Board member Alphonso Braggs, who is the new elected President of the NAACP Hawaii Chapter, and also JACL Board member Bill Woods, who was elected NAACP treasurer. Congratulations to our sister civil rights organization, the NAACP Hawaii chapter, on a hugely successful Martin Luther King dinner and dance held on January 14, 2005, with a sellout 400 guests in attendance! JACL supported the MLK dinner as a co-sponsor, and all JACL members were mailed invitations to this dinner. You were also mailed invitations to a January 8th screening of Lane Nishikawa’s “Only the Brave” film about the heroic contributions of Japanese Americans incarcerated during WWII.

I hope that all of you will make the time to attend our annual Day of Remembrance (“DOR”) event on February 21, 2005 (President’s Day holiday). The purpose of the event is to remember the issuance of Executive Order 9066 during World War II, on February 19, 1942, which led to the exclusion and internment of 120,000 Japanese Americans from the West Coast. This year, the JACL Education and Events Committee, under the leadership of Board member and Committee chair Marcia Sakamoto-Wong, has tirelessly worked to put together an outstanding event featuring renowned activist Yuri Kochiyama. I want to recognize and thank Education Committee members Clement Bautista, Brian Niya, Delores Glover, Ken Akinaka, Pam Funai, Robert Imaike, Shirley Nishimura, Tam Nish, Wendy Yamashita, Susan Kitsu and Yoshie Tanabe, for all of their hard work in planning this event. Thank you to the many organizations and individuals who have already made financial contributions toward helping us defray the costs to put on this event. If you would like to contribute toward our DOR event, you may do so at the event itself, or you can mail it to the JACL Honolulu Chapter address (checks made out to JACL Honolulu Chapter with a notation that it is for the “Day of Remembrance” event).

For those members who do attend the DOR event, please stop by the Membership Table while you are there, and pick up a small gift as a token of our appreciation of your continued support of the JACL Honolulu Chapter.

Aloha,

Karen N. Nakasone
President, JACL Hawai‘i, Honolulu Chapter
Japanese American Citizens League

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Day of Remembrance Commemoration to Feature Legendary Nisei Activist Yuri Kochiyama

became active with the Harlem Parents Committee and spent three of her children to the Harlem Free School. In 1963, she and her oldest son were among 600 protesters who were arrested in a demonstration for construction jobs for African Americans and Puerto Ricans. While in court, she met Malcolm X, who became a close friend. She joined Malcolm’s Organization for Afro-American Unity in March 1964 and attended his liberation school. She later organized a meeting between Malcolm and Japanese atomic bomb survivors. She was with Malcolm X at the time of his assassination.

Malcolm’s murder intensified Yuri’s commitment to work for dignity and equality for all people. Through her tireless efforts, she has challenged long held assumptions about race and has advocated about the struggles of people of color in the U.S. and around the world. One of her current activities is to support reparations for African Americans. She has been a strong voice for the importance of ethnic studies, workers’ rights, and reparations for the Japanese Americans incarcerated during WWII. She remains active in her 80s and now lives in the San Francisco Bay area.

Yuri is the subject of numerous books, articles and films and has inspired several generations of activists. She will be signing her autobiography, Passing On: A Memoir, published last year by the UCLA Asian American Studies Center.

In preparation for her visit, we have also arranged for a documentary on her life to be aired on Ulule Community Television. Yuri Kochiyama: Passion for Justice is a 57 minute profile of Yuri directed and produced by Rea Tajiri and Pat Saunders in 1993. Please watch for it in the weeks to come.

Preceding Yuri’s presentation will be a short video tribute by Video Productions, produced by Kimberly Dominguez, Karen Samsul, and Leslie Ishi. This fifteen minute documentary will introduce Yuri and her life’s work.

Following her talk, there will be a response by author Saleem Ahmed. Dr. Ahmed is a native of India and former senior fellow at the East-West Center. While at the East-West Center, Ahmed worked on agricultural-envi-

dimental policy issues and is now active in promoting cross-cultural understanding. Copies of his book Beyond Veil and Holy War: Islamic Teachings and Muslim Practices with Biblical Comparisons (Mooning Pen Publishers, Inc., 2002) will also be available for purchase.

Please join us for what should be an exciting program. The Day of Remembrance event will be held on Monday, February 21, 2005 at the Architecture Auditorium at UH Manoa at 7:00pm. The event is free and open to the public. Light refreshments will be served. Parking on campus that day is free.

We are happy to joined by a host of co-sponsors for the event. As of press time, these co-sponsors include the American Friends Service Committee; the Hawai‘i People’s Fund; the Martin Luther King Coalition; McDonald’s of Hawai‘i; the Muslim Association of Hawai‘i; the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People; Honolulu-Hawaii Branch; the UH Manoa Ethnic Studies Department; the UH Manoa Office of Multicultural Student Services; and the United Nations Association, Hawai‘i Division.

Get Involved with the JACL!

Education & Events

MARICA SAKAMOTO-WONG
Chair

The purpose of this committee is to inform the public about issues relating to the human and civil rights of all people, especially those who have been marginalized, and to preserve the cultural heritage and values of Japanese Americans. Currently, the committee plans and executes three major events: The Day of Remembrance (DOR) program commemorating the incarceration of Japanese Americans during WWII; A Fast educational event focusing on civil rights, redress of injustice, or related issues; and, the Annual General membership Meeting.

Legal Defense & Advocacy

ALAN MURAKAMI & BILL ANEKO
Co-Chair

Monitors local legislation; coordinates the chapter’s response to any pending local legislation; coordinates the chapter’s response to any pertinent national or local legislation.

Membership

SUSAN KITSU
Chair

Will work with the youth base developed during the 2004 national convention and build out from there. Intends to create a presence at the law school, universities, and community colleges. Will try to develop more outreach to get youth involved.

Development

VACANT

Will focus on raising money through the Annual General Membership Meeting, board donations, general solicitation from members, and the Foodland/Sack-n-Save “Give Aloha” program. Will also work with the Scholarship Committee to raise additional funds to try to provide more scholarship aid to Emerging Leaders in our community.

If you are interested in helping any of the above committees, or know someone who might be interested, please contact the JACL via telephone at (808)/523-8464, or via email to karen.nakasone@hawaii.rr.com