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NISEI WEEK

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JAPANESE FESTIVAL

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75<sup>th</sup>

---

ANNIVERSARY

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# NISEI WEEK

**Pioneers, Community  
Service & Inspiration  
Award Honorees**

**Event Schedules &  
Festival Map**

**2015 Queen Candidates**

**Nisei Week  
Japanese Festival  
1934 - 2015:  
"Let the Good Times Roll"**

**2014 Nisei Week  
Japanese Festival  
Queen Tori Angela  
Nishinaka-Leon**





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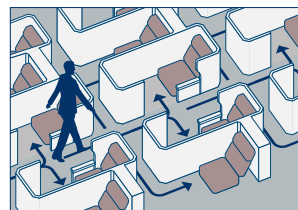
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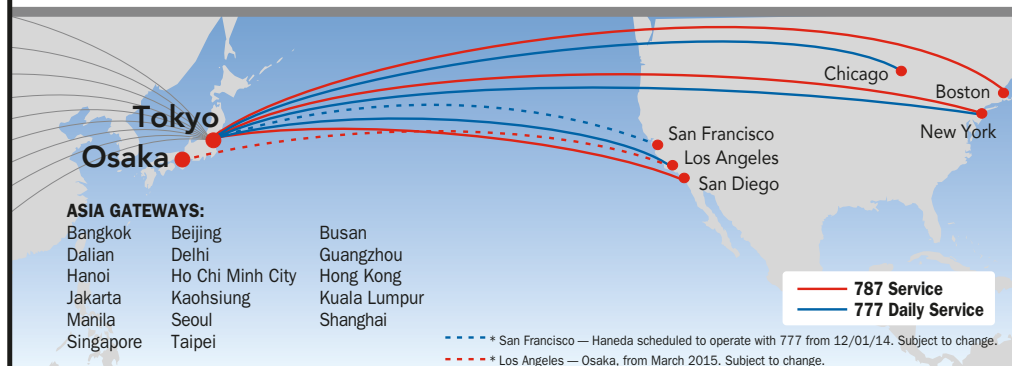
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2014 Nisei Week Queen Tori Angela Nishinaka-Leon in her furisode kimono from Nagoya, Japan, Los Angeles' sister-city.  
Cover photo: Toyo Miyatake Studio; Make up by Jennifer Yoshida; Hair, kimono dressing: Michie Sujishi. Photos above: Toyo Miyatake Studio.



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## 75th Annual Nisei Week Japanese Festival *Congratulations!*



*Love,  
The 2013 Nisei Week Court  
and Families  
Thank you for years of memories!*



*Congratulations  
Nisei Week Foundation  
on celebrating your 75<sup>th</sup> Anniversary!!!*



*Love,  
The 2010 Nisei Week Court  
and their Families  
Thank you for the beautiful memories.*

## 2014 NISEI WEEK COURT



*To our daughters:*

*Lindsey · Ashley · Tori · Melissa · Tiffany · Dominique*

*You are beautiful, talented, poised, and graceful. We are so proud  
of how much you have grown throughout this past year!*



*With love,  
Your Parents*





*Michelle Kaori Hanabusa      Veronica Toyomi Ota*  
*Sara Kuniko Hutter      Karen Nana Mizoguchi*  
*Kelsey Nakaji Kwong      Camryn Michiko Rie Sugita*  
*Tamara Mieke Teragawa*

**Congratulations girls !**  
  
We are proud of you!  
Love,  
Your Parents

# 2015 NISEI WEEK MERCHANDISE

The official 75th Annual Nisei Week Japanese Festival commemorative poster and t-shirt feature the 2015 Nebuta float. Designed by Japanese Master Nebuta Float Artist Hiroo Takenami, it was created especially for the 75th anniversary and inspired by Minamoto no Yoshitsune, the famous general of the Minamoto clan in the late Heian and early Kamakura period.

The t-shirt, which features a beautiful outline of the Nebuta float in metallic silver on a high-quality, dark blue, fitted shirt is available at select retailers in Little Tokyo. There are both men's and women's t-shirt styles available in an assortment of sizes. Men's shirts are \$25 and women's shirts are \$20.

For questions, please email us at [merchandise@niseiweek.org](mailto:merchandise@niseiweek.org) or call the Nisei Week office at (213) 687-7193.





SAN FERNANDO VALLEY  
JAPANESE AMERICAN COMMUNITY CENTER



**Best Wishes Kelsey Nakaji Kwong!**

12953 Branford St. • Pacoima, CA 91331



FESTIVAL GREETINGS

Public officials and community leaders offer greetings in honor of the annual Nisei Week Japanese Festival.

Federal, State and City officials as well as local representatives and dignitaries from merchant and business associations celebrate the occasion and strengthen their ties to the Little Tokyo community.



August 2015

Dear Friends,

On behalf of the Nisei Week Foundation's board of directors, committee chairs and volunteers, I welcome you to the 75<sup>th</sup> Annual Nisei Week Japanese Festival a "Diamond Jubilee" celebration.

The Nisei Week Foundation is a nonprofit organization run entirely by volunteers whose primary focus is to produce a nine-day festival in Los Angeles highlighting Japanese and Japanese American culture. As Southern California's largest and longest-running ethnic festival, we are proud to share this extraordinary event with the community. Combining our traditional cultural arts with new customs and events allows us to carry on the spirit of our founders who created the festival 75 years ago.

As the Little Tokyo community continues to grow, the Nisei Week Japanese Festival is a means to connect the diverse communities of Southern California by sharing the Japanese and Japanese American heritage and traditions through arts and cultural education. This year's theme is "Let the Good Times Roll" and is a very special year with the return of the all new, dynamic, breathtakingly colorful LED- illuminated Nebuta float in our Nisei Week Grand Parade.

I would like to express my deepest gratitude to the board of directors for their leadership and vision, the tireless efforts of each committee chair and the hundreds of volunteers for their hard work and commitment. Without them, the Nisei Week Japanese Festival would not be possible. In addition, I wish to extend my heartfelt appreciation to our generous sponsors. Your support truly helps the Nisei Week Foundation continue with the festival as an annual tradition in our community.

Again, welcome and thank you for joining this year's "Diamond Jubilee" celebration of the 75<sup>th</sup> Annual Nisei Week Japanese Festival.

Sincerely,



TERRY S. HARA, President  
Nisei Week Foundation

244 S. San Pedro Street Suite 303 · Los Angeles, CA 90012 · (213) 687-7193 Fax (213) 687-6510  
www.niseiweek.org



CONSULATE GENERAL OF JAPAN  
350 SOUTH GRAND AVENUE, SUITE 1700  
LOS ANGELES, CALIFORNIA 90071  
TELEPHONE (213) 617-6700

August 2015


Congratulations on the 75<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Nisei Week Festival!

It is my honor and pleasure to join you all at this beloved annual tradition of the Japanese American community. Since 1934, Little Tokyo summers have come alive with the delights of Japanese matsuri. These distinctly Japanese festivals are a national pastime in Japan and thanks to Nisei Week, we can enjoy them right here in Southern California - Aomori's Nebuta and Sendai's Tanabata are some of the most prominently featured, with proud traditions in their native cities.


I extend my heartfelt gratitude to the volunteers past and present who have sustained Nisei Week for all of these years, promoting Japanese American heritage and deepening the friendship between the U.S. and Japan. I pray for your continued success, and that younger generations will carry on your legacy in preserving this national treasure.

Let us join together in the grand celebration!

Sincerely,



Hidehisa Horinouchi  
Consul General of Japan  
in Los Angeles



**JBA** Japan Business Association  
of Southern California  
日本企業協会

1411 West 120th Street, Suite 200, Gardena, CA 90248  
Web Address: <http://www.jba.org>

TEL: 310-515-9222 FAX: 310-515-9722 E-MAIL: [jba@jba.org](mailto:jba@jba.org)

August, 2015

Dear Friends,

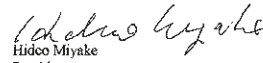
On behalf of the Japan Business Association of Southern California, I would like to congratulate the 2015 Nisei Week Japanese Festival on its 75th anniversary. Nisei Week is one of the largest and longest running Japanese American festivals in the U.S. and is a major cultural festival in Southern California.

In recent years, with increasing participation from Japan and the local Japanese community, it has also been serving as a common ground for mutual understanding and friendship between Japanese Americans and Japanese nationals. Bringing together people with diverse backgrounds, Nisei Week has become a truly iconic cultural festival in this region where everyone is welcome to join and appreciate Japanese American culture and tradition.


I wish to express our appreciation to the Nisei Week board members, volunteers, sponsors and participants for their tireless efforts to make this year's festival even more successful and memorable at this important milestone of the 75th anniversary. Japan Business Association of Southern California takes pride in being part of this important event.


Congratulations and best wishes for a successful 2015 Nisei Week Japanese Festival!

Sincerely,



Hideo Miyake  
President  
Japan Business Association of Southern California





XAVIER BECERRA  
Member of Congress  
34th District, California

August 15, 2015

Nisei Week Foundation  
244 South San Pedro Street, Suite 303  
Los Angeles, CA 90012

Dear Friends:


It is with great excitement that I welcome you to my district as we celebrate the diamond jubilee of the Nisei Week Japanese Festival of Los Angeles.

Nisei week started during the Depression era to bring economic vitality back to Little Tokyo during a difficult time in our nation's history. The spirit and drive of Nisei Week continues to draw thousands of Angelenos to this community 75 years later.


I would like to take this opportunity to commend the hundreds of volunteers who contribute their time to put on the Nisei Week Japanese Festival. Our city is privileged to host this week-long festival and it is all possible because of the dedication of its volunteers.

I look forward to enjoying many more years of the Nisei Week Japanese Festival. Best wishes to all those in attendance!

Sincerely,




XAVIER BECERRA  
Member of Congress



CAPITOL OFFICE  
P.O. BOX 942840  
SACRAMENTO, CA 95814  
(916) 306-2851  
FAX (916) 309-2159

DISTRICT OFFICE  
729 WEST 4<sup>TH</sup> STREET, SUITE 1000  
LOS ANGELES, CA 90013  
(213) 426-4440  
FAX (213) 426-4339

E-MAIL  
[Assemblymember.Santiago@asmn.ca.gov](mailto:Assemblymember.Santiago@asmn.ca.gov)



OFFICE OF ASSEMBLY MEMBER  
**MIGUEL SANTIAGO**  
MAJORITY WHIP  
FIFTY-THIRD ASSEMBLY DISTRICT

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PUBLIC SAFETY  
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July 19, 2015

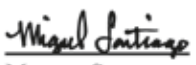
Dear Friends,

Greetings to all those attending 2015 Nisei Week Japanese Festival. I would like to acknowledge the foundation's Board of Directors, staff, and partners for hosting this beloved annual event. Your dedication and leadership will continue to highlight the vibrant culture and heritage of the Japanese and Japanese American community to all of us in Southern California.


Since its inception in 1934, the Nisei Week Japanese Festival has been one of the region's largest and longest-running cultural festivals. This nine-day festival is an iconic event in the City of Los Angeles that our residents eagerly look forward to every year. I commend the foundation for its tremendous work, contributions, and dedication to serving our great city by promoting the rich heritage of the Japanese American community.


I look forward to working with the foundation to serve our residents in the state of California and the 53<sup>rd</sup> Assembly District in Los Angeles. Please accept my best wishes for continued success and congratulations on your 75<sup>th</sup> anniversary!

Sincerely,



MIGUEL SANTIAGO  
Assembly Member, 53<sup>rd</sup> District  
Majority Whip





ADAM B. SCHIFF  
Member of Congress  
California's 28th District

August 15, 2015

Nisei Week Foundation  
244 South San Pedro St., Suite 303  
Los Angeles, CA 90012

Dear Friends:

It is my great pleasure to congratulate the Nisei Week Foundation on its 75<sup>th</sup> Annual Nisei Week Japanese Festival!


Nisei week began as a small local parade and festival lighting up Little Tokyo for seven days. Along with being an instrument for the economic revival of Little Tokyo, Nisei Week strived to introduce Angelenos to the vibrant Japanese American culture in the heart of downtown Los Angeles. Nisei Week has since grown to an exciting yearly event that draws local residents and tourists from around the globe wishing to experience the many Japanese art forms such as martial arts, ondo dancing, tanabata, flower arranging and much more.

Since the first Nisei Week Japanese Festival, The Nisei Week Foundation has grown into a vital organization that helps promote Japanese and Japanese American heritage and traditions. The Nisei Week Foundation is run by a team of dedicated volunteers from the Japanese American community and through their efforts Nisei Week is now recognized as one of Los Angeles' most prominent cultural gatherings.


It was my distinct honor to serve as Nisei Week Grand Marshall in 2012 and I can tell you from firsthand experience that the annual Festival's parade, exhibits, and various cultural events are some of the most outstanding I have ever seen. I am delighted to join you once again this year to celebrate the wonderful Japanese and Japanese American traditions.


Congratulations on 75 wonderful years and best wishes for an enjoyable Nisei Week!

Sincerely,



ADAM B. SCHIFF  
Member of Congress





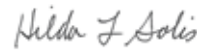
BOARD OF SUPERVISORS COUNTY OF LOS ANGELES  
856 Kenneth Hahn Hall of Administration  
Los Angeles, California 90012

Dear Nisei Week participants and organizers,


As the Los Angeles County Supervisor for the First District, it is my pleasure to congratulate all organizers and participants as they gather for their 75<sup>th</sup> Nisei Week Japanese Festival.

I am thankful for the work, dedication and committed efforts Nisei Week Foundation has made as they share Japanese and Japanese American heritage and traditions throughout Los Angeles County. The Festival is a wonderful opportunity for all people to engage and learn from each other's cultures. I look forward to continue working alongside them as they continue their work with the diverse communities in the First District.

Sincerely,



HILDA L. SOLIS  
Supervisor, First District







# Board of Supervisors County of Los Angeles

MICHAEL D. ANTONOVICH  
MAYOR

August 2015

Nisei Week Foundation  
244 S. San Pedro St., Suite 303  
Los Angeles, CA 90012

Dear Friends:

Welcome to the 75<sup>th</sup> Annual Nisei Week Japanese Festival.

Home to the largest Japanese-American population in the United States, Los Angeles County appreciates the Nisei Week Foundation's dedication and hard work in developing and producing Southern California's largest and longest-running ethnic festival, highlighting Japanese-American culture through cultural exhibits, a street arts festival, grand parade, and a car show.

Best wishes for your continued success.

Sincerely,  
  
MICHAEL D. ANTONOVICH  
Mayor



ALL OF ADMINISTRATION, 800 WEST TEMPLE STREET, LOS ANGELES, CALIFORNIA 90012  
55 • FAX (213) 874-1010 • WEBSITE: www.antonovich.org • E-MAIL: mantonovich@lacas.org



ERIC GARCETTI  
MAYOR

August 1, 2015

Dear Friends,

On behalf of the City of Los Angeles, I welcome you to the 75<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Nisei Week Japanese Festival.

The Nisei Week Japanese Festival celebrates Japanese and Japanese American heritage and traditions while bringing together the diverse communities of Southern California through arts and cultural education. I commend the Nisei Week Japanese Festival for bringing together Angelenos from all walks of life to celebrate diversity, share their cultural heritage, and enjoy the best of our city.

I send my best wishes for a memorable anniversary and continued success.

Sincerely,

ERIC GARCETTI  
Mayor



LITTLE TOKYO BUSINESS ASSOCIATION  
LITTLE TOKYO BUSINESS IMPROVEMENT DISTRICT

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LTBD Co-Chair & Secretary  
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Nancy Takayama

Jason Toyoshima

Robert Yasui

Rebecca Young

Summer 2015

Mr. Terry Hara

President

Nisei Week Foundation

244 South San Pedro Street #303

Los Angeles, CA 90012

Dear Mr. Hara,

The Little Tokyo Business Association and Little Tokyo Business Improvement District proudly join in congratulating you and the Nisei Week Foundation on the 75<sup>th</sup> anniversary of our community's most esteemed cultural celebration.

During this milestone year, let us pay tribute to all of the men and women that have helped make the Nisei Week Japanese Festival a source of pride for our city and for our community.

We encourage everyone to take time to experience the grand parade, music, dance, exhibits, martial arts, and other activities that contribute to making Nisei Week colorful and, above all, lots of fun.

Yours truly,

Ellen Endo

President

196 1/2 Judge John Aiso Street #132 Los Angeles, CA 90012 Phone 213.880.6875  
website: www.littletokyobiz.org

# WE ARE PROUD TO SUPPORT THE 2015 NISEI WEEK JAPANESE FESTIVAL

*"Let the Good Times Roll!"*



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www.kurataeyecare.com



JOSÉ HUIZAR  
COUNCILMEMBER, 14TH DISTRICT

Dear Friends,

It is with great pleasure that I extend greetings to all those attending the 75<sup>th</sup> Nisei Week Japanese Festival.

My family and I are honored to once again participate, reveling in what has become the largest celebration of Japanese culture in the United States. We look forward to seeing ondo dancing, Japanese floral arrangements, tea ceremonies, martial arts, calligraphy, and talent programs that also draw visitors from around the globe.

Growing up in Boyle Heights and working in Little Tokyo during my youth allowed me to develop a keen awareness of the deep cultural roots and importance of the Japanese American community here in the City of Los Angeles.

Nisei Week helps connect the many diverse communities of Los Angeles, allowing us to commemorate the rich cultural heritage of our friends and neighbors. With the help of volunteers of all ages, visitors will learn about the cultural and historical contributions of the Japanese American community.

I extend my heartfelt gratitude to the Nisei Week Foundation for their continued support of cultural programming in Little Tokyo and our Downtown community. Congratulations to each of the dedicated volunteers and staff members who make Nisei Week possible.

Best wishes to all for an excellent Nisei Week celebration!

Sincerely yours,

José Huizar  
Councilmember, 14th District

300 North Spring Street, Room 400 • Los Angeles, California 90012  
Phone: (213) 473-7014 • Fax: (213) 467-0600  
Email: jhuizar@lacas.org



南加日系商工会議所

JAPANESE CHAMBER OF COMMERCE OF SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA

244 S. San Pedro St #410, Los Angeles, CA 90012 Tel: (213) 626-3067, Fax: (213) 626-3070 http://www.jccsc.com  
office@jccsc.com

On behalf of the Japanese Chamber of Commerce of Southern California and the Japanese Chamber of Commerce Foundation, it is my honor and privilege to extend my warmest wishes and congratulations to the Nisei Week Foundation on commemorating the occasion of your 75<sup>th</sup> anniversary.

Los Angeles is one of the world's most diverse region and our unique mix of people makes our region strong and a world leader in human relations and interactions. Your organization allows our diverse community to observe and appreciate the variety of the Japanese American cultures and traditions shared by the Japanese-American community, and I applaud and appreciate your organization for enhancing the integrity of our growing community here in Los Angeles.

On this auspicious occasion, I extend my sincerest gratitude and appreciation to all of your member organizations for dedicating immeasurable amounts of time and effort in contributing to our vast community as our goodwill ambassadors.

As we celebrate your 75<sup>th</sup> Anniversary, we hope to continue our partnership to make our community a better and an exciting place to be in the many years to come.

Once again, Congratulations on your 75<sup>th</sup> Anniversary!

Most Sincerely,

Yoshio Lee Aoki  
President, JCCSC & JCCF  
会頭 青木義男



# THE ORANGE COUNTY NIKKEI COORDINATING COUNCIL

STRIVING TO MAKE  
THE COMMUNITY  
ONE!

OCJAA OCO OCJACCC OCQC SOC  
SELANOCO - JACL SEYO OCSA

祝 二世週日本祭



## ORANGE COUNTY JAPANESE AMERICAN ASSOCIATION

オレンジ郡日系協会

会長 藤田 喜美子 会員一同

Social and Community Services to  
the Nikkei population of Orange County

17332 Irvine Blvd. #110, Tustin CA 92780

(714) 730-3551 • Fax (714) 730-3515

Email: network@ocjaa.org

www.ocjaa.org



# Nisei Week Japanese Festival 1934–2015: Let the Good Times Roll

The first Nisei Week Japanese Festival was held in 1934, in the midst of the Great Depression. Little Tokyo was the hub of the Japanese American population, but not thriving, as the merchants catered mostly to Issei (first generation) patrons. The Issei controlled all activities. The young Nisei (second generation) were coming of age, ambitious and anxious for job opportunities and a meaningful role.

With merchant support, the Nisei started the Nisei Week Japanese Festival to brighten Little Tokyo for seven days and nights. It helped attract more of the Nisei population to revive and revitalize Little Tokyo's economic base and exposed them to their cultural roots and heritage.

From the outset, the Nisei Week organizers planned their attractions around the best they could offer in ondo dancing, Japanese floral shows, kimono clad queen and court, calligraphy, art shows, and talent programs.

In subsequent years, judo and kendo exhibitions, various sports competitions, Coronation Ball, Baby Show, Pioneer Awards, Carnival, and other cultural activities and events were added. The Grande Parade, with the ondo dancers, has continued to be the crowd-drawing spectacle.

Nisei Week is the largest Japanese festival in the United States. Today, it continues to play a unique and rewarding role in furthering the understanding and awareness of the traditions and beauty of Japanese culture to multiple Japanese American generations and the greater American community.



*The first Nisei Week Japanese Festival in 1934, in the midst of the Great Depression.*



*Reiko Inouye is crowned 1941 Nisei Week Queen at the Coronation Ball held at the Biltmore Hotel Los Angeles.*



*The Nisei Week Carnival was held from 1949 to 2002. To community organizations, it was an opportunity to raise money. For many who moved out to the suburbs, it was a homecoming. The Carnival had something for everyone. For many, it was Nisei Week.*



*The Closing Ceremony and Ondo conclude Nisei Week's Japanese Festival highlights of Japanese and Japanese American culture over the two-weekend period. Multi-ethnic Los Angeles is on display ending with the ever-popular public Ondo dance on 1st Street. With another successful festival completed, the community looks forward to next year's continuity of traditions that represents Nisei Week.*



*As a testament to the Little Tokyo community's courage and will after the war, Nisei Week was revived in 1949 with the 9th festival. Terri Hokoda became the first Sansei (third-generation) Nisei Week Queen.*



*Nisei Week has had Hollywood and international celebrities participate in the Grand Parade over the years. Shown here are Hollywood actors Martin Landau and Barbara Bain from the TV series Mission Impossible and internationally acclaimed Japanese actor, Toshiro Mifune, who received wide American recognition as Lord Toranaga in the 1980 U.S. television miniseries, "Shogun."*



*The Nisei Week Baby Show stems from the queen pageant. It was created to introduce youngsters of the community. The event is open to all children of at least one-quarter Japanese heritage from ages one to six years.*



*1951 Nisei Week Queen Aiko Ogomori and her court ride in the Grand Parade, a crowd drawing spectacle.*



*The Nisei Week Baby Show stems from the queen pageant. It was created to introduce youngsters of the community. The event is open to all children of at least one-quarter Japanese heritage from ages one to six years.*

\* Excerpts from the 2015 Nisei Week Calendar are used with permission from the Little Tokyo Historical Society.



# ROY YAMAGUCHI

CHEF/FOUNDER, ROY'S RESTAURANTS

Roy Yamaguchi is the chef and founder of a collection of restaurants including 30 Roy's Restaurants in the U.S. and Guam, the Tavern by Roy Yamaguchi, and Eating House 1849. He is revered for his culinary skills and is an innovator of Hawaiian inspired cuisine, an eclectic blend of California-French-Japanese cooking traditions created with fresh ingredients from Hawaii. He is the first from Hawaii to be honored with the prestigious James Beard "Best Pacific Northwest Chef" Award in 1993 and earned numerous honors, including: California Chef of the Year (California Restaurant Writers Association), Gault-Millau Top 40 (Forbes FYI), Top 50 Cuisines in America (Conde Nast Traveler), Fine Dining Hall of Fame (Nation's Restaurant News), and the John Heckathorn Dining Excellence Award (Honolulu Magazine).

Yamaguchi was born and raised in Tokyo. His Hawaii roots are tied to his paternal grandfather who owned a tavern in Wailuku, Maui in the 1940s. He attributes his appreciation for food to his Hawaii-born father and his Okinawa-born mother. Yamaguchi attended the Culinary Institute of America (CIA) in New York where he received his formal culinary training. After graduating in 1976, he accepted positions at some of the most prestigious California restaurants at the time, L'Escoffier, L'Ermitage, Le Serene, Michael's, and Le Gourmet in the Sheraton Plaza La Reina. In 1984 Yamaguchi opened his first restaurant, 385 North, in Hollywood, and in 1988, he moved to Honolulu to open the first Roy's Restaurant. He is also credited as the mastermind behind the 1994 debut of Outback Steakhouse in Hawaii.

Yamaguchi hosted six seasons of the PBS series, Hawaii Cooks with Roy Yamaguchi, broadcast on more than 300 stations in all 50 states, and in more than 60 countries. He was also featured on the Food Network's My Country, My Kitchen, taking him back to his roots in Japan. Yamaguchi also competed as one of 12 of the nation's most notable chefs



on the first season of Bravo's Top Chef Masters; and appeared as Iron Chef Asian, in the first incarnation of Iron Chef USA.

In 2004, he launched a "Roy Yamaguchi" brand of cookware sold on the Home Shopping Network. Partnering with Ajinomoto North America in 2011, Yamaguchi developed a "Roy Yamaguchi" food product line for national distribution. He has published four cookbooks: Pacific Bounty, Roy's Feasts from Hawaii, Hawaii Cooks: Flavors from Roy's Pacific Rim Kitchen, and Roy's Fish and Seafood.

Yamaguchi's personal influence and community involvement have placed him among the most influential chefs in the nation. He gave the

commencement speech to the 1996 graduating CIA class and in 2009 was elected to its Board of Trustees. In 2011, Yamaguchi was nominated by the late U.S. Senator Daniel Inouye and earned a political appointment under the Obama administration to the board of the Corporation for Travel Promotion, now known as Brand USA. He is one of 11 board members and has used his culinary and travel experience to help develop policies and strategies to promote the U.S. as a premiere travel destination. He is also part of the U.S. Department of State's American Chef Corps, a network of chefs from across the U.S. who have agreed to be resources and elevate the role of culinary engagement in America's formal and public diplomacy efforts.

Yamaguchi founded and chairs, along with Chef Alan Wong, the Hawaii Food & Wine Festival, which has become Hawaii's premiere food and wine event. He established the Tom and Warren Matsuda Scholarship Fund, providing scholarships to attend the Culinary Institute of the Pacific. Founding the Roy's Annual Golf Classic more than 17 years ago, which has raised more than \$400,000 for Imua Family Service. Yamaguchi serves as trustee and/or member of many nonprofit boards, including: U.S. Japan Council, Go For Broke National Education Center, Culinary Institute of the Pacific, Hawaii Culinary Education Foundation, and Good to Grow.

# KENNY ENDO

MASTER TAIKO ARTIST

Kenny Endo is one of the leading artists in contemporary taiko and percussion. He is at the vanguard of this genre, continuing to pave new paths in Japanese drumming even after 40 years as a career taiko artist. A performer, composer, and teacher, Endo is a consummate artist, blending taiko with rhythms influenced from around the world into original melodies and improvisation. He is arguably one of the most versatile musicians in the genre, crossing easily between classical Japanese music and his own neo-traditional, globally inspired variety. Endo is known for his collaborations with artists from many cultures.

Born in Los Angeles and a pioneer in the Asian American cultural renaissance of the 1970s, Endo began his taiko career with LA's groundbreaking Kinnara Taiko, and then with the renowned San Francisco Taiko Dojo. In 1980, he embarked on a decade-long odyssey in his ancestral Japan, studying and performing with the masters of ancient classical drumming (National Living Treasure Bokusei Mochizuki and Saburo Mochizuki), traditional Tokyo festival music (Kenjiro Maru), and ensemble drumming (O Edo Sukeroku Taiko and Osuwa Daiko). He has the honor of receiving a natori (stage name and masters license) in hogaku hayashi (classical drumming) and received the name, Mochizuki Tajiro. Endo received a bachelor's degree in political science from UCLA (1976) and master's degree in music from the University of Hawai'i (1999).

Endo has performed in Australia, Asia, Europe, Africa, and throughout the Americas. In 2013, Endo was a featured artist in the Japan National Theater's prestigious "Nihon no Taiko" concert in Tokyo. He has



recorded nine CDs of original taiko compositions, and was a featured artist on the PBS special, "Spirit of Taiko." Endo has performed for Michael Jackson, Prince, as well as Prince Charles and the late Princess Diana. He opened for The Who, performed a duet with singer Bobby McFerrin, and is featured on the soundtracks for films "Picture Bride," Francis Ford Coppola's "Apocalypse Now," and recorded in a motion capture suit for James Cameron's "Avatar." Endo is proud to have performed and recorded with the band Hiroshima. He has performed with orchestras: Hong Kong Philharmonic, Honolulu Symphony,

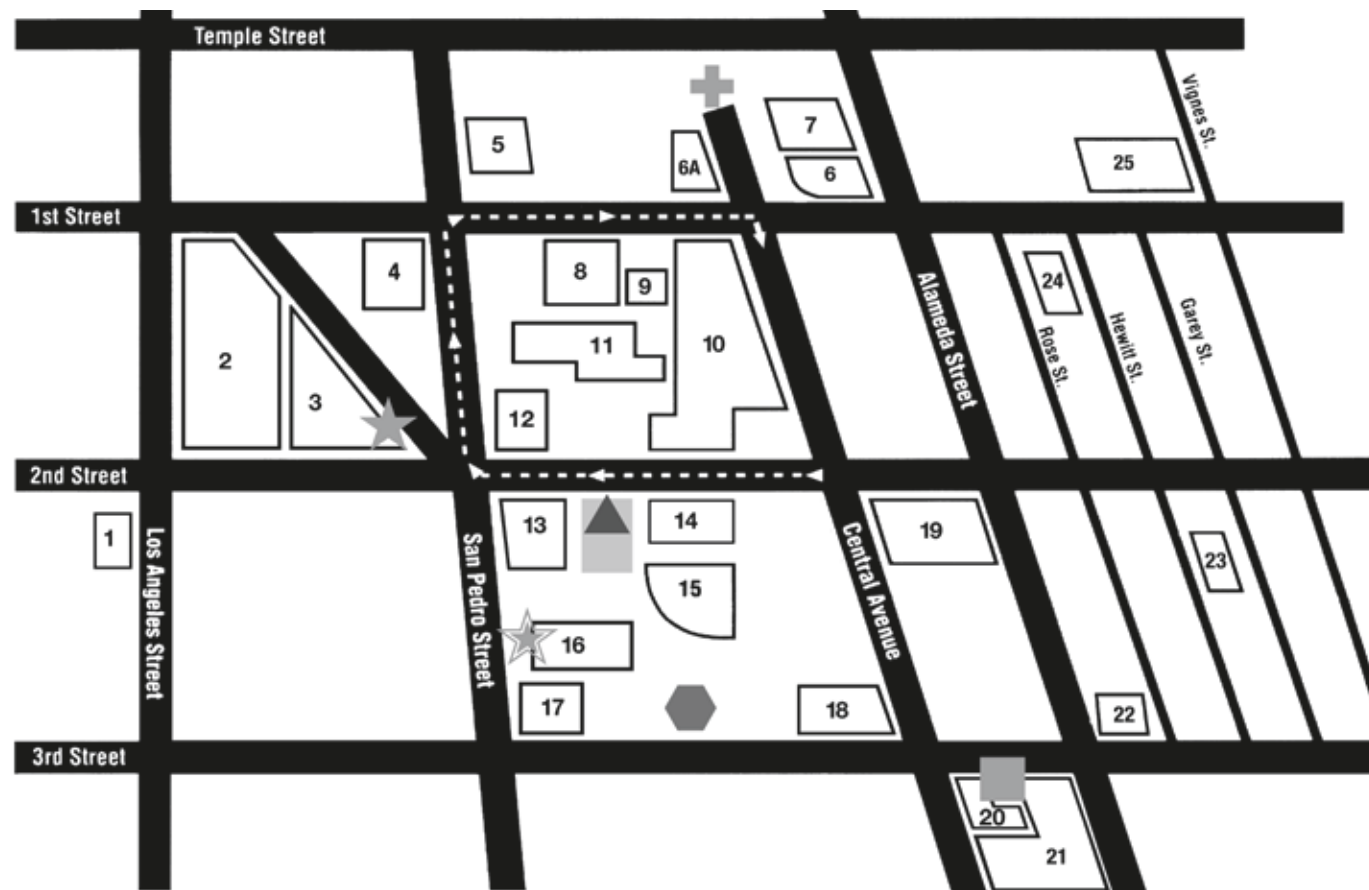
Stanford Symphony, Tokyo Symphony, and Sao Paulo's Orquestra Experimental de Repertorio.

Endo has received commissions to create and tour new work from American Composers Forum, McKnight Foundation, Continental Harmony, Children's Theater Company, Rockefeller Foundation (MAPP), Japan Foundation, Freeman Foundation, Hawai'i State Foundation on Culture and the Arts, Japanese American Cultural and Community Center, Stanford Lively Arts, and Honolulu Mayor's Office of Culture and the Arts.

This year Endo celebrates his 40th year of taiko drumming in the 2015-2016 season with more than 25 concerts across the nation, collaborating with musicians from the U.S. and Japan. He is based in Honolulu where he serves as artistic director for the Taiko Center of the Pacific. Endo is honored to perform on beautiful taiko provided courtesy of Miyamoto Unosuke Shoten of Tokyo. For more information on Kenny Endo, go to [www.kennyendo.com](http://www.kennyendo.com)



# PARADE ROUTE



1. Los Angeles/Little Tokyo Library  
203 S. Los Angeles St.
  2. DoubleTree By Hilton  
Los Angeles Downtown  
120 S. Los Angeles St.
  3. Weller Court  
Astronaut Onizuka St.
  4. California Bank & Trust  
101 S. San Pedro St.
  5. Union Center for the Arts  
120 N. Judge John Aiso St.  
• David Henry Hwang Theater  
• LA Artcore  
• Visual Communications
  6. Japanese American National Museum  
Pavilion (JANM)  
369 E. First St.
  - 6A. The National Center for the  
Preservation of Democracy  
369 E. First St.
  7. Geffen Contemporary at MOCA  
152 N. Central Ave.
  8. Miyako Hotel Los Angeles  
328 E. First St.
  9. Koyasan Buddhist Temple  
342 E. First St.
  10. Japanese Village Plaza  
350 E. First St.
  11. Little Tokyo Mall  
319 E. Second St.
  12. Union Bank  
120 S. San Pedro St.
  13. Manufacturers Bank  
200 S. San Pedro St.
  14. Little Tokyo Plaza  
340 E. Second Street
  15. Aratani Theatre  
244 S. San Pedro St.
  16. Japanese American Cultural &  
Community Center (JACCC)  
244 S. San Pedro St.
  17. Union Church of Los Angeles  
401 E. Third St.
  18. Higashi Hongwanji Buddhist  
Temple  
505 E. Third St.
  19. Honda Plaza  
Second St. & Central Ave.
  20. Centenary United Methodist  
Church  
300 S. Central Ave.
  21. Little Tokyo Galleria  
Third & Alameda Streets
  22. The Rafu Shimpō  
701 E. Third St., Suite 130
  23. St. Francis Xavier Japanese  
Catholic Center  
222 S. Hewitt St.
  24. Zenshuji Soto Mission  
123 S. Hewitt St.
  25. Nishi Hongwanji Buddhist  
Temple  
815 E. First St.
- ▲ Little Tokyo Towers
  - ✚ Go for Broke Monument  
Japanese American National  
Museum and Geffen  
Contemporary at MOCA
  - ★ Astronaut Ellison S. Onizuka  
Memorial
  - ▲ Frances K. Hashimoto Plaza
  - ★ National Japanese American  
Veteran Memorial Court  
244 S. San Pedro St.
  - Nikkei Veterans Monument  
Little Tokyo Square  
Third & Alameda Streets

# 2015 PARADE CHOREOGRAPHERS

## BANDO RYU

LOS ANGELES BANDO RYU JAPANESE CLASSICAL DANCE GROUP

The Bando School of Japanese Classical Dance is headquartered in Tokyo and was established there in the early 1800s. There are branch studios in the United States, including Los Angeles, the first of which opened in the 1940s.

Many years ago former headmaster of the Bando School in Tokyo, the late Bando Mitsugoro IX, was a Nisei Week Festival Parade Marshal. His son, the late Bando Mitsugoro X, famed Kabuki actor, television star, and headmaster of the Bando School until his untimely passing earlier this year, had a vision to preserve the art of Japanese classical dance in the Los Angeles area. He gave the blessing for the establishment

of a combined group of Los Angeles Bando branch studios, the Los Angeles Bando Ryu Japanese Classical Dance Group.

The L.A. Bando Ryu Group is currently comprised of four studios: Bando Mitsusa Kai of Los Angeles and San Jose, which was headed by Madame Mitsusa Bando until her passing last year; Bando Mitsuhiro Kai; Bando Hidesomi Nihon Buyo under the direction of Bando Hidesomi; and Mai No Kai Japanese Dance Studio under the direction of Bando Hirosozu, Bando Kohiro, and Bando Hiromiya. Bando Hidesomi Nihon Buyo and Mai No Kai were both established by protégés of Madame Mitsuhiro.



Bando Mitsusa



Bando Mitsuhiro



Bando Hidesomi



Bando Hirosozu





# 2015 CULTURAL EXHIBITS, SPORTS AND MARTIAL ARTS

Displays of traditional Japanese and Japanese American arts are featured throughout the Japanese American Cultural & Community Center (JACCC) building, 244 S. San Pedro St., Japanese American National Museum (JANM), 100 North Central Ave., Higashi Honganji, 505 East Third St., and other locations in Little Tokyo. Presented with support from the City of Los Angeles Department of Cultural Affairs.



## WEEK 1—AUG 15 - 16

**Jidai: Timeless Works of Samurai Art**  
Exhibition of rare and historically significant samurai swords, fittings and armor from Los Angeles collections  
Aug 1 - 30 at Japanese American National Museum (JANM)  
See JANM hours

**Kimekomi Japanese Dolls – Yukari-kai**  
Dolls with hand-made and hand-painted porcelain heads and dressed in beautiful Japanese fabric  
10 am - 5 pm  
JACCC

**Ikebana**  
Traditional Japanese flower arrangement  
10 am - 5 pm  
JACCC George J. Doizaki Gallery

**California Japanese Ceramics Guild**  
Exhibition of ceramic works by members of the California Japanese Ceramic Arts Guild  
10 am - 5 pm  
JACCC Garden Room A

**Tea Ceremony: Urasenke School of Tea**  
10 am - 5 pm  
JACCC South Gallery

**Japanese American Korean War Veterans**  
10 am - 5 pm  
JACCC Veranda

**36th Annual Ai-Seki Club Gem and Jewelry Show**  
Taisho Club exhibition and sale of gems, jewelry, rocks, and minerals  
10 am - 4 pm  
Higashi Honganji

## WEEK 2—AUG 22 - 23

**“Celebrating 36 Years of Photography”**  
U.S. 101 Photo Club  
Sat, Aug 22 10 am - 5 pm  
Sun, Aug 23 10 am - 3 pm  
Little Tokyo Towers, Community Room



Toyo Miyatake

**Kimekomi Dolls – Hirofumi-kai**  
Authentic hand-crafted Japanese dolls  
10 am - 5 pm  
JACCC Garden Room B

**Beikoku Shodo Kenkyu-kai**  
Japanese Calligraphy  
10 am - 5 pm  
JACCC Garden Room A

**Bonsai Exhibit Nanpu kai**  
10 am - 5 pm  
JACCC George J. Doizaki Gallery

**Sashiko Japanese Needlecraft**  
Embroidery and kimono dressing exhibit with demonstration; open to anyone interested in learning about *sashiko*, a form of Japanese needlecraft  
10 am - 5 pm  
JACCC Pioneer Center Rm 311

**Kawai Sumie**  
Japanese brush painting  
10 am - 5 pm  
JACCC Garden Room B

**Nisei Week Shigin Taikai**  
Aug 30  
9 am - 4 pm  
Quiet Cannon Restaurant

## NIKKEI GAMES

**July 19 - August 30**  
Schedule varies,  
please visit [Nikkeigames.org](http://Nikkeigames.org)



## MARTIAL ARTS

**Shotokan Karate Exhibition and Tournament**  
Aug 15  
11 am - 1:30 pm  
Cal Tech, Braun Gymnasium

# 2015 CALENDAR OF EVENTS

## NISEI WEEK JAPANESE FESTIVAL TRADITIONAL EVENTS

July 19 (Sun)  
**Nisei Week Japanese Festival Opening Ceremony**  
(Invitation only)\*

August 1 (Sat)  
**Baby Show** 9 am - 3 pm\*  
Centenary United Methodist Church

August 15-16 (Sat - Sun)  
**Festival at JACCC** 11 am - 6 pm  
[www.jaccc.org](http://www.jaccc.org)

August 15 (Sat)  
**Nisei Week Rubik's Cube Open** 8 am - 1 pm  
JACCC Plaza

**Golden Circle Dinner** 5 pm (Dinner)\*  
DoubleTree by Hilton Los Angeles Downtown

**Coronation** 7 pm\*  
JACCC/Aratani Theatre

August 16 (Sun)  
**Grand Parade** 5:30 pm  
Little Tokyo

August 17 (Mon)  
**Awards Dinner** 6 pm\*  
DoubleTree by Hilton Los Angeles Downtown

August 19 (Wed)  
**Pioneer Luncheon** 11:30 am\*  
DoubleTree by Hilton Los Angeles Downtown

August 22-23 (Sat - Sun)  
**Festival at JACCC** Sat 11 am - 6 pm  
[www.jaccc.org](http://www.jaccc.org) Sun 11 am - 4 pm

August 22 (Sat)  
**Day-Lee Foods** 12 - 2 pm  
**World Gyoza Eating Championship**  
JACCC Plaza

August 23 (Sun)  
**Dai-Dengaku Theatrical Performance** 2 - 3 pm  
JACCC Plaza

**Dai-Dengaku Street Dance** 4 - 4:30 pm  
1st Street

**Ondo and Closing Ceremony** 4 pm  
1st Street

## NISEI WEEK JAPANESE FESTIVAL CALENDAR OF COMMUNITY EVENTS

July 8 (Wed)  
**JACN Dodgers' Night** 7:10 pm\*  
(vs Philadelphia Phillies)

August 1 (Sat)  
**Orange County Sansei Singles Dance** 7 - 11pm\*  
Music by Kokoro Band  
Gardena Elks • 1735 W. 162nd St • Gardena  
Light appetizers served

August 9 (Sun)  
**Matsui Makoto and US Friends Show** 1 pm\*  
Famous Japan character actor/dancer to debut in LA  
For info: 213.819.4100/info@culturalnews.com  
JACCC/Aratani Theatre

August 14 (Fri)  
**Tanabata Festival Opening Ceremony** 5 pm  
For info: 213.613.1911/tanabatalosangeles.org  
@Geffen MOCA/JANM area

August 15 - 16 (Sat - Sun)  
**Tanabata Festival**  
**Saturday 11 am - 9 pm and Sunday 11 am - 5 pm**  
Including Rokkon-sai performances/workshop  
(Central Avenue @ Geffen MOCA/JANM area)

**Nisei Week Book Faire** 11 am - 6 pm  
Panel discussions, book signings  
[www.jaccc.org](http://www.jaccc.org); JACCC

August 15 (Sat)  
**JANM Natsumatsuri Family Festival** 11 am - 5 pm  
JANM

August 15 (Sat)  
**Nisei Week Car Show** 12 pm - 6:30 pm\*  
Aiso Parking Garage • 101 Judge John Aiso St., Los Angeles

**Rakugo** 1 - 3 pm  
(classic Japanese comedic storytelling)  
Miyako Hotel Banquet Room

August 16 (Sun)  
**Rokkon-sai performances** (Tohoku "spirit" performances)  
JACCC/Aratani Theatre

**Queen's Reunion** - JANM (Invitation only)\*

October 10 (Sat)  
**Nisei Week Variety Show**  
For info: [btakahashi@gmail.com](mailto:btakahashi@gmail.com)  
JACCC/Aratani Theatre\*

**Events are mostly held at the following locations, unless otherwise noted:**

- **Japanese American National Museum (JANM)**  
100 N. Central Avenue, Los Angeles, CA 90012
- **Japanese American Cultural & Community Center (JACCC)**  
244 S. San Pedro Street, Los Angeles, CA 90012
- **Centenary United Methodist Church**  
300 S. Central Avenue, Los Angeles, CA 90013
- **DoubleTree by Hilton Los Angeles Downtown**  
120 S. Los Angeles Street, Los Angeles, CA 90012

\*Fees and/or registration required.





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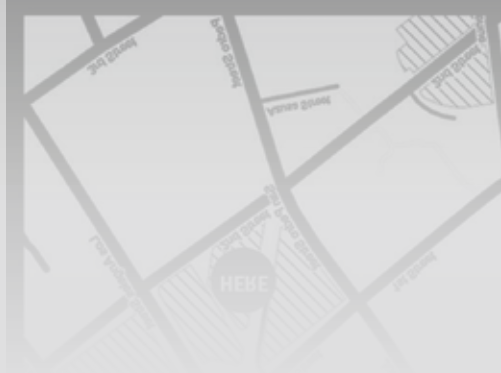


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# RICHARD YUTAKA FUKUHARA

**R**ichard Yutaka Fukuhara was born on August 20, 1944, at Camp Minidoka, Idaho. In September 1945, like the thousands of internees, the Fukuhara family of five returned to Los Angeles with two suitcases. Fukuhara's dad found housing in one of the mini trailers previously occupied by military personnel in Long Beach. His father managed to resume his gardening business and later opened M'Hara Nursery in Long Beach.

Fukuhara attended Long Beach Poly High School, and majored in photo journalism at Long Beach City College. He was a part-time sports photographer for the Long Beach Press Telegram and part-time photographer for Memorial Hospital of Long Beach while being a full-time student.

In 1966, Fukuhara was drafted into the U.S. Army and was a staff photographer at Fort Huachuca, Arizona, before being transferred to Fort Lewis, Washington, to join the 75th Engineers Battalion as a unit photographer. Because of logistical equipment problems the 75th never deployed to Vietnam and stayed stateside.

After his military obligation, Fukuhara attended UCLA and the Art Center School of Design. In 1970 he opened Fukuhara, Inc. Photography studio in Signal Hill. His client list included Toyota, Nissan, IBM, Exxon, Occidental Petroleum, Hunt Wesson Foods, Baskin-Robbins, and Bumble Bee, to name a few.

For the past 25 years Fukuhara has devoted his time to community service and art. He credits his parents as role models for his community involvement. His father, Henry Kiyososhi Fukuhara, received the Order of the Sacred Treasure, Silver Rays, from the emperor of Japan in 1991. His mother, Mary Sadako Fukuhara, was recognized as the



1987 Long Beach Woman of the Year.

Fukuhara's community involvement includes: El Toro Young Marines, Orange County Junior Orchestra, Long Beach Japanese Cultural Center, Orange County Optimists, Kokoro Taiko of Long Beach, Nikkei Games, "Games for the Generations" Love to Nippon, Los Angeles Tanabata Festival, and Los Angeles Nagoya Sister City Affiliation. He was an active member of the Irvine Chamber of Commerce Ambassadors for six years, serving as co-chair and recognized as the "Irvine Ambassador of the Year" for three consecutive years. Fukuhara was an advisor to the USC Institute for Genetic

Medicine Art Gallery, and president of the Nanka Yamaguchi Kenjinkai for three years, currently serving as an advisor. He is a contributing writer/photographer for Rafu Shimpō.

As an artist, Fukuhara has had many solo and group exhibitions locally, and two solo exhibitions in Japan. His current project, "Shadows for Peace, for the Sake of the Children, the Hiroshima and Nagasaki Experience" through forums, artwork, and dance has been presented at colleges throughout the southland. In March 2015, it was hosted by the Japanese American National Museum and presented by Orange County Optimists to recognize the 70th anniversary of the atomic bomb.

Fukuhara enjoys learning, creating, and educating. His greatest joy is hearing the laughter of happy children, "our most important treasurers."

He is the proud father of Julia, 33, a children's oncology nurse at Rady Children's Hospital San Diego, and Derek, 32, a professional skateboarder and photographer.

# TOSHIO HANDA

**T**oshio Handa was born in Tokyo in 1942. After graduating from Keio University's School of Business in 1965, he began his career at ITOCHU Corporation, eventually moving to Pasadena to manage the Aircraft Department for ITOCHU Corporation Los Angeles. Returning once to Japan, he came back to the U.S. in 1981 with his family and began his private trading company until his retirement in 2011.

Once his company became successful, Handa started participating in various Japanese American organizations and actively contributed to the community. Since most Japanese American organization events were held in the South Bay area, he organized the first Pasadena seminar in 2003, which continued for more than 10 years, providing the Japanese community in the north-eastern region of L.A. with valuable opportunities to attend lectures on current affairs and social exchange.

With his Japanese pride and love for Japan, Handa has spent many years enlightening the community and spreading Japanese culture in the greater Los Angeles area.

After serving in many key posts in the Japanese Chamber of Commerce of Southern California, Handa served as president for three years, hosting various events to develop Japanese American community and promote friendly relations with the general public in the United States. During his third year as president, the Great East Japan Earthquake struck. Handa, taking leadership, gathered the Japanese American community and through his efforts raised a total of \$560,000 in donations, all sent to the disaster area through UNICEF. He continues his annual



visitation of the disaster area, nurturing his relations with local people.

Handa became president of the Japanese Community Pioneer Center in 2014. His efforts include the offering of welfare services to elderly Japanese Americans, including taxi coupons and cultural classes. In addition, Handa has helped provide operational support for the Nikkei Helpline, which is the heart and soul of the Japanese people, as it is the sole provider of support in Japanese in North America. He has donated all profits from his Pasadena seminars and has hosted events, including benefit concerts, to raise funds for the Nikkei Helpline.

Handa has contributed to a wide variety of organizations, such as the Chado Urasenke Tankokai Orange County Association, Japanese American Cultural and Community Center, Little Tokyo Community Council, Japanese Prefectural Association of Southern California, Beikoku Shodo Kenkyukai, L.A. Tokyo-kai, Taisho Club, and Japan America Society of Southern California, making his activities an integral part of the community. As a reflection of his tremendous contribution to the community, Handa received the Commendation of the Consul General of Japan in Los Angeles in spring 2014. In fall 2014, Handa was awarded with a Decoration of the Order of the Rising Sun, Gold and Silver rays, from the Government of Japan for his contributions to the promotion of Japan-US relations and revitalization of the Japanese American community in Southern California.

Handa and his wife, Toshiko, have two children and two grandchildren in California.



# KAY KAYOKO INOSE

Third generation Japanese American, Kay Kayoko Inose, has served the Japanese American community for nearly 30 years. Inose, who was born in Long Beach California, is the eldest of three children born to Takeo and Shizuye Sakai. During World War II the Sakai family evacuated inland to Utah where she spent four years.

Inose worked with her husband, Ken, in their family wholesale nursery plant business in Gardena until their retirement in 1986. Just before they closed the doors of their business, Col. Young Oak Kim and Bruce Kaji recruited Inose to serve on the board of the Japanese American National Museum. This was the start of her volunteering.

From 1987 Inose served as vice president of the JANM Board of Trustees where she served on various committees, including the selection committee that hired Executive Director Irene Hirano and the museum logo. She was involved with refurbishing the former Nishi Hongwanji Buddhist Temple, which became JANM. As administration chair, Inose created the first Policy and Procedures Manual for the museum. She also served on the first Presidents Council, attended the first annual dinner, and helped with fundraising and many other capacities until 1997.

While volunteering with JANM, she became involved with the Asia America Symphony Guild, a nonprofit organization bridging the West and East through music while focusing on giving musical opportunities to youth. She has served as president of the Guild, golf fundraising chair for many years, and Bravo dinner co-chair. She participated in the chorus of the Disney Concert Hall performance with the Asia America Symphony Orchestra.



Learning Japanese customs and culture was influenced by her mother-in-law. Inose appreciated her heritage and was encouraged to earn her teaching credentials in Ikebana and Japanese Tea Ceremony. She continues to teach tea ceremony twice a week, and participates in community demonstrations and events. She served as executive director of the Omotesenke Domonkai Southern California branch with more than 200 members from across the U.S. and Canada. Inose escorted 32 Chanoyu members to Kyoto for participation at Daitokuji Temple for Omotesenkes' special anniversary event.

While serving as president of the Japanese Women's Society of Southern California (JWSSC), she was instrumental in securing a nonprofit status for the 111-year-old organization. Inose chaired the first scholarship distribution and she continues to support its annual volunteering in Little Tokyo community events. She was able to greet the Crown Prince Naruhito when he visited Los Angeles. Inose also serves on the Nichi Bei Fujinkai board, Beikoku Shodo Kenkyukai advisor, and is past president of Rolling Hills Country Club Women's Golf Club. She still enjoys traveling around the world. Recognition for her services include: Women of the Year, JWSSC Award, Bravo Award, and most recently she was selected a community representative to meet Prime Minister Shinzo Abe. Inose enjoys volunteering and also feels the importance of giving and sharing our heritage while living our lives in the United States.

She has been married to Ken for 54 years. They have a son and daughter, and two grandchildren.

# MADAME KATSUKIYO MATSUMAE III

Madame Katsukiyo Matsumae III, was born in August 1938 in Oita Prefecture, Japan. In 1964 she married Kiyoshi Monji and moved to the United States. She became a member of the Japanese Minyo (folk song) Group, Matsumae-kai. She studied Minyo under Madame Matsumae Katsukiyo II. In 1983, after only five years of intense training, Monji earned the credential of Natori (stage name earner).

From 1988 -1996 she started teaching Minyo in San Diego and established classes in Orange County, Covina, and Mira Mesa. In 1989, Monji debuted as a Natori teacher at the Japan America Theater in Little Tokyo. In 1995, Monji celebrated the fifth anniversary of the establishment of the San Diego class at San Diego Western University. Sasaki Kazuneka, head of the Kasune School, and Japanese dancer Fujimura Tsurutoyo of the Fuji school came from Japan to attend the events for the occasion. Additionally, in 1995, following the sudden passing of Madame Matsumae Katsukiyo II, Monji succeeded her as Madame Matsumae Katsukiyo III. She was officially introduced to the community as Madame Matsumae Katsukiyo III at a special event held at the New Otani in 1996.

In 2002, Matsumae-kai held a special the 40th anniversary celebration and Kazune-kai and Fuji-no-



kai from Japan attended. Matsumae Katsukiyo III received a special award from the San Diego Women's Forum for her cultural contributions in 2003. She participated in a special performance with Matsumae-kai students at the 2003, 20th anniversary celebration of the Kazune-kai held in Yamato City, Kanagawa Prefecture. In 2012, Matsumae-kai held its 50th anniversary celebration and once again Kazune-kai and Fuji-no-kai both attended from Japan.

In 2013, with 12 Matsumae-kai students, Madame Matsumae Katsukiyo III traveled to Japan to participate in a special charity performance sponsored

by Kazune-kai in Matsushima City, Miyagi Prefecture to help the Eastern Japan Earthquake Relief.

Madame Matsumae Katsukiyo III has been the chief secretary of the Matsumae-kai headquartered in Tokyo since 1996. She has made tireless efforts not only in teaching and spreading of Minyo in the United States, but has always participated and helped with the various Japanese community events. Currently, Matsumae-kai has three Shihan (teacher), one Junshihihan (associate teacher), and 10 Natori. She continues to teach two Los Angeles classes, and three San Diego classes.





# GEORGE TAKAMASA NAGATA

George Takamasa Nagata was born in Gardena, California in 1924 to Matasaburo and Yatsu Nagata from Kumamoto, Japan. During his youth, he assisted his father farming strawberries, blackberries, and assorted vegetables. In 1942, Nagata and his family were evacuated and interned in Poston, Arizona. Leaving camp, he relocated to Chicago in 1943. The family subsequently moved to Oceanside, California once Japanese Americans were allowed to move back to California, where he continues to reside today.

Nagata's most influential contributions have been to the agriculture industry, as he was critical to the innovation and development of novel techniques in strawberry and tomato production. One of the key periods in his career was in 1951 when he went to University of California, Davis, to create a Southern California field station to assist in strawberry growing. Meetings with Nagata, other farmers, and elected officials were held to petition the California legislature for a field station in Southern California. This led to the creation of the Torrey Pines Strawberry Research Center, which was later moved to Irvine. Many California strawberry varieties were developed at these centers and helped to make the California strawberry industry one of the primary producers of strawberries worldwide.

Many of the growing practices that Nagata experimented and adapted are now standard practices. First, Nagata worked with researchers to become one of the earliest adapters of the drip irrigation system. This system is still in use today as it saves water and increases production. In addition, the use of methyl bromide in strawberry fumigation for mites and soil diseases was another technique that he experimented with very early on, which is



still used by farmers today. Through his innovative and experimenting spirit, he planted earlier to accelerate strawberry production in southern California, thus prolonging the strawberry season.

Nagata was also a pioneer in growing fruits and vegetables, specifically strawberries, in Baja, California. Growing in this region was unheard of at the time and very much discouraged, but Nagata believed that the region was the wave of the future. He was correct, and today, there are numerous farms and companies growing in Baja.

Leadership in organizations and associations was also very important to Nagata. He served as a board member

of the San Diego Farm Bureau and the San Diego County Farmers' Bracero program. Nagata became a founding board member of the San Diego County Honorary Deputy Sheriff's Association (HDSA), and was active as an honorary board member in the San Diego HDSA until the 2000s. He also served as a board member and became vice chairman of the California Tomato Advisory Board and was a board member of the California Strawberry Advisory Board.

In addition to his contributions to agriculture, Nagata was also active in the North County San Diego Japanese American community. He organized picnics, dances, parties, and community events for the Issei and Nisei community. His fundraising and leadership skills were also used to assist in the building of the North San Diego County Japanese Community Center and Vista Buddhist Temple.

Nagata has been happily married to Alethea (Yasukochi) for more than 60 years. They have five children: Elaine, Shereen, Lindy, Owen, and Neil.



# DAVID HIROSHI YANAI

David Hiroshi Yanai was born in 1943 at the Manzanar War Relocation Camp in Inyo County, California. He was one of seven children born to Hisataro and Satsuyo Yanai. Following the conclusion of World War II, his family relocated to Gardena, California. He attended Gardena High School and after graduating in 1961, he matriculated to California State University, Long Beach (CSULB).

Upon completion of his studies from CSULB in 1966, Yanai started his teaching and coaching career at Fremont High School in Los Angeles. He coached varsity baseball for two years and varsity basketball for seven years. In the nine years as coach he led Fremont to four league titles, three city finals, and one L.A. City Championship. In 1976, Yanai returned to his alma mater, Gardena High School, and led them to the semi-finals of the L.A. City Championship. In all, Yanai amassed a 120-31 record in his eight-year career as a prep basketball coach.

The steady results at the high school level earned Yanai the head basketball coaching position at California State University, Dominguez Hills (CSUDH) in 1977, where he became the first Japanese American collegiate men's head basketball coach. Success continued for Yanai at the collegiate level. In just his second year, he led Dominguez Hills to a 21-9 record and a berth in the NAIA National Championship Tournament.

The following season, CSUDH made the jump to NCAA Division II by entering the prestigious California Collegiate Athletic Association (CCAA). During Yanai's 19 years at CSUDH, his teams won two CCAA league championships, finished in second place five times, and made three NCAA tournament appearances.

In 1996, Yanai was named men's head basketball



coach at California State University, Los Angeles (CSULA). He led the team to the 1998 and 2000 NCAA Tournaments. His teams recorded 84 wins from 1996 through 2001 (the most wins in a five-year span in CSULA's men's basketball history). In March 2005, Yanai became just the second men's head basketball coach in the history of the CCAA (dating back to 1940) to reach 400 wins. Yanai retired one season after this historic milestone.

Yanai's coaching honors include: 1975 Los Angeles City High School Coach of the Year; 1979 NAIA District III Coach of the Year; 1987 and 1988

CCAA Coach of the Year; 1987 NCAA West Region Coach of the Year; 1990 Assistant Coach West Team, United States Olympic Festival; 1999-2003 Chairman, West Region NCAA Basketball Committee; 1987-2007 Coach, Pete Newell Big Man's Camp; 1985-present Advisor/Consultant, Japan National Teams; 2000 Outstanding Coach, John R. Wooden Award; 2009 Aki Komai Memorial Award Recipient; CSUDH named the basketball court, the Dave Yanai Court in 2010.

Yanai's community service includes: founding member of the FOR Club; advisor for the LA Watts Summer Games; clinician for numerous camps and clinics locally as well as in Japan and Taiwan; and he initiated the County of Los Angeles summer sports program with the emphasis on drug prevention.

Yanai attributes his success to a handful of role models and authority figures. Among them are his parents, his older brother Frank, close friend Sho Nojima, his youth coach Mas Fukai, and basketball mentors Pete Newell and John Wooden.

Yanai and his wife, Saeko, have two children, Garrett and Deanne (Keith), and two grandchildren, Ryan and Gavin.



# DICK SAKAHARA

Dick Sakahara had always dreamed of being a veterinarian for his love of animals. Instead he became a graphic illustrator creating creatures from real life and from his imagination, including the design of the Nisei Week Japanese Festival mascot, “Aki the Akita.”

From his birth at Heart Mountain, Wyoming, the only son of the late Henry and Toshiko Sakahara, he grew up in Pasadena surrounded by pet animals. Sakahara completed his bachelor’s and master’s degrees in design at the University of California, Los Angeles, and began working for various design firms in Southern California. After gaining experience and confidence he began freelancing from his home studio, as he continues to do today.

His passion for living creatures grew into a life’s passion for travel around the world to see, in person, those creatures that so captured his imagination. His travels have included nine safaris to Kenya, 12 trips to the jungles and villages of India, Nepal, Madagascar, Ecuador, Burma, Cambodia, Laos, China, and Sri Lanka. “Photo-hunting” big game has allowed him to use this first-hand experience as research for many of his work assignments. He has donated designs for animal rescue, saving sea turtles and river otters.

In addition to his graphic illustrations, Sakahara has infused his design talents into wildlife related jewelry and products. The creation of Aki the Akita was born from his research into Japanese folk tales. He found recurring examples of Japanese animals such as the saru (monkey), kaeru (frog), usagi (rabbit), kuma (bear), and tanuki (raccoon-dog), but ultimately selected the Akita dog for its authentic and unique relationship to Japanese culture.



As Sakahara stated, “Everyone loves a dog!” Sakahara has been able to unite that which he loves with what he does best. His designs are simple but elegant, deeply rooted in the strength of Japanese aesthetics, where less is always more.

Creating Aki the Akita for Nisei Week Foundation as its official festival mascot has brought joy and happiness to thousands of people. Aki the Akita has been invited to appear at countless community events for more than 18 years and is loved by children and adults alike.

Sakahara’s innate sense of design and his lifelong passion for living creatures has developed into an ability to design and illustrate mascots and creatures like very few others anywhere in the world. With a career spanning more than 40 years, he has creates mascots and logos for:



Atlanta Hawks, WNBA’s Lynx, MLB’s Pittsburgh Pirates and Chicago Cubs, plus numerous collegiate teams. Sakahara has also done work for: Disneyland and Disney Products, American, Delta and Northwest Airlines, Miller and Anheuser Busch Brewing Companies, Reebok, RJ Reynolds, American Express, Milton Bradley Toys, Kikkoman Foods, Crazy Shirts of Hawaii, San Diego and Singapore Zoos. A multitude of Los Angeles area companies and restaurants have icons that bear that “Sakahara” touch.

He and his wife, Arleen, live amidst their folk art collection in Rancho Palos Verdes with Joji and Kuri, their Shiba Inu.

# MICHIE BARBARA SUJISHI

Michie Barbara Sujishi, is a Sansei (third generation Japanese American) born in Burbank, California. As a young child during WWII, Sujishi and her family were sent to the Manzanar incarceration camp. The family subsequently relocated to the Tule Lake camp as her grandfather wanted the family to return to Japan after the war. Sujishi spoke no English when she first moved to Japan and her mother spoke no Japanese. What a pair! The family settled into life in Tottori prefecture. At her mother’s suggestion, after completing high school, Sujishi attended a beauty college in Kamakura, near Tokyo. She excelled in the two-year program and was invited to teach new students after she graduated, which she did for six years. Part of the beauty education in Japan involved learning how to dress and style women for formal events, including kimono dressing.

Sujishi and her mother moved back to the San Fernando Valley in 1963, where she met and married her husband Hisashi in 1964. They had two children, Cathy and Mako. Her involvement with the Nisei Week Japanese Festival began that same year by way of her uncle. Her uncle told his friend Mr. Torii, a kimono shop owner in Little Tokyo, about his talented niece who was an expert kimono dresser. Thus began her 50-plus-year journey of volunteering for Nisei



Week. When daughter Cathy became a teenager, she started helping her mother with dressing the court in kimono for the Nisei Week festivities.

While Sujishi started as a kimono dresser, her volunteer career with Nisei Week expanded over the years to include being: queen chair, chaperone, kimono and Japanese etiquette trainer. Her professional career also took off. In addition to doing many wedding and event makeup and hairstyling, Sujishi worked on films (Karate Kid), commercials (Kool-Aid) and television (The Andy Williams show). After working at several salons in the San Fernando Valley, she opened her own

salon, Michie’s Place, in Van Nuys in 1995. She still owns and operates the salon today, using only the finest hair products. She is a master hair colorist for Goldwell, having completed additional education with the company.

Sujishi loves furthering her education, be it in learning the latest styles, treatments, and trends in hair to traveling to Japan to continue to learn about the art of kimono dressing. Her passions outside of making people feel and look beautiful include: singing, going to the theatre with friends, traveling, and enjoying her four wonderful grandchildren. She is grateful to give back to her cultural heritage by sharing her natural talents.



# Congratulations Nisei Week Foundation on the 75th Annual Nisei Week Japanese Festival!

*Let the Good Times Roll as you celebrate your Diamond Jubilee!*



JACCC is honored to be a longtime partner with Nisei Week, sharing the common bond of promoting Japanese and Japanese American arts and culture to diverse audiences.

Japanese American Cultural & Community Center  
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# CELEBRATING 56 YEARS: The Los Angeles Nagoya Sister City Relationship

At the corner of City Hall, between Little Tokyo and the Civic Center is Los Angeles' Sister City Monument. This monument lists the names of 25 sister cities to Los Angeles. Nagoya, Japan is proudly listed first. In addition, the monument lists the distance between those cities to Los Angeles. The distance from LA to Nagoya is shown at 5,633 miles (9,065 kilometers).



Los Angeles sister city street signs.

Los Angeles and Nagoya became sister cities in March 1959 and over the past 56 years have undertaken many cultural, educational, and civic exchange programs that have reduced the geographical distance between them to enrich the lives of the citizens of both cities. In 2014, Nagoya and Los Angeles celebrated the 55th anniversary of their sister city relationship by holding the first Nagoya Day at the Grove in Los Angeles. The cities share some commonalities; they both are large commercial cities with major port facilities.

## Los Angeles Nagoya Sister City Affiliation

Los Angeles Sister City Affiliation (LANSCA) is a nonprofit organization established in 1965 comprised of individuals and corporate volunteers to assist the City of Los Angeles and the Mayor of Los Angeles in the activities and functions that surround its sister city relationship with Nagoya.

The primary goal of the sister city program is to foster mutual understanding between the



Mayor Kobayashi/Mayor Poulson's Sister City proclamation (Left) and City of Los Angeles Resolution (Right).

peoples of Los Angeles and Nagoya through people-to-people exchanges. These exchanges allow individuals to make contacts with their counterparts abroad and learn for themselves the facts and realities of the citizens in their sister city, not just the differences, but the many similarities. Some of the programs include: cultural exchanges, educational exchanges, and delegation visits.

## Minami Otsudori Shopping Street Promotion Association Pure O2 (PyuaO2)

Minami-Otsu Dori is one of the most active city centers in Nagoya, extending to the north and south of the city. Merchants and local business owners along the street formed the Minami Otsudori Shopping Street Promotion Association (PyuaO2) association in 1963. This association is noted for its vision for the future growth and prosperity of the area by organizing popular events and programs. Many of their endeavors go beyond the area and enhance the larger Nagoya region.

In 1981 PyuaO2, the association's nickname, formed a "sister" organization partnership with the Little Tokyo Business Association (LTBA) and jointly established business enhancement programs in 1989. The efforts of community volunteers, especially the late Frances Hashimoto who represented LTBA, and the late Aikira Katsuda who represented PyuaO2, created strong ties enhanced by organizing "nigiwai" or prosperous activities in their communities. This year marks the 34th anniversary of this collaboration.

## Nisei Week Japanese Festival

The Nisei Week Foundation has a long standing relationship with LANSCA with the Nisei Week Japanese Festival playing host to the Nagoya goodwill delegation each August for many years. The delegation participates in the Nisei Week Grand Parade, Queen Coronation, and other events. PyuaO2 and LTBA also host various networking and outreach events during the festival.

## Participation in Nagoya Matsuri

As members of LANSCA, the goodwill delegates from the City of Los Angeles, Nisei Week Queen and court, and the LTBA representatives, visit Nagoya during the Nagoya Festival every year in October. They participate in the Sister City Festival, Sister City Reception and join in the Nagoya Festival parade. PyuaO2 also hosts several events and activities for the visiting delegation in Nagoya.

All of these activities and exchanges foster a strong and dynamic relationship between Nagoya and Los Angeles. By building these important sister city relationships, the future looks bright that goodwill will carry on for many more years to come.



2009 Nisei Week &amp; LANSCA delegation.

## ロサンゼルス名古屋姉妹都市委員会 (LANSCA、ランスカ)

ランスカは個人及び法人のボランティアを主体とする非営利公益法人として、文化交流、相互理解のための各種事業に携わっており、二世週祭もその一員として、毎年名古屋で行われる姉妹都市の集まり、名古屋まつりに参加している。



## 二世週祭と二世週クィーン・コート

ロサンゼルス二世週祭においては、名古屋市の代表団は二世週クィーン選出のコロネーションや様々なイベント、展示会、そして二世週グラウンド・パレードに参加し、また、祭りの期間中には、ピュアO2もLTBAと協力し、各所で交流イベントが催されます。

## 名古屋まつりへの参加

姉妹都市委員会の主導により、ロサンゼルス市代表団、二世週祭クィーン、プリンセス等代表団一行、リトル東京実業協会代表等、毎年10月に開催される名古屋まつりに合わせて来名し、シスターシティ・フェスティバルや姉妹友好都市親善使節団歓迎レセプション、名古屋まつりパレードに参加し、ロサンゼルスと名古屋との交流を深めている。

なお、この他にもロサンゼルス交歓高校生プログラム、大学間交流、東山動物園とロサンゼルス動物園との姉妹動物園交流、名古屋港との交流(ロサンゼルス港)など様々な活動がおこなわれている。



ロサンゼルスと名古屋市の姉妹都市の歴史は1959年4月1日にさかのぼる。両方の都市にとって、お互い最初の姉妹都市となったこともあり、お互い関係はより強いものになった。そして、昨年、2014年には、名古屋・ロサンゼルス姉妹都市提携55周年の行事が盛大に行われ、今後ともお互いの強い絆を大切にすることを誓い合った。

リトルトーキョーに近接するロサンゼルス市の市庁舎横にはロサンゼルスとの姉妹都市にあたる各都市の名前、方向や距離を示すモニュメント(写真)があるが、この表示された25都市の中で名古屋が最古のものである。そして、そこで表示されている5,633 マイル(9,012 km)という距離を越えてロサンゼルスと名古屋市の友好関係は続いている。これは、名古屋市とロサンゼルス市が両市とも大きな商工都市であり、そして優秀な施設を誇る大港湾都市であるといった共通点があることが理由である。それにより、二世週祭、名古屋まつりの交流等各種交流が活発に行われている。

## 南大津通商店街振興組合(PyuaO2、ピュアO2)

名古屋市の中心を南北に貫く南大津通エリアの南大津通商店街振興組合は1963年に設立された。時代に先駆けたイベントを積極的に取り組み、商店街の枠組みを越えた新たな息吹を地域に吹き込んでいる大変活発な地域である。1981年には当地リトルトーキョー・ビジネスアソシエーション(LTBA)と姉妹提携し、お互いの発展の為に交流がはじまった。なお、1989年には一般公募によりこれまでの南大津通商店街振興組合に愛称「ピュアO2」を採用した。両市に「にぎわい」を作るべく、ピュアO2の故勝田 明さん、LTBAの故フランシス・ハシモトさん等の先人が育ててきた両団体の絆は強い。このLTBAとの毎年実業レベルでの交流も今年で34周年となり、前述の都市レベルでの姉妹都市の関係を民間レベルでサポートする・・・と、言った多岐にわたる協力関係は今後の発展がおおいに期待されている。



## 2015 FRANCES K. HASHIMOTO COMMUNITY SERVICE AWARD

### EAST SAN GABRIEL VALLEY JAPANESE COMMUNITY CENTER

The East San Gabriel Valley Japanese Community Center (ESGVJCC) bridges culture, family, and community, and stands as a vibrant Japanese American regional cultural and community organization that spans across the greater Los Angeles County, Inland Empire, and Orange County. It is home to more than 25 cultural, educational, artistic, recreational, and social programs serving more than 1,000 families.

Established in 1936 and incorporated as a nonprofit organization in 1951, the ESGVJCC now bridges outward and partners with the City of West Covina to host the annual West Covina Cherry Blossom Festival. It also works with the Sister City Association of West Covina and Ohtawara, Japan, and participates in the annual summer student exchange program between the two cities. It bridges Japanese American



organizations, civic officials, performing artists, campus clubs, and educational institutions to collaborate on the design and delivery of innovative and essential programs and services for the community, including the annual Family Health Fair with California State Senator

Dr. Ed Hernandez. The ESGVJCC has also sponsored the Nisei Week Japanese Festival's queen program for 34 years, the longest serving sponsor of the program.

The future of the ESGVJCC is reflected by the dynamic combination of the increasing diversity within the Japanese American community, the broad attraction to Japanese cultural traditions, and involvement in community-based social services, artistic, recreational, and educational programs. The ESGVJCC continues to remain a bridge, open to all to experience, celebrate, and be inspired by the beauty, uniqueness, and joy of the Japanese American culture.

## 2015 FRANCES K. HASHIMOTO COMMUNITY SERVICE AWARD

### JAPANESE RESTAURANT ASSOCIATION OF AMERICA

The year 1997 marked a beginning of stricter enforcement of laws and regulations by various state and local authorities concerning immigration, payroll, labor, and alcohol service in the food sale and service industry. Additionally, in 1998 the Department of Environmental Health (DEH) began requiring food facilities to have licensed certified professional food managers and specified time and temperature control and monitoring of sushi rice.

A mutual support and discussion group was formed on January 12, 1999 in response to the outpouring of concerns voiced by restaurant owners regarding these regulations. Members of this group included: David Kudo, education chair for the Little Tokyo Business Association, Noritoshi Kanai, president of Mutual Trading Co., and Keisuke Tanaka, chairman of Tanaka Academy. On August 5, 1999, with the support of the Japanese Business Association of



Southern California, Little Tokyo Business Association, various Japanese wholesalers and manufacturers, Japanese Community Health, Inc., and the Yanagisawa Law Firm, the Japanese Restaurant Association (JRA) was established.

The purpose of JRA, which was founded by Japanese restaurant owners and managers, is to exchange ideas and information regarding various aspects of the Japanese food industry in the United States. With the approval and the support of the Japan Consulate, JRA has focused on expanding the American knowledge of Japanese culture and food in addition to assisting JRA members' concerns that arise in the operation of their food service business. JRA continues to be a source of support in providing information to solve operational and management issues as they develop for its members.

### EVENING OPTIMIST CLUB OF GARDENA

The Evening Optimist Club of Gardena (GEO) is in its 51st year of serving originally sponsored by the Japanese and chartered in February 1964. The GEO demonstrates this friendship through GEO Youth Tennis League for kids ages under 19 years of age, Respect For Law a career in law enforcement, and Youth community service are just some of its Youth Home, Junior Blind Olympics, Gardena More information is available on GEO's website at



(popularly known as the Gardena Evening Optimist the communities of the South Bay. GEO was American Optimist Club of Los Angeles (JAO) Optimist Club's motto is "Friend of Youth" and its various youth programs and activities. Its 6 to 10, oratorical and essay contests for kids Scholarships for high school students pursuing Appreciation Awards for students excelling in activities. GEO also actively supports the Optimist Valley Sansei League, and Boy Scout Troop 683. [www.gardenaoptimist.org](http://www.gardenaoptimist.org).

### ORANGE COUNTY NIKKEI COORDINATING COUNCIL

The Orange County Nikkei Coordinating Council (OCNCC) is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit corporation established on May 5, 1994 that serves as an umbrella organization for many of the nonprofit Nikkei community service groups in Orange County. The members of OCNCC are: Orange County Japanese American Association (OCJAA), Orange Coast Optimist Club (OCO), Orange Coast Sports Association (OCSA), Orange County Queen's Council (OCQC), South East Youth Organization (SEYO), Suburban Optimist Club (SOC), and South East Los Angeles/North Orange County Japanese American Citizens League (SELANOCO JACL). By acting as a coordinating entity between its member organizations, OCNCC provides a conduit through which its members can tap into each other's resources to expand the scope and reach of their individual



events, thus allowing them to better serve the community at large.

In addition, OCNCC has taken an active role in organizing the Nikkei Games, through volunteer recruitment, publication, and fundraising. During the Nisei Week Japanese Festival, OCNCC selects the Miss Orange County Japanese American as a nominee to the Nisei Week Court and selects the Orange County Pioneer(s) as the nominee(s) for the Nisei Week Pioneers Awards. The Miss Orange County Japanese American, the Orange County Pioneer and community service award recipients of the member organizations are all honored at OCNCC's annual awards dinner.

OCNCC has endured because of the strength of its member organizations and its many volunteers.



## 2015 FRANCES K. HASHIMOTO COMMUNITY SERVICE AWARD

### PASADENA JAPANESE CULTURAL INSTITUTE

More than 70 years ago on Pasadena's Del Mar St., the Pasadena Japanese Association was home to a Japanese language school and the Pasadena Women's Association. In the 1950s its name was changed to the Pasadena Japanese Community Center, where the Pasadena Gakuen, and judo and kendo dojos were founded. In the mid-1950s, the Crown City Gardeners and Pasadena's venerable Boy Scout Troop 41 also made their homes there.

In the early 1960s, a group of 15 Pasadena Issei pioneers had the vision to realize that the old house on Del Mar Street needed to be replaced, so they raised funds to move the facility and build the Pasadena Japanese Cultural Institute (PJCI) in 1962. In March of that year, the PJCI was incorporated with its primary purpose "to operate and maintain a school or cultural



institute to teach Japanese language, and to conduct studies in the Oriental arts."

Since that time, the PJCI has stayed true to its mission as it continues to be the home to Pasadena Gakuen, as well as to kendo, naginata, aikido, kyudo, karate, and Qi Gong. Traditional Japanese

arts classes such as taiko, odori, and ikebana are taught. The center is also home to the Pasadena Nikkei Seniors, Pasadena Bruins basketball, and hosts an annual student exchange with Pasadena's Sister City, Mishima, Japan. In 2009, the PJCI began sponsoring queen candidates for the Nisei Week Japanese Festival, and has proudly sponsored three Nisei Week Queens: Dana Heatherton, Erika Olsen, and Tori Nishinaka-Leon.

## 2015 FRANCES K. HASHIMOTO COMMUNITY SERVICE AWARD

### VENICE JAPANESE COMMUNITY CENTER

The Venice Japanese Community Center has been serving Westside for nearly 95 years. Its strength and longevity have been shaped by its mission: To preserve, share, and promote the Japanese and Japanese American culture and heritage and provide for the needs and interests of the Japanese American community through education and instruction."

From 35 families in 1921 to a membership of 1,600 in 2015, the VJCC has adapted to changing times and needs. Originally founded to provide cultural activities to its members, the VJCC's role as a mainstay within the community was cemented when, after WWII, it served as a hostel for more than 100 Japanese families and individuals.

There are now 40 organizations at the VJCC, offering a wide range of cultural, martial arts, dance, music, art,



VENICE JAPANESE  
COMMUNITY CENTER, INC.

sports, and service activities. Youth and seniors-oriented programs play a critical role, the former to ensure the VJCC's continued relevance and the latter to address the needs of this growing constituency.

The VJCC facilities are used as an election polling site, meeting place for the Del Rey homeowners association, and a center for Senior Nutrition. It hosts the annual Memorial

Day Service at Woodlawn Cemetery with the Santa Monica Nikkeijin Kai and WLA Japanese Institute of Sawtelle to honor area Issei pioneers and Nisei soldiers who died in WWII and the Korean War. Since 1986, with the WLA JACL, it has co-sponsored a Nisei Week queen candidate. It is a member of the Nikkei Federation and holds educational events with other nonprofits, such as the 2014 Genki caregiving conference with Keiro Senior HealthCare.

### SAN FERNANDO VALLEY JAPANESE AMERICAN COMMUNITY CENTER

On December 12, 1959, San Fernando Valley Japanese American Community Center (SFVJACC) was established by visionaries whose "kizuna" or bond between family and friends was an important mission to maintain after coming back from camp. The farmers donated their entire treasury as seed money for a capital campaign to build a much needed community center.

Welcome to the gathering place! Today, it is a hub of activities for all generations from early morning to late at night with a mainly volunteer staff. The Japanese Language Institute and San Fernando Valley Judo Club work side-by-side with members of the SF Athletics, SF Gardeners, VFW, SFV JACL, churches, and clubs as we look forward to a bright future. A healthy mind and body can grow at SFVJACC with various support groups and services.



SFVJACC activities include ukulele, ping pong, taiko, ikebana, bonsai, fishing, martial arts, ball room dancing, Zumba, yoga, ondo dancing, line dancing, calligraphy, classical dance, bowling, bridge, tai chi, and more. Senior Hot Meals serves lunch on Tuesdays and Fridays when seniors can get together to play hanafuda,

harmonica, mah jong, Hawaiian hula, mandolin, karaoke, shigin, and talk story for hours.

The San Fernando Japanese American Community Center is proud to be the sponsor of the National Parks Service Japanese American Confinement Sites grant for the Tuna Canyon Detention Station.

We invite you to come to our air conditioned facilities and make new friends!

### WEST LOS ANGELES JAPANESE AMERICAN CITIZENS LEAGUE

Seven years after it was founded as a national civil rights organization in 1929, the Japanese American Citizens League (JACL) formed the Bay District JACL, encompassing the Santa Monica, Venice, and West Los Angeles communities.

In 1941, under a restructuring plan, the Bay District dissolved and created three new chapters. Tom Ikuta became the charter president of the West L.A. chapter. But by year's end WW II erupted, which led to the incarceration of Japanese Americans on the West Coast.

The West L.A. chapter was reactivated in November 1947 with Sho Komai serving as its first postwar president. By 1970, the chapter grew to 1,141 members, making it the largest chapter in the JACL's Pacific Southwest District.

In 1958, the chapter formed its Women's Auxiliary and became involved with an international orphanage group, Keiro



Nursing Home, and the Issei Pioneer Project. Its most celebrated project came in 1966, when it collected everyone's favorite recipes, bound them together and printed the East West Flavors cookbook, becoming a kitchen staple in tens of thousands of homes. Proceeds funded various projects, including its scholarship program.

Since the 1950s, the chapter has been involved with the Nisei Week Japanese Festival by sponsoring a queen candidate. Today, the Miss

Western Los Angeles candidate is co-sponsored by the West L.A. JACL and the Venice Japanese Community Center. The chapter continues to serve the Westside community through its scholarship program, recognizing high school honor students and a post-graduate student pursuing a degree in medicine. For the past six years, it has sponsored a food booth at the West Los Angeles Buddhist Temple's Obon Festival.



*Congratulations Nisei Week*



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## Consulate General of Japan in Los Angeles Celebrates Centennial Anniversary



On July 14, 1915, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan announced the opening of the Consulate in Los Angeles. Vice Consul Ujiro Oyama arrived in Los Angeles on August 10 and established the first office in Downtown Los Angeles on the corner of Temple and Spring streets. The initial plan to establish the mission on West 2nd Street was changed due to strong anti-Japanese sentiments in the neighborhood during that time.

The opening of the office was met with jubilation in the community. The Japanese residents of Los Angeles first requested the Japanese government establish a consular post in Los Angeles in 1906, after the San Francisco earthquake led to a large increase in the Japanese American population. After close to 10 years, their wish had finally been granted. A joyous opening ceremony party was held on August 22 at Verdugo Park, with 3,500 attendees.

The consular office jurisdiction included nine Southern California counties and the states of Arizona



and New Mexico. Currently, the same areas remain in the consulate general region, except for New Mexico, which is governed by the Denver Consulate.

The first official function was the celebration of the Enthronement of His Majesty Emperor Taisho, hosted by Vice Consul Oyama, and held at the Ebell Club in November 1915. Dignitaries from throughout Southern California were in attendance, including 550 U.S. guests and 150 Japanese guests.

The first years of the consulate were focused on countering anti-Japanese movements in Southern California and Arizona and resulted in the office having to move several times. After the attack on Pearl Harbor, the consulate was closed. Employees were evacuated to West Virginia on December 7, 1941, and detained until they returned to Japan in June 1942.



Photos courtesy of The Office of The Consulate General of Japan in Los Angeles

In the postwar period, a Japanese government overseas office was opened in May 1950. In April 1952, after the enactment of the San Francisco Peace Treaty, the office was upgraded to become a consulate general. The consul general's residence was established on Orange Grove Boulevard in Pasadena, and the consulate general office on West 6th Street in Downtown Los Angeles. The first Consul General of Japan in Los Angeles was Kenichiro Yoshida.

Since the reestablishment of the consulate mission in 1952, the Consulate General of Japan has worked closely with the people of Southern California and Arizona to continually build stronger Japan-U.S. relations. The vibrant Japanese American community has worked with the consulate general in a mutually supportive relationship, ensuring the region will continue to remain the gateway for Japan to the U.S. and a focal point for bilateral friendship. Current Consul General Harry H. Horinouchi is the 26th consul general serving in the region.







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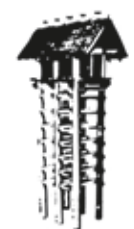


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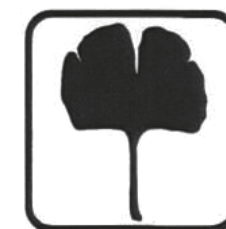
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## Congratulations on your 75th Annual Nisei Week Japanese Festival

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## Congratulations! 75<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Nisei Week Japanese Festival



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By Masao Mike Okamoto

## The Legend of Yoshitsune – 2015 Nebuta Float Design

The 2015 Nebuta float was designed by Japanese Master Nebuta Float Artist Hiroo Takenami especially for the 75th Nisei Week Japanese Festival's Grand Parade. The Nebuta was inspired by Minamoto no Yoshitsune, the famous general of the Minamoto clan in the late Heian and early Kamakura period.

At very end of the 12th century, two samurai clans, Heishi and Genji, had a large battle. In the end, the Genji clan led by Minamoto no Yoritomo, demolished the Heishi clan and Yoritomo became Shogun. He was not the first Shogun, but he was the first Shogun to organize his own government, a Shogunate. It was the beginning of the age of the samurai.

Shogun Yoritomo had a younger brother, Minamoto no Yoshitsune. He is one of the most popular samurai heroes of Japan, a great commander-in-chief and a very clever militarist. As the Shogunate government started to function, Shogun Yoritomo began to suspect Yoshitsune was planning to overtake his government.

Yoshitsune was an honorable man who admired his older brother but hated the situation. He escaped with a few vessels to the north and asked the Fujiwara clan, who ruled northern Japan, for protection. When he was a young boy, the clan had protected Yoshitsune from the Heishi clan. However, Shogun Yoritomo sent a party to find and kill Yoshitsune, and at the same time demanded that the Fujiwara clan give up Yoshitsune to the Shogunate.

Orthodox history says Yoshitsune killed himself in the Koromogawa area of Hiraizumi located in the present-day Tohoku area of Japan. However, in areas of northern Japan – Iwate, Aomori, and Hokkaido – there are many legends that exist today saying Yoshitsune survived the battle and escaped further north.

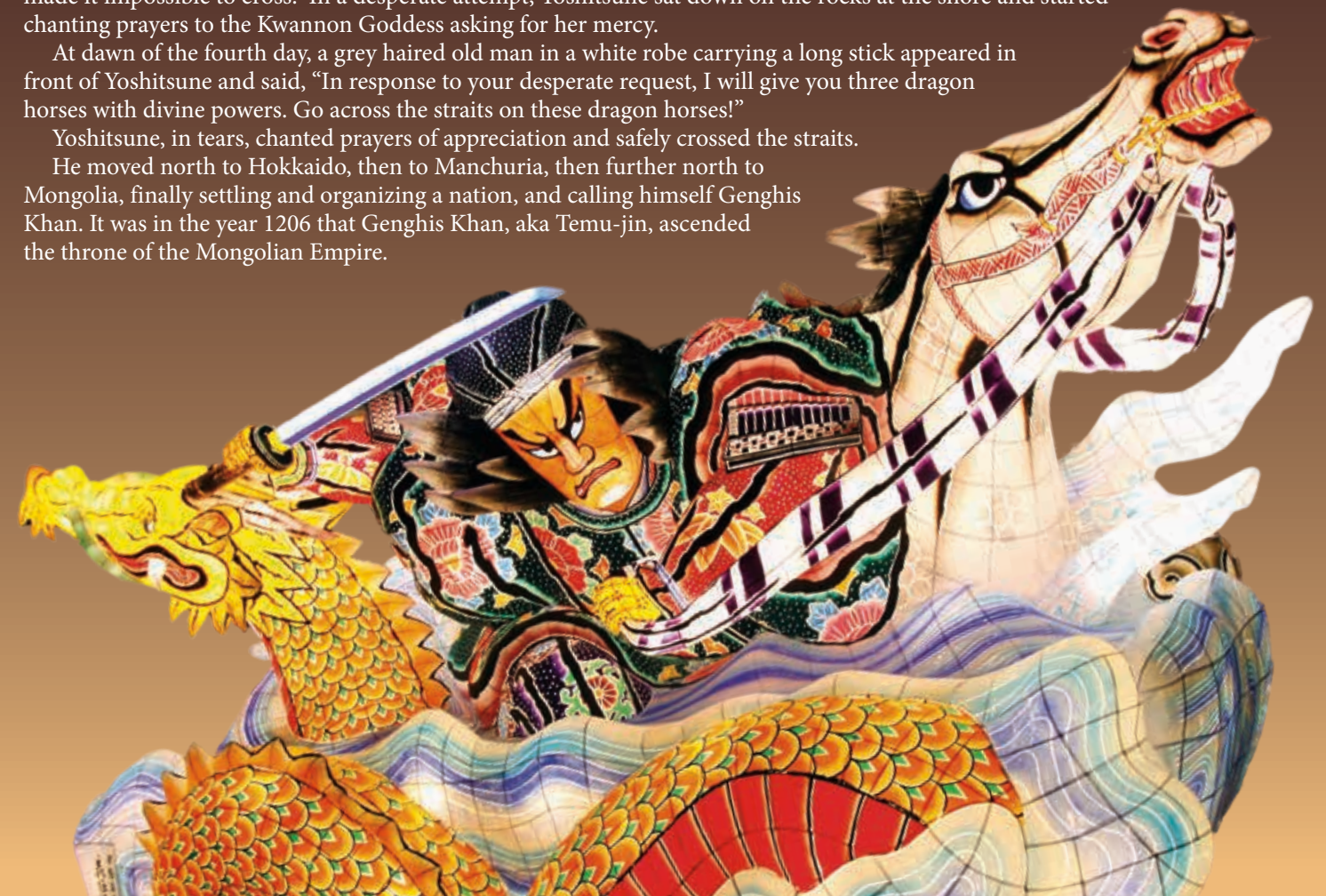
### The Legend of Yoshitsune

When Yoshitsune reached the northern tip of Japan's main island, the rough waves at the Tsugaru Straits made it impossible to cross. In a desperate attempt, Yoshitsune sat down on the rocks at the shore and started chanting prayers to the Kwannon Goddess asking for her mercy.

At dawn of the fourth day, a grey haired old man in a white robe carrying a long stick appeared in front of Yoshitsune and said, "In response to your desperate request, I will give you three dragon horses with divine powers. Go across the straits on these dragon horses!"

Yoshitsune, in tears, chanted prayers of appreciation and safely crossed the straits.

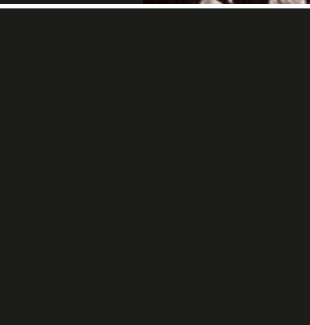
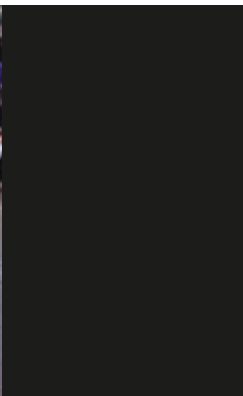
He moved north to Hokkaido, then to Manchuria, then further north to Mongolia, finally settling and organizing a nation, and calling himself Genghis Khan. It was in the year 1206 that Genghis Khan, aka Temu-jin, ascended the throne of the Mongolian Empire.





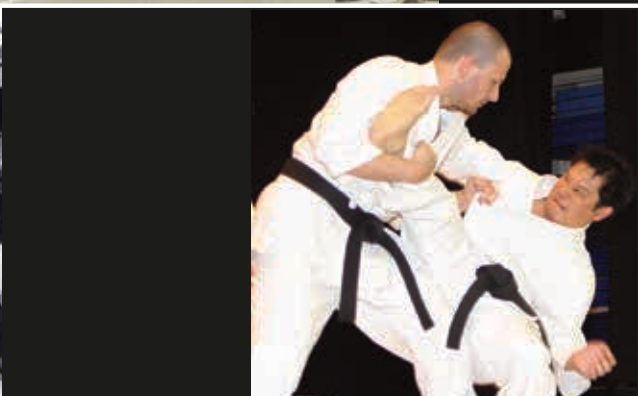
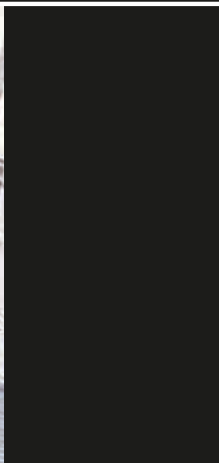
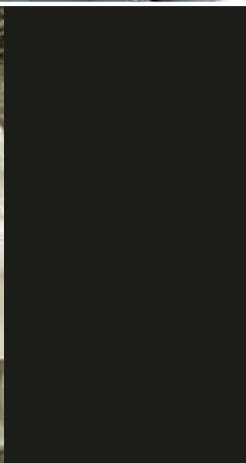


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# THE 75<sup>th</sup> NISEI WEEK JAPANESE FESTIVAL QUEEN CANDIDATES



Back Row from L to R:

**Kelsey Nakaji Kwong**

San Fernando Japanese American Community Center

**Karen Nana Mizoguchi**

Japanese Restaurant Association of America

**Sara Kuniko Hutter**

Orange County Nikkei Coordinating Council

**Veronica Toyomi Ota**

Pasadena Japanese Cultural Institute

Front Row from L to R:

**Tamara Mieko Teragawa**

East San Gabriel Valley Japanese Community Center

**Michelle Kaori Hanabusa**

West Los Angeles Japanese American Citizens League  
 and Venice Japanese Community Center

**Camryn Michiko Sugita**

Evening Optimist Club of Gardena





**Birthplace:** Los Angeles, CA

**Age:** 24

**Education:** University of Southern California

**Degree:** Bachelor of Arts, Renaissance Scholar

**Major:** Fine Arts  
**Minor:** Advertising

**Platform:**  
Special World Olympic Games

**Hobbies & activities:** Weekly yoga practices, finding creative inspiration by reading blogs and listening to podcasts such as Design Sponge and Being Boss, traveling around the world and volunteering as a coach and choreographer for the USC Ice Girls.

**Professional / Career Goals:**  
Become an art director in the entertainment and/or film industry and ultimately have my own creative online business.

**What is your first recollection of Nisei Week?** From a young age, my family and I have attended Nisei Week in support of my grandmother, who performed with her odori group in the parade. I remember waving frantically and calling out, "Grandma, Grandma!" to get her attention as she danced by us. I could see the joy in her eyes as she tried to contain her smile.



Michelle with parents Masami and Shinko Hanabusa.

**Birthplace:** Los Alamitos, CA

**Age:** 22

**Education:** University of Southern California

**Degree:** Bachelor of Arts, cum laude

**Major:** Communication

**Platform:**  
National Psoriasis Foundation

**Hobbies & activities:**  
Playing basketball, traveling, hiking, watching movies, and trying new restaurants.

**Professional / Career Goals:**  
I hope to continue working in the public affairs or nonprofit sector and find a career in which I'm able to help others and make a difference in the community.

**What is your first recollection of Nisei Week?**  
My first recollection of Nisei Week would be in 2009 when I attended the Golden Circle Dinner and Coronation with members of my family. I was able to meet members of the court and talk to others who were involved in events throughout the week.



Sara with parents Ralph and Joy Hutter and brother Ross.







**Birthplace:** : Burbank, CA

**Age:** 22

**Education:** Whittier College

**Degree:** Bachelor of Arts,  
summa cum laude

**Major:** Chemistry

**Minors:** Music and French

**Platform:**  
Wounded Warrior Project

**Hobbies / Activities:**  
Singing opera, dancing hula, writing poetry, cheering for the Dodgers, collecting pillbox hats and other vintage clothing, and doing chemistry research.

**Professional / Career Goals:**  
I plan to pursue medical school.

**What is your first recollection of Nisei Week?**  
My most memorable experience of Nisei Week was winning the gold medal at the Nikkei Games 3-on-3 basketball tournament at the Long Beach Pyramid.



*Kelsey with parents Phillip and Nancy Kwong and brother Derek, and sisters Tiffany and Jillian.*

**Birthplace:** Los Angeles, CA

**Age:** 23

**Education:** University of California,  
Irvine

**Degree:** Bachelor of Arts

**Major:** Art History

**Platform:**  
American Cancer Society

**Hobbies & activities:**  
Pilates, reading entertainment magazines, trying new restaurants, and volunteering as the president for the South East Los Angeles/North Orange County (SELANOCO) chapter of the Japanese American Citizens League (JACL).

**Professional / Career Goals:**  
To become a senior editor/reporter at a well-recognized multimedia publication.

**What is your first recollection of Nisei Week?**  
Since I was a child, I remember hearing about the impact Nisei Week had on my friend's older siblings. I have attended only a few events and remember taking away great memories and friendships.



*Karen with parents Kyoya and Betty Mizoguchi.*





**Birthplace:** Pasadena, CA

**Age:** 23

**Education:** Tufts University

**Degree:** Bachelor of Arts, magna cum laude

**Major:** International Literary and Visual Studies

**Platform:** Reading is Fundamental

**Hobbies & activities:**  
Working with children, singing and playing guitar with my dad's classic rock band, reading and writing haiku poetry, and meeting new people.

**Professional / Career Goals:**  
I plan to attend graduate school and obtain my master's degree in education. Someday, my dream is to create a curriculum teaching the importance of cultural diversity and promoting compassionate activism.

**What is your first recollection of Nisei Week?**  
I remember my aunt would take my cousin and me to the Nisei Week obon rehearsals near the JACCC when we were young. I loved watching the ladies around me and learning the dances from them. Everyone was so kind and welcoming, and it was always really fun to dance with my little cousin.

**Birthplace:** Toda, Saitama, Japan

**Age:** 23

**Education:** American University

**Degree:** Bachelor of Arts

**Major:** International Studies

**Minor:** International Business

**Platform:**  
Homeboy Industries

**Hobbies & activities:**  
Documenting my travels through photography, researching other countries and cultures, volunteering as the Events Director for Japan Film Society, and my goal is to eat at every restaurant in Little Tokyo.

**Professional / Career Goals:**  
I want to continue working in events for a Japanese related organization aimed at maintaining positive relations between the United States and Japan.

**What is your first recollection of Nisei Week?**  
As a child I remember watching the obon-style dancers during the Nisei Week Grand Parade.



Veronica with parents Ronald and Carolyn Ota.



Camryn with parents Hajime and Christine Sugita and sister Caryn.







# Tamara Mieko Teragawa

East San Gabriel Valley Japanese Community Center



**Birthplace:** West Covina, CA

**Age:** 25

**Education:** California State University, Fullerton

**Degree:** Dual Bachelor of Arts, magna cum laude

**Major:** Communications and Dance

**Platform:** Give Back Yoga Foundation

**Hobbies & Activities:**

Hot yoga, dancing, finding new music, basketball, cooking healthy foods, fishing, DIY projects, and anything related to Harry Potter.

**Professional / Career Goals:**

My ultimate goal is to expand on my teaching career and guide professional athletes through their own yoga practice. I also aspire to one day dance professionally for a modern/contemporary company.

**What is your first recollection of Nisei Week?**

I am fortunate to have watched my two older sisters participate as members of Nisei Week courts in 2010 (Kelli) and 2013 (Jamie). I attended several events and activities and witnessed each one grow tremendously while making everlasting friendships. My sisters have inspired and encouraged me to take this amazing opportunity.

TOMMY MYOTAKE

Tamara with parents David and Cheryl Teragawa and sisters Kelli and Jamie.



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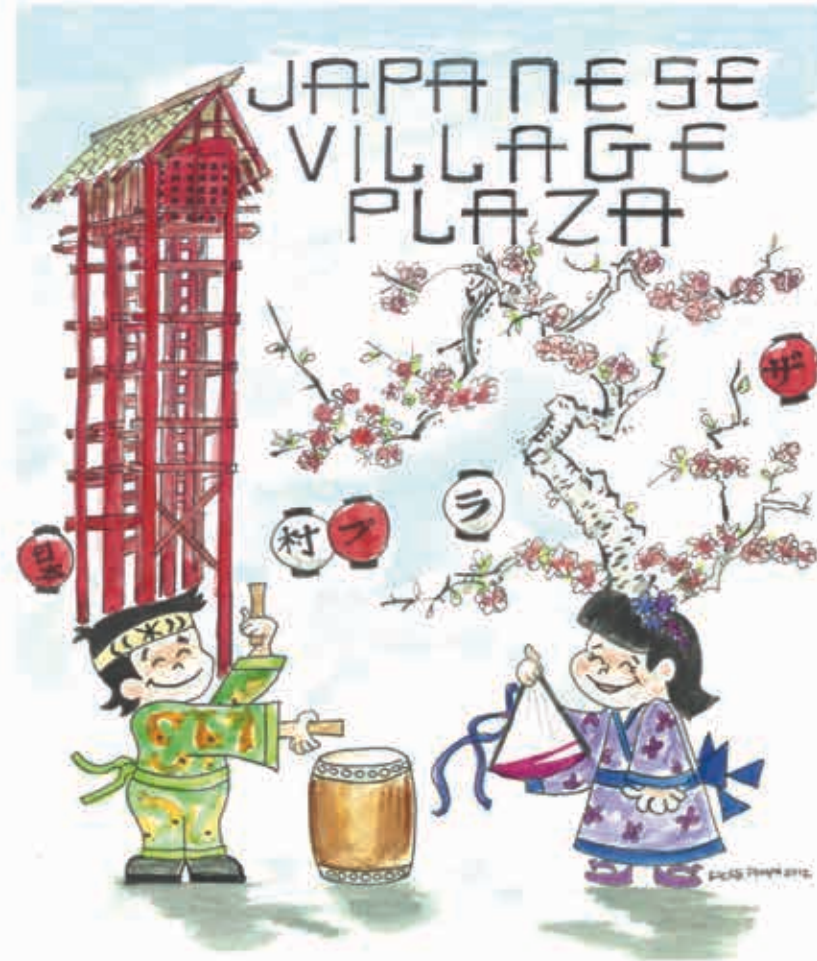
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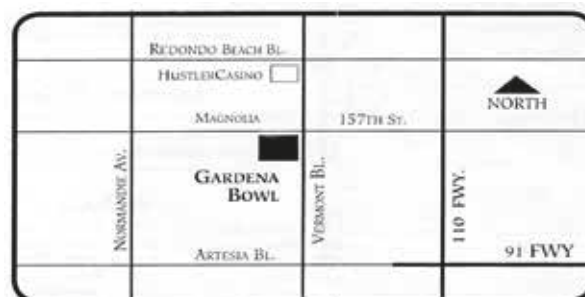


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# CORONATION HIGHLIGHTS

For six young women who have undergone months of training, exploring Japanese culture, public speaking, wearing a kimono, learning dance routines and sharing friendships, the Coronation is the final stage of competition. There they will find themselves vying for the title of Nisei Week Queen amongst new friends and companions.

The announcements are made and the audience finds out who the judges had as their final choices: Queen Tori Angela Nishinaka-Leon, First Princess Lindsey Emiko Sugimoto, and Miss Tomodachi Ashley Akemi Arikawa.

Princesses are Tiffany Akemi Hashimoto, Melissa Sayuri Kozono, and Dominique Ariadne Mashburn.



Candidates Ashley Akemi Arikawa, Tiffany Akemi Hashimoto and Melissa Sayuri Kozono.



The always entertaining Masters of Ceremonies, David Ono and Tamlyn Tomita.



Candidates Dominique Ariadne Mashburn, Tori Angela Nishinaka-Leon, and Lindsey Emiko Sugimoto.



Queen candidates performing their Japanese dance & modern dance numbers.



2013 Nisei Week Queen Lauren Naomi Iwata giving her farewell speech with her court standing by her.



2013 Miss Tomodachi Megumi Yuhara places the tiara on Ashley Akemi Arikawa.



2013 First Princess Ashley Mieko Honma helps Lindsey Emiko Sugimoto with her tiara.



Tori Angela Nishinaka-Leon reacts after being announced as the 2014 Nisei Week Queen.



The 2014 Nisei Week Court from left to right: Princess Tiffany Akemi Hashimoto; Miss Tomodachi Ashley Akemi Arikawa; Queen Tori Angela Nishinaka-Leon; First Princess Lindsey Emiko Sugimoto; Princess Dominique Ariadne Mashburn; Princess Melissa Sayuri Kozono.

Photos by Toyo Miyatake Studio

Make-up Artists: Jennifer Yoshida, Jill Hiraizumi, Liane Takano Pham; Hair Design Artists: Saeru Awazu, Nikki Kodama, Michie Sujishi, Kana Ishii, Miki Fujika, Chiyuki Ato; Kimono Artists: Cathy Gali, Michie Sujishi; Evening Gown Designer: Tadashi; Photography: Toyo Miyatake Studio; Special Thanks to Keiro Retirement Home



*Tori Angela Nishinaka-Leon*

# The Life Changing Spark



People often ask me, “Why Nisei Week?” I think back to my first obon at the Pasadena Buddhist Temple, the priest standing in the yagura. At obon, we gather to remember our ancestors. He told us to think of a lost loved one. Ask that person to dance. This was emotional because I had just lost my grandfather. I was reminded of his passing, but in this moment I felt comfort. Once again, I was able to be with him.

Now I didn’t know a single step of ondo and, honestly, I was petrified. You might laugh, but I’m a very shy person. That day was different. None of that mattered. I let go of all my insecurities.

I was able to do so because the people around me, the JA community, welcomed me. Strangers came up to me and embraced me like family. Instantly, I felt a part of the community. From then on, I was going to every obon. Each weekend was like a family reunion that just kept growing.

The JA community helped me see the strength in me and the strength of being Japanese American. That day, a spark lit, and it was life changing because it set off my journey of self-discovery from reflection and contemplation to action. For this once shy, awkward girl, I finally belonged. The following weekends, whenever I saw someone out of place, I welcomed them, walked them through the steps just as others had done for me on my first day. It was my call to action to give back. We never know how one thing may impact another. That day, those people probably didn’t realize they had just changed my life. I don’t even have their names to thank them. But I am here now. I can and will always try to do more, with the hope to share with others what I have learned. Together, we can celebrate our history, our community and enrich it.



*My first day of school.*



*The 2014 Nisei Week Court in Hawaii visiting our sister court during their Cherry Blossom Festival.*



*With my brother, Bernard, and my parents, Bernie & Victoria.*



*Golfing in an Occidental College golf tournament. Go Tigers!*

It’s only been a year. So much has happened, and yet training feels like just yesterday. But learning about who you are and where you come from makes you appreciate in a grander perspective the people who have brought you here. That will make anyone, not just me, grounded by a sense of belonging and responsibility.

Throughout the year, I was reminded of who our community is at its core. Just as I see so many of us at obon dancing as one around the yagura, I see us united as a people, ready to step up to help those who might need it. I saw this first hand at all the events I went to. Yes, we were busy all year, but that attests to the countless who are devoted to causes set forth to make differences for others. The Japanese American Optimist and Kizuna seek to motivate

and support the youth, our future. The Japanese American National Museum, the Go for Broke National Education Center, and the MIS, 100th and 442nd Battalions Veterans Associations immortalize the stories and sacrifices of our Issei and Nisei for without them, we would not be who we are today. Keiro tenderly cares for our Issei and Nisei so that they live out their lives with the dignity and grace that they deserve. Grateful Crane uses the gift of song to help us feel when words alone aren’t enough. Except of course, when you have writers from the Rafu Shimpo work tirelessly to keep us all connected with their articles. And through it all, I saw hundreds of sponsors and attendees giving what they could to ensure that these organizations continue to do their great work. Individuals as well as businesses like





*My family and friends who attended Coronation.*

Union Bank and Fukui Mortuary truly care about the wellbeing of the community. The Japanese American Cultural & Community Center, the Japanese Chamber of Commerce of Southern California, our local community centers and organizations that sponsor the Nisei Week Court Candidates, the Okinawa Association of America, and all the Kenjikai try to create opportunities for all of us to bond, to help others thrive.

And yet, for me personally, I would not have experienced this journey without those who carried me along the way. Thank you to the 2014 Court, Queen's Committee, President Mike Okamoto, and the Nisei Week Foundation for this life-changing year. Without the sponsorship and the support of the Pasadena Japanese Cultural Institute, its community, and the Miss Pasadena JCI Committee, Ron, Cindy,

Lisa, Dana, Erika, Atsuko, and Auntie Linda... What would I have done without you? With very little convincing, you instantly took me under your wing and taught me to have courage to fly on my own. Paige, Tarin, Nao, Seri, and the best optometrist and boss, Dr. Matsuzaki, I owe a special thanks to you for your unwavering support and belief in me. Centenary United Methodist Church, San Fernando and Sun Valley, and the Meiji Dance Group, thank you for the love you have shown me. I am forever moved by your compassion and spirit for others. Thank you, Nishinaka-clan, for standing by my side and helping me see the fun side of life. Mom, Dad, and L.B., I don't know how to tell you thank you for all you have ever done for me. Through it all, you're always there. I love you.

This year we embark on our 75th year, applauding a legacy of strength and resilience, beauty and art, with the respect that our Issei and Nisei have instilled in us. The Nisei Week Foundation and all of its volunteers have and will continue to do this. Everyone comes together from all over Southern California, united in celebration to keep who we are alive and awakening those ideals in both younger generations and people outside of the community. It's our responsibility to listen to our call to action so this legacy can thrive. You never know how one thing, one little thing, will impact another. And, like me, that person might not even know whom to thank in the end. The spirit of the Nisei Week Festival is more than one week, but exists throughout the year and has for the past 75 years. Ganbatte to the next 75 years to come.



*Huntington Drive Elementary students learn Bambutsu no tsunagari ondo dance as part of my DOVE Self Esteem platform project.*

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LINDSEY EMIKO SUGIMOTO

FIRST PRINCESS



Growing up in the Japanese American community, I took for granted playing basketball in the leagues and participating in Little Tokyo youth programs. Undoubtedly, being a part of the Nisei Week court has transformed my perspective on the once, previously presumed community.

Through experience and observation, Nisei Week reshaped the importance of the community within my own objectives by reiterating that “we cannot seek achievement for ourselves and forget about progress and prosperity for our community. Our ambitions must be broad enough to include the aspirations and needs of others,” (Cesar Chavez).

Over the past year, I have watched individuals selflessly volunteer in community events. I’ve been inspired by families of veterans fervently working to keep the legacy of the Nisei alive. I have stood in awe, admiring past court

members who continue to eagerly participate in nonprofit organizations. And though my year as part of the Nisei Week court is over, these community members will continue to assist unhesitatingly. They don’t wear a crown or sash nor receive equivalent recognition. But, we are all of the same – all members within the community, acknowledging we have been given a plethora of opportunities because of the generations of determined, community-minded members before us.

To the #phenomenal women of the 2014 Court, from the late nights spent at Keiro practicing dances, to perfecting the art of selling raffle tickets, the five of you collectively have made this journey profoundly indelible. I know that your individual legacies as community members will continue to blossom.



To my Sister City Courts, I will remember the eternal laughs we shared and exceptional memories we created in Hawaii, San Francisco, and Los Angeles. Thank you for becoming

part of my extended family.

To PureO2, Hawaii Hospitality, and San Francisco Hospitality, I am grateful beyond measure for the warmth and generosity exuded while visiting your respective cities.

I would like to offer my sincere appreciation to my sponsors, the VJCC and WLA JACL, for allowing me the opportunity to be a part of this long-lasting tradition. It is such a blessing to be a part of the West LA community, for I have been gifted with undeserving respect and spoiled with heartfelt mentors.

Thank you to my parents for your unwavering support and faith. Thank you for truly believing in my limitless goals and aspirations, as well as for challenging me to grow to my greatest potential – don’t worry, I’m still growing.

Last, my immeasurable appreciation to the Nisei Week Board, Queen’s Committee, and Hospitality Committee for providing me with the most unforgettable, invaluable opportunity: to be a part of and thrive in the Japanese American community from an exclusive perspective. I veraciously affirm Nisei Week is an organization essential to our community, challenging young women, like myself, to make a fundamental impact for the benefit of others. Therefore, as I commence my professional journey, I will be cognizant a career is but a means to an end. My ambitions rest in the impact I will have on this phenomenal, resilient community.

DOMINIQUE ADRIADNE MASHBURN

PRINCESS

Growing up, I always wanted to be active in the Japanese American community but was not aware of the steps I should take. My mother and her side of the family are almost entirely Issei and I wanted to find ways to get them integrated into the JA community to keep our traditions and values alive. It was so inspiring to listen to my mother talk about how living in Japan Town in San Francisco helped her assimilate in America. At a very young age I realized that helping others within the community brought me personal happiness.

Two years ago, my health took a turn for the worse and I was constantly in doctors’ offices. I felt like I needed to find myself again and best place to start was to do something I always had a passion for, serving within the community. From there my great Nisei Week experience began.

Transitioning from the worst to best year of my life, I have come out of it as a new and improved me. This experience has truly made me healthy once again. After becoming part of this sisterhood, I learned to embrace and talk about my Japanese heritage with confidence to others in public; for I am proud to be both. Before this time I acted the complete opposite. I have reached a new level of happiness in life.

My five new sisters: Ashley, Lindsey, Melissa, Tiffany, and Tori are the best court members I could ask for. Thank you for laughing at my funny quirks and helping me heal (emotionally and physically) to be who I am today.

Thank you to the Orange County Nikkei Coordinating Council for this life changing opportunity. I hope I was able to represent you all with the upmost respect. It was truly an honor representing my home, my furusato.

Thank you to the Nisei Week Foundation for its continued efforts to bring honor and vitality to this special JA community. Thank you, Mike, for being an amazing Nisei Week President and always helping the court with your big smile.

And thank you to the Nisei Week Queen’s Committee for your guidance and support since day one! Thank you Michelle and Helen for empowering us to be the best we can be as young women in the community. We truly appreciate everything you have done to make this sisterhood so special.

Thank you to my family for helping through-



out this year and supporting me in every way possible. Thank you dad for teaching us kids what unconditional love is. And thank you mom for making the bold decision to move to America after college with just a couple suitcases in hand to reach your dreams. I hope I made you all proud and showed you I am flourishing in what this country has to offer and carrying out the 74th Nisei Week theme, “Continuing the Legacy.”

And thank you to the community for welcoming the 2014 Court at all the events we have attended and taking the time out of your busy schedules to make this JA community what it is today. #phenomenal



ASHLEY AKEMI ARIKAWA

MISS TOMODACHI

Being a member of the Nisei Week court this year has been such an eye-opening journey! I’ve spent many summers at the Nisei Week office volunteering, but never imagined how amazing this year would be. It has been more than I could have wished for, and I’m so grateful for all of the opportunities.

Like many past Nisei Week girls, I always dreamt of being on the court. I yearned to be one of those confident, well-spoken women who were part of the Nisei Week sisterhood, but felt too unsure of myself. Plus, the thought of speaking in front of hundreds of people at Coronation intimidated me! Deciding to run for a spot on the court has been one of my best decisions.

From trainings and cultural classes, to community events and trips, every day has been an opportunity to grow. I have become a more confident speaker and feel more comfortable being myself around others. This experience has also taught me more about the community and its relationships within and beyond. It has opened my eyes to the variety of organizations that exist in our community and the specific needs that they fulfill. In addition, I have gained a deeper insight into the importance of the festival and our relationships with Nagoya, Hawaii, San Francisco, and Seattle. With this knowledge, we can continue to nurture these cherished friendships.

The memories that we created will last a lifetime-- thank you to everyone who has

been a part of this experience with us! The bonds that we have forged truly make the memories special.

To my 2014 Nisei Week court sisters-- you have made this dream what it is. From the first time we met, I knew it was going to be a great year. Being able to go through the year together has been nothing but amazing, and I really appreciate your friendship. You are all #phenomenal!



To the lovely Queen’s Committee-- thank you for welcoming us into the sisterhood and helping prepare us for our year. Thank you for believing in us and for always being there for advice. You are all such incredible role models!

To the Japanese Restaurant Association and the JRA girls-- thank you for your continuous support and for allowing me to share my

love of Japanese food with the community. I’m grateful for the opportunity you gave me to represent your organization; I would not be here without you.

To my Nisei Week office family-- thank you for getting me “hooked” on Nisei Week and for giving me a reason to come back each year. I miss everyone and can’t wait to be back in the office next summer!

To my loving family-- thank you for all of your support throughout this journey. A BIG thank you to my parents for being there every step of the way, and for fostering my love of the Japanese culture and community. I am forever grateful.



Lastly, to Cory-- thank you for your unwavering love, and for keeping me inspired throughout the year with our good talks. Nisei Week wouldn’t be the same without you.

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# COURT REFLECTIONS

MELISSA SAYURI KOZONO

PRINCESS



As a young girl, I remember seeing the Nisei Week court around Little Tokyo in their sparkling crowns and pretty sashes and being in complete awe of them. Deciding to run for Nisei Week has truly been the experience of a lifetime. Through this experience, I have learned so much about the Japanese American community and myself. After much thought and consideration, I decided to take a chance and it was everything I imagined. This experience has been much more than a crown and sash. It was about being given the opportunity to represent the community I grew up in, while also developing friendships and relationships that will last a lifetime. This year has given me a greater appreciation for the Japanese American community. Through the different events we've attended,

we learned more about the variety of organizations in the community, and most importantly met the people who make them happen. These unsung heroes are the reason why our community is unlike any other. To the Nisei Week Foundation, thank you for your tireless work behind the scenes and for providing me with the opportunity to represent the Japanese American community. To the Queens Committee, thank you for everything you do, for preparing us for this crazy ride and supporting us throughout our journey. To the hospitality committees of Hawaii and San Francisco, thank you for welcoming us and making us feel like a part of the family and opening us to the bond that ties our communities together. Thank you to the East San Gabriel Valley Japanese Community Center, my sponsor and employer, for giving me this opportunity to represent you at Nisei Week. Being able to give back to and represent a community that has such a special place in my heart was truly a tremendous honor. Thank you for the constant support and encouragement throughout the year. To the #phenomenalwomen, who I am lucky enough to now call sisters, you guys made this year so special. Meeting you all has been the most rewarding part of this experience. I never

would have thought that in a year we would become so close and form a bond that could never be broken. From the late night practices, never-ending text threads, after-event boba runs, and endless amount of raffle tickets, I couldn't have imagined sharing this experience with anyone else. I know even as our reign comes to an end, we will continue the bonds of sisterhood into the next chapter of our lives. Finally, to my friends and family, words cannot express how truly grateful I am for your support this year. To my parents, thank you for joining me on this amazing journey, understanding the hectic schedule, and the crazy emotions. Thank you again for your unconditional love and support throughout the year. Without you, none of this would have been possible. You always stood by my side and most importantly taught me the meaning of family, community, and "okaeshi."



TIFFANY AKEMI HASHIMOTO

PRINCESS

I was not the type of little girl who dreamt of being a princess, wearing a crown and sparkly heels. Instead, I was usually off playing on the monkey bars, following my older sister around, and trying to make sculptures with my dad's wood supplies in the garage. I think everyone (including myself) was a little surprised when I decided to participate in Nisei Week, but I saw it as a great opportunity to connect with my culture, step out of my comfort zone, test my individuality, and gain once in a lifetime experiences. Attending events this past year really allowed me to grasp the spirit and resilience of the Japanese American community. I've realized the strength of the foundation laid down for the present generation, the immense amount of work that goes into maintaining what has been built on that foundation, and our responsibility to keep building. As a representative of the Nisei Week Foundation, I had the privilege of witnessing and taking part in the preservation of this special culture. I'd like to say thank you to the community for continuously supporting the Nisei Week Japanese Festival and accepting the 2014 Nisei Week court as representatives and ambassadors. Also, thank you so much to the Nisei Week board members for your dedication and year-round work to plan such an elaborate week of celebration, diverse enough to draw the interest of multiple generations. Without the Nisei Week Foundation and all of the volun-

teers who dedicate their time, no one would be able to enjoy the history encompassed by the yearly festivities. The 75th anniversary of Nisei Week is a remarkable milestone, and I hope the tradition continues for many more years. Mom and Dad, thank you for supporting me during this year and always, and I hope you have gotten as much enjoyment and appreciation out of your involvement as I have from mine. To my sponsor, the Evening Optimist Club of Gardena, thank you for starting me on this incredible journey. I could not imagine representing any other organization! And finally, thank you to those who hosted the court and our families with such incredible hospitality in Japan, Hawaii, and San Francisco.



Ashley, Lindsey, Melissa, Dominique, and Tori, I am so grateful to have been on court with all of you! As we trained, planned, and traveled together, I feel that I formed special bonds with each of you. Though we were all



strangers last spring, we are now family, and I am so glad to have gained an amazing group of lifelong friends. This past year has been a bit of a whirlwind, but I wouldn't trade it for anything. I've had the time of my life while also learning about and gaining a new respect for the community. Though my time on court has come to an end and I will no longer be wearing crown and sash with raffle tickets in hand, I will stay involved and hope to help continue the Japanese American legacy.



*Congratulations to the  
Nisei Week Foundation  
on a successful 75th Festival*

*Good Luck to the 2015  
Nisei Week Candidates*

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# NISEI WEEK FORMER QUEENS ... A Visual Reference



Alice Watanabe '35



Renko Oyama '36



Clara Susuki '37



Margaret Nishikawa '38



Karen Uchizono '88



Sandra Fukushima '89



Sandra Posey '90



Mutsuko Sata '91



Andrea Kawamoto '92



Naomi Ono '93



Kimi Tokuda-Evans '94



Shizue Narahara '39



Shizue Kobayashi '40



Reiko Inouye '41



Terri Hokoda '49



Sachi Kazunaga '50



Aiko Ogomori '51



Emiko Kato '52



Judy Sato-Gilbertson '95



Joann Shin '96



Janelle Hamabata '97



Tiffany Hattori '98



C. Traci Murase '99



Tricia Tanaka '00



Lauren Kinkade '01



Judy Sugita '53



June Aochi '54



Stella Nakadate '55



Phyllis Ono '56



Mitzi Miya '57



Jean Yasui '58



Faith Higurashi '59



Jamie Mizuhara '02



Nicole Cherry '03



Nikki Kodama '04



Steffanie Tamehiro '05



Liane Takano '06



Monika Teuffel '07



Jill Hiraizumi '08



Penny Akemi Tani '60



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Sandy Saito '64



Carol Kunitsugu '65



Ruby Komai '66



Dana Heatherton '09



Lani Nishiyama '10



Erika Olsen '11



Emily Folick '12



Lauren Naomi Iwata '13



Tori Angela  
Nishinaka-Leon '14



Joanne Sono Uehara '67



Clara Nonoshita '68



Toni Sakamoto '69



Jo Ann Uyemura '70



Joyce Kikuchi '71



Carol Lynn Matsunaga '72



Cheryl Kawakami '73



Eliza Akemi Cuthbert '74



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Sandra Toshiyuki '76



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Ahn '86



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## 2014 QUEENS REUNION





# 2014 NISEI WEEK BABY SHOW



Centenary United Methodist Church in Little Tokyo hosted the Nisei Week Baby Show, featuring Tiny Tots: age 1 year to 23 months; Romper Stompers: 2 to 3 years, 11 months; and Jet Setters: 4 years to 6 years, 1 month.

Actor/comedian Aaron Takahashi served as the 2014 emcee.

## HERE ARE THE WINNERS:

### TINY TOTS (12 - 23 months)

Princess: Audrey Ng

Prince: Ender Furukawa

Most Photogenic: Camille Okimoto and Aiden Ikei

### ROMPER STOMPERS (2 - 3 years, 11 months)

Princess: Meilani Sato

Prince: Makoto Lairson

Most Photogenic: Grace Andrade and Evan Nishihira

### JET SETTERS (4 - 6 years, 1 month)

Princess: Naia Yoshida

Prince: Toshio Matsuoka

Most Photogenic: Grace Davis and Kamryn Nava



## CONGRATULATIONS TO NISEI WEEK FOR 75 YEARS!



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# INAUGURAL NISEI WEEK BOWLING TOURNAMENT



When planning began for the first event of the Nisei Week Japanese Festival's Diamond Anniversary, it was immediately obvious the event had to be something special, something that embodied the Japanese American culture and would bring together multiple generations of Japanese Americans. And so the inaugural Nisei Week Bowling Tournament was born!

Bowling has been a favorite pastime of Japanese Americans for decades. Many second-generation Japanese Americans (Nisei) began bowling following their return from the camps after World War II. Bowling became a means to return to some sense of normalcy while also providing an outlet. To this day, JA bowling leagues are a huge part of Nikkei life with the younger generations joining in as well.

Held on January 18, 2015 at the newly renovated X Lanes in the heart of Little Tokyo, the inaugural Nisei Week Bowling

Tournament commenced with hundreds of participants from age 2 to 66. Community leaders, celebrities, friends, families, and co-workers all came together in support of the festival, but more importantly to enjoy a day of camaraderie and fun.

Participants were able to partake in a buffet lunch and were also given use of the billiards tables, karaoke rooms, and unlimited play cards for the arcade. A table of silent auction items were available for bidding, and included autographed books from Kristi Yamaguchi, a day of golf with ABC 7 Sports Anchor Rob Fukuzaki, Clippers tickets, Lakers tickets, golf wedges and much, much more!

## Winners of the tournament were announced in each of the following categories:

- Girls, 10 and under. . . . . Torri Yoshida
- Boys, 10 and under. . . . . Ashton Wong
- Adult Female Individual . . . . . Jazmin Estrada
- Adult Male Individual . . . . . Greg Kadoguchi
- Women's Team . . . . . 2010 Nisei Week Court
- Men's Team . . . . . Team MNF
- Co-Ed Team . . . . . Team Alley Dawgs



The event was Co-Chaired by the founding members of the Japanese American Women's Giving Circle (and 2001 Nisei Week Court Members) Akiko Hattori-Maloney, Lauren Kinkade-Wong, and Silvia Yoshimizu-Yee as well as 1996 Nisei Week Queen Joann Shin-Cordeiro. The Bowling Tournament Committee was comprised of all former Nisei Week court members.

The Japanese American Women's Giving Circle's mission is to empower Japanese American women and contribute towards the future of the Japanese American community. Portions of the proceeds from the event go towards a monetary award presented by the JAWGC members to an outgoing member of the Nisei Week Court who proves exceptional philanthropic value to the JA community.

The Nisei Week Foundation and the Nisei Week Bowling Tournament Committee would like to thank the many donors who contributed to make the event a success, including event sponsors Tom Hoshiyama, the Little Tokyo Business Association Fukui Mortuary, and The Argonza Family.



By Joann Shin Cordeiro

## Toyo Miyatake Studio: One family's long standing commitment to preserving the history of the Nisei Week Japanese Festival



Toyo was the 1978 Nisei Week Grand Marshal.



Alan, bottom right, watches the Nisei Week events (1959).



Alan with daughter Sydney.

Walk to the back room of the Toyo Miyatake Studio in San Gabriel and you'll find hundreds of albums filled with photos taken from every Nisei Week Japanese Festival, dating back to 1934. It's an extensive archive of Nisei Week history. Even more impressive is the fact that this entire photo collection belongs to one family.

"Photographically, we can leave a legacy just playing a part in preserving the Japanese American heritage," explains Alan Miyatake, photographer and owner of Toyo Miyatake Studio. Miyatake is the third generation in his family to serve as Nisei Week's official photographer. He's had the role since 1992, but he's been taking photos for Nisei Week since he was 18 years old.

His grandfather, Toyo, owned the original studio in Little Tokyo, the hub of Los Angeles' Japanese American community. He was the first in the family to serve as Nisei Week's head photographer. The inaugural festival was held in the midst of the Great Depression. According to Miyatake, "They were trying to create more business in Little Tokyo, so they created Nisei Week."

The Miyatake clan also helped bring back the festival in 1949, four years after World War II ended. At the time, Toyo's eldest son and Alan's father, Archie, was in his late teens and with a camera in hand, helped cover Nisei Week once again. Miyatake says, "I guess he was more involved full-time right after the war, when they all came back from camps, and the family needed to ban together to be able to survive."

Before Miyatake was capturing Nisei Week memories, he was making them as a young boy growing up in Little Tokyo. One favorite memory was when the 1960 Nisei Week Queen helped a then seven-year-old Miyatake. "I got lost on my way back to the studio. Penny Akemi Tani, the Queen then, saw me and I was crying. She picked me up and put me in the car. I think I went through the parade and she brought me back," he fondly recalls.

Miyatake's eldest daughter, Sydney, is the latest to shoot Nisei Week festivities, working alongside her dad for the last few years. But Miyatake insists there's no pressure to carry on the family legacy. "I just hope that my kids, Sydney and Lindsey, just take an interest in the community and know it is something important."

As we celebrate 75 years of one of the nation's longest running cultural festivals, we appreciate and celebrate people like the Miyatake family, who have had a critical role in ensuring the Nisei Week Japanese Festival continues to thrive for generations to come. "Not only how long Nisei Week has been going on but how much effort it really takes to keep it going. I think that's the best part about the JA [Japanese American] community – we're willing to keep it going."

Photos courtesy of Toyo Miyatake Studio



# DAY-LEE FOODS WORLD GYOZA EATING CHAMPIONSHIP

Throughout human history, we have been grown accustomed to greatness but every now and then a moment comes along that redefines our standards. Michael Jackson introducing the moonwalk. Tiger Wood's first win at Augusta. Apple unveiling the iPhone. Last year, brought us Matt "the Megatoad" Stonie eating an unthinkable 377 gyoza at the Day-Lee Foods World Gyoza Eating Championship...and taking second place. First place, of course, belonged to the greatest eater of all time: Joey "Jaws" Chestnut with 384 gyoza.

On a blistering-hot day in Little Tokyo, the best two talents competitive eating has ever seen squared off in a highly anticipated rematch of Stonie's epic 2013 victory, and unlike Mayweather-Pacquiao they did not disappoint. As the captivated crowd of faithful foodies was whipped into a frenzy by a rousing performance by competitive eater-rapper extraordinaire Eric "Badlands" Booker, the first LAPD-FDLA Gyoza Showdown (FDLA won 137-111), and the poetic hyperbole of emcee Sam Barclay, the table was set for something magical. Similar to his near-upset in the Nathan's Famous Fourth of July Hot Dog-Eating Championship, the

speedy Stonie raced out to a quick lead nearly finishing 100 of delicious Day-Lee Foods gyoza in the first minute but not to be outdone, the powerful Chestnut closed the gap as the crowd roared. With three-and-a-half minutes to go, Chestnut and Stonie destroyed both the previous world record (Stonie's 268) as well as the sanity of the gyoza staff. Would there be enough gyoza to satisfy these two titans of mass-gyoza destruction?

As time expired with a mere two plates of fresh gyoza remaining, excitement filled the air. The whirlwind of potstickers had been too hectic for anyone to know what heights the duo from San Jose had just hit. Plates were counted, then recounted, then counted once more not just for accuracy, but to allow the judges time to come to terms with the sheer audacity of what they just saw. Finally, it came down to the dreaded debris penalty to separate the two. In the end, there could only be one: Joey "Jaws" Chestnut, the best in history. Crediting the tasty Day-Lee Foods gyoza expertly prepared by Far Bar and the challenge by close friend Stonie, Chestnut reveled in his victory long into the night.

We've all heard the sayings: "second place is the first loser," "winning isn't everything, it's the only thing," and "if

Tale of the Tape	Chestnut	Stonie
World Rank	1	2
Gyoza Appearances	6	4
Gyoza Titles	5	1
Total Gyoza Eaten	1,525	1,092
Gyoza/Contest Avg.	254	273
2014 Result	384*	377
2013 Result	251	268*
2012 Result	266*	234

\*Title and world record set

## 2014 RESULTS

Name	Gyoza
1 Joey "Jaws" Chestnut	384
2 Matt "Megatoad" Stonie	377
3 Miki Sudo	199
4 Erik "the Red" Denmark	181
5 Juan "More Bite" Rodriguez	180
6 Rich "The Locust" LeFevre	175
t-7 Eric "Badlands" Booker	157
t-7 Marcos "the Monster" Owens	157
9 Steve Hendry	149
10 Pablo Martinez	139
11 Josh Miller	117
t-12 Danny Chau	66
t-12 Andrew "the Bear" Kogutkiewicz	66
14 Mary "I Love 'em Hot" Bowers	61
15 Neslie Ricasa	52
16 Eddie "Linsatiable" Lin	37

you're not first, you're last." Hogwash. Sayings from the best, embraced by the weak. Only those that do not possess the competitive fire and gastronomical fortitude of the Megatoad would dare scoff at the achievement of the young Stonie. Nearly doubling the 3rd Place finisher (Miki Sudo with 199) it is clear that Stonie is the heir apparent to the throne of competitive eating. However, to wear the crown you must vanquish the King, and King Chestnut remains at the top of his game.

Ali vs. Frazier. Magic vs. Bird. Taylor vs. Katy. Some rivalries seem destined to last forever, but eventually they will fade, for Father Time is undefeated. Bear witness to greatness while it is among you. The 9th Annual Day-Lee Foods World Gyoza Eating Championship. August 22, 12 pm, at the JACCC Plaza. Don't miss it.



The 2014 Court with Joey "Jaws" Chestnut and Day-Lee Foods representative, Jason Uno.

Photo by Toyo Miyatake

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# The Los Angeles Tanabata Festival



The Tanabata Festival in Sendai started in the Edo Period shortly after it was founded by the Daimyo, Date Masamune (1567-1636). It came into its grand style similar to today's festival after 1928, the year of the Tohoku Industrial Exposition. However during the World War II, the festival was suspended. After 1946, the festival was reintroduced in order to revive the

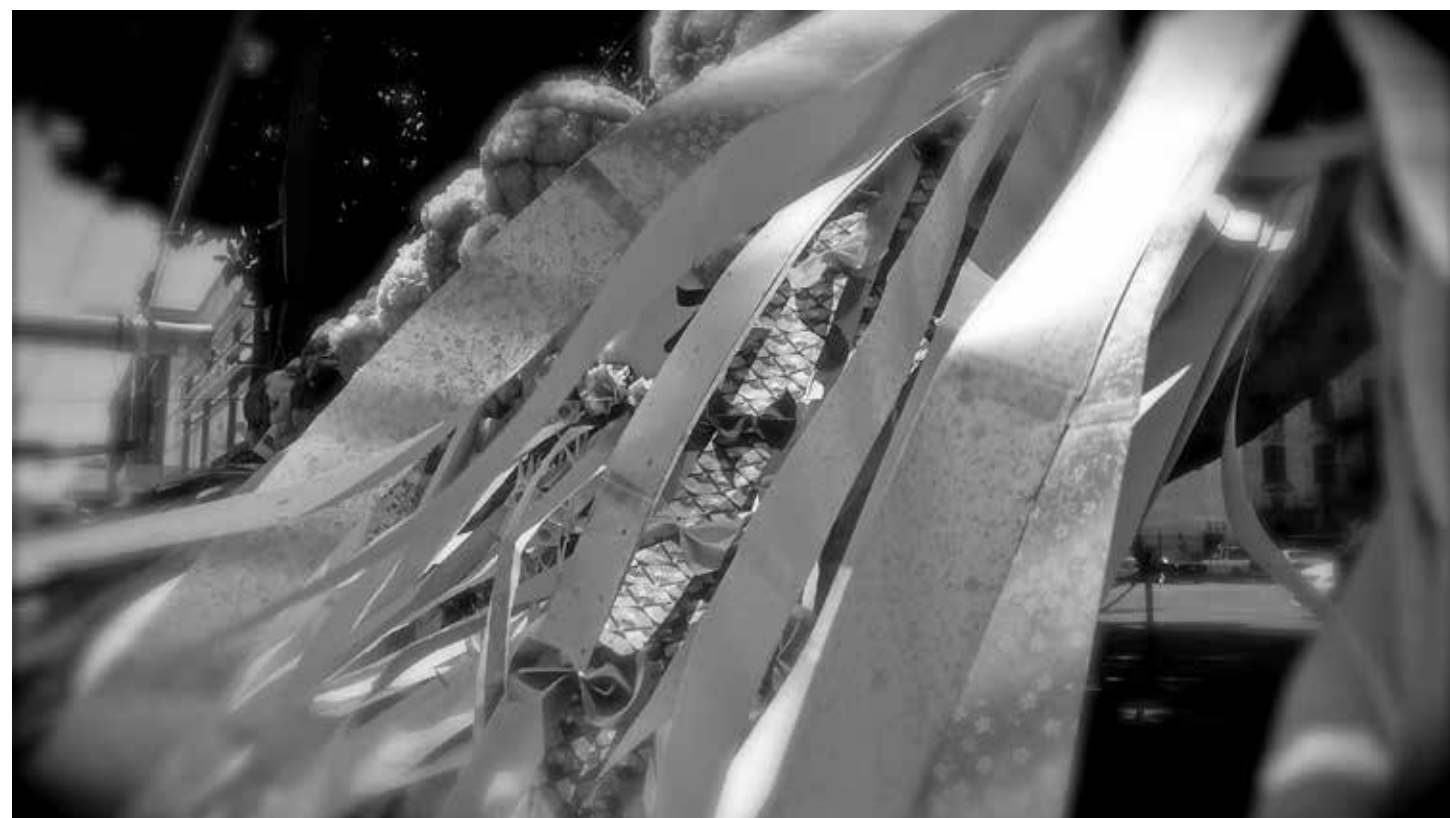


city. Since then, the Sendai Tanabata Festival has grown and expanded to one of the largest Tanabata festivals in Japan, as well a major tourist event in the Tohoku region.

Also known as the Star Festival, Tanabata is a story about the love between a princess (Orihime) who was a weaver and a cow herder (Hikoboshi), representing the stars Altair and Vega. As a result of their love for each other, Orihime neglected her work weaving the cloth for the gods and Hikoboshi neglected tending to his cattle. In punishment, Orihime's father, the Emperor of the Heavens, moved the star lover to the opposite side of the Milky Way (Amanokawa) and stated they would be only allowed to meet once a year on the seventh day of the seventh month. They may only cross when it is a clear night. If it rains, the star lovers must wait another year.

In Los Angeles, Tanabata was brought in with the dream that its history, culture, and community would grow and not be forgotten. Yoshihito and Junko Yonezawa of Miyagi Kenjinkai with Brian Kito of Fugetsu-do in Little Tokyo helped make that dream come true. The Los Angeles Tanabata Festival was formed. With the help of sponsors, committee members, and volunteers the festival continues to expand. This year's festival, themed "Heart & Soul," is dedicated to Nancy Kikuchi. She was well-known throughout the community and always gave her time and energy to others. With the Los Angeles Tanabata Festival in its 7th year and the Nisei Week Japanese Festival celebrating its 75th year, Little Tokyo will continue to create and define itself for many years to come.

Join this year's exciting Little Tokyo celebrations!



Photos by Steve Koyama

## 2014 Los Angeles Tanabata Festival Award Winning Kazari

### FOUNDERS AWARD-BEST OF SHOW

L.A. Gedatsu Church

### PEOPLE'S CHOICE

L.A. Gedatsu Church

### MANGA/ANIME CATEGORY

1st Place – L.A. Gedatsu Church  
2nd Place – Gregory Gladokov  
3rd Place – L.A. Gedatsu Church  
4th Place – America Miyazaki Kenjinkai  
5th Place – America Miyazaki Kenjinkai

### BUSINESS CATEGORY

1st Place – ANA Group  
2nd Place – Anzen Hardware  
3rd Place – Fugetsu-Do  
4th Place – Nikkan san

### KENJINKAI CATEGORY

1st Place – Nanka Yamaguchi Kenjinkai  
2nd Place – Nanka Miyagi Kenjinkai  
3rd Place – Tochigi Kenjinkai  
4th Place – Nanka Ehima Kenjinkai  
5th Place – Nanka Miyazaki Kenjinkai

### GOVERNMENT CATEGORY

1st Place – Council Member  
Mitch O'Farrell  
2nd Place – L.A. Police Department  
3rd Place – L.A. Library Rancho  
Park Branch

### INSTITUTIONS/NON-PROFIT

1st Place – Little Tokyo Nutritional Service  
2nd Place – SGI – USA  
3rd Place – Rising Stars Nikkei Federation  
4th Place – Japanese Community Pioneer  
Center Photo Club  
5th Place – Japanese American  
National Museum

### INDIVIDUALS/FAMILY

1st Place – Tomoko Kito  
2nd Place – Carl Geiberger  
3rd Place – Gumbo & Umami  
4th Place – Lena Kadogawa  
5th Place – Hiroken

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# Nisei Week 1991-2015: 25 Years of Growth



Photo by Hal Keimi

Photos by Toyo Miyatake Studio

The Nisei Week Japanese Festival's 50th anniversary celebrated in 1990 was a milestone so significant it drew the attention of Japanese royalty. Her Imperial Highness Princess Sayoko, 21 at the time, and the only daughter of Japan's Emperor Akihito and Empress Michiko, watched the grand parade wind its way through Little Tokyo from the 3rd floor balcony of the Kajima Building at First & San Pedro streets.

Frances Hashimoto-Friedman chaired the Golden Anniversary events. The following year, Gerald Fukui stepped in as chair to launch Nisei Week's new era. His challenge: Keep the momentum going.

Fukui succeeded by staying close to home. Los Angeles Mayor Tom Bradley, serving an unprecedented fifth term, was named grand marshal. Chosen as parade marshal was a former Nisei Week queen and Miss Nikkei International who had gone on to star in movies and television – Tamlyn Tomita. Indeed, the Japanese American community had its own royalty.

During the next 25 years, a worldwide recession saw Japanese corporations leave California, the animated Simpsons and Pixar's Toy Story debuted, the mobile phone went from "Yuppie toy" to essential communication device, and the Internet forever changed our lives.

Meanwhile, the community was going through its own transformation. Nisei gradually began to retire, and more Sansei were ascending into leadership roles. Whether by chance or foresight, or perhaps a little of both, Nisei Week managed to continually reflect these macro changes, providing the community with a snapshot of itself—a virtual selfie.

## Here are some highlights:

In 1992, Kristi Yamaguchi, a petite young woman from Northern California won the gold medal at the Winter Olympics in figure skating, women's singles. She shined as a celebrity of the highest caliber; but more than that, she became a source of pride for all Japanese Americans. It followed she would be selected to serve as Nisei Week's parade marshal.

That same year, the Japanese American National Museum opened its doors as a history and education center and launched its inaugural exhibition, Issei Pioneers: Hawaii and the Mainland, 1885-1924. The exhibition was housed in the former Nishi

Hongwanji Buddhist Temple. Nishi had moved into its new home two blocks east in 1969.

The term Shin Issei, describing those who emigrated from Japan after World War II, was introduced in the pages of the 1993 Nisei Week commemorative souvenir booklet. The year also marked the 50th anniversary of the legendary 442nd Regimental Combat Team, Nisei unit of the U.S. Army during WWII. Archie Miyatake, community leader and son of pioneering photographic artist Toyo Miyatake, was named the festival's grand marshal, and actress Nobu McCarthy served as parade marshal.

It took more than 54 years, but in 1994, Nisei Week designated its first female grand marshal, naming Haru Matsutaka Reischauer, wife of former Ambassador Edwin O. Reischauer. In another landmark moment, Nisei Week queen Naomi Ono followed in her mother Faith Higurashi Ono's footsteps. Faith won the title in 1959. Together, they became the first mother and daughter to win the beauty title.

Fashion designer Tadashi Shoji, responsible for bringing the Nisei Week court into the world of couture, was recognized for his contributions. In a move that was met with some controversy, the festival leadership saluted the World War II Nisei resisters who refused to serve while their families were confined in concentration. On the sweeter side, 1994 was also the year Mikaway's Mochi Ice Cream was introduced.

In 1995, the Great Hanshin Earthquake, measuring 6.8 in the Kobe-Osaka area of Japan, sparked community-wide relief efforts. A husband and wife team served as parade grand marshals, Kats and Kango Kunitsugu. Kats is remembered as English section editor of the Kashu Mainichi newspaper and executive secretary of the Japanese American Cultural and Community Center. Kango had worked as the Little Tokyo Redevelopment Project's first project manager.

During the next couple of years, Nisei Week looked to the movie industry for its grand marshals. Godzilla, courtesy of Toho Company Ltd, led the parade in 1996. That year, affordable housing development Casa Heiwa commenced construction.

George Takei was grand marshal in 1997. Aside from his achievements as an actor, Takei served for 10 years on the Southern California Rapid Transit District board.

Aki the Akita, developed by Dick Sakahara, was introduced as the Nisei Week mascot in 1998. Bruce Kaji was selected to serve as grand marshal. By 1999, the 85,000-square-foot Pavilion of the Japanese American National Museum, designed by Gyo Obata of Hellmuth, Obata and Kussbaum, opened its doors.

In 2000, the festival presented a community service award to Keiro Senior HealthCare, a facility that had its origins in 1929 as the Japanese Hospital. Jeanne Wakatsuki Houston, author of Farewell to Manzanar, was named grand marshal, while 600-pound grand sumo champion Konishiki served as parade marshal. That year, Nisei Week honored veterans from World War II, Korean War, and Vietnam.

A groundbreaking was held in 2002 for the Far East Café, and International Lions Club president Kay Fukushima served as grand marshal, with Rodney Kageyama as parade marshal. Lauren Kinkade graced the cover of the Nisei Week commemorative souvenir booklet as 2001 Nisei Week queen.

In honor of his 20th anniversary as fashion pacesetter in 2003, Tadashi Shoji showcases his designs at the Nisei Week Fashion Show, then donates \$20,000 to JACCC, Keiro, and the Nisei Week Foundation.

In 2004, Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger commended the Nisei Week Japanese Festival for "promoting community pride and cultural appreciation." Rafu Shimpo publisher Michael Komai became the grand marshal as the newspaper celebrated its 100th year. Susan Hirasuna Fox 11 News anchor was parade marshal. Far East Cafe reopens.

After a brief absence, Aki the Akita returns as the festival mascot in 2005. Hashimoto-Friedman is selected as grand marshal, and Colonel Young Oak Kim (retired) served as honorary grand marshal. ABC7 news anchor David Ono rode as parade marshal. Adding to the excitement, Mike Shinoda of the popular rock band Linkin Park drew enthusiastic fans.

In 2006, the festival once again paid tribute to community royalty, honoring Noritoshi Kanai of Mutual Trading, and koto virtuoso June Kuramoto of the jazz fusion band, Hiroshima.

Nisei Week celebrated its 67th year in 2007 by welcoming the illuminated Nebuta float from Aomori, Japan. A new Nebuta will make a return appearance in the Grand Parade this year on Aug. 16.

In 2009, Masaaki Tanaka, President and CEO of Union Bank, was chosen as grand marshal, and KTLA Morning News anchor Frank Buckley served as parade marshal. Also, the inaugurated Los Angeles Tanabata Festival began, which runs concurrently with the Nisei Week Japanese Festival, and continues to be a big success today as they beautifully hang in front of Geffen Contemporary at MOCA.

Little Tokyo bid farewell to the Kimura Photomart in 2010. The family owned business was established in 1955 by Hisao Kimura, who passed away in 1975. Brothers Toshio and Sadao carried on the family business.

2010 also saw the passing of civil rights activist William Minoru Hohri, who founded the National Council for Japanese American Redress, and Frank Emi, who helped found the Fair Play Committee, an organization of resisters at Heart Mountain during WWII.

By 2012, two more activists had died—Gordon Hirabayashi, who stood against the wartime evacuation of Japanese Americans, and Victor Shibata, co-founder of the Yellow Brotherhood, a self-help program aimed at getting young men off drugs and back into school. That same year, Little Tokyo mourned the loss of Hashimoto-Friedman, who had been a guiding force behind Nisei Week for nearly three decades.

The City of Los Angeles dedicated Frances Hashimoto Plaza in honor of the businesswoman's efforts to improving Little Tokyo and her support of community organizations. Nisei Week initiated the Frances K. Hashimoto Community Service Awards as a tribute to her.

In 2013, the community said farewell to another leading supporter, businessman and philanthropist George Aratani. By 2014, the festival crowds had grown bigger than had been seen in recent years. Korean War hero and Medal of Honor recipient Hiroshi "Hershey" Miyamura was named as grand marshal, while the ubiquitous childhood icon, Hello Kitty, starred as parade marshal.

For this year's 75th anniversary, Nisei Week Foundation president Terry Hara and his hard-working committee members and board of directors promise a wide-ranging slate of activities befitting L.A.'s most enduring cultural celebration.





# Aloha Spirit of Uncle Bobby

Visiting a new city can be a tiresome experience or it can be one filled with wonderful and everlasting memories. For the visitors belonging to the queen's courts of Honolulu, Seattle, and San

Francisco, the Nisei Week Japanese Festival is a must attend event. They look forward to receiving a loving and generous hospitality experience. This special hospitality began with the legendary *aloha spirit* of Uncle Bobby.

In 1970, Bobby Chun was asked by Dr. Roger Kame and Dr. Steve Yokoyama to help out with the arrival of the Hawaii Cherry Blossom Queen and Miss Popularity, who were attending the Nisei Week Japanese Festival. Using a budget of \$125, Bobby Chun picked them up at the airport and took them to lunch and dinner. To make their visit even better, he added a trip to Disneyland and then took them shopping at the mall. Out of respect and affection, those ladies called him "Uncle Bobby."

Uncle Bobby was able to do the same entertaining the following year. However, in 1973, Drs. Kame and Yokoyama resigned from their hosting duties, due to personal responsibilities. They said, "You from Hawaii, you know how to host." Thus, Uncle Bobby became the official hospitality host for Nisei Week.

A few days later, he went to the hotel to pick up the Hawaii Queen Jill Matsui and others. While walking through the lobby, he noticed another visiting queen sitting by herself. So Uncle Bobby approached her and asked who was taking her out to have dinner. Her reply was that no one was taking her out to dinner, so she was passing the time in the lobby. Uncle Bobby was so stunned, he invited her to join the others for dinner. Since he was planning to take the members of the

Hawaii court to Disneyland, Uncle Bobby also invited her to go along. Within a few days, he had spent the budgeted money and without hesitation, he reached into his own wallet to continue providing for the guests.

It was also during this time that Uncle Bobby persuaded a trophy shop to donate and make sashes out of white ribbon with black lettering. Those sashes were for the Nisei Week Queen's court. That year, the Nisei Week court was the only court without sashes to go with their crowns. The following year, the other visiting courts not only arrived with shiny, satin sashes, but their title and city logo were embroidered in various colors. Uncle Bobby had been outdone. Unknowingly, he had started another tradition.



As time went by the number of guests increased. For a few years, the Japanese American communities of Seattle, San Francisco, Chicago, New York, Mexico, and Brazil sent their queens to the Nisei Week Japanese Festival. Having grown up with Hawaiian hospitality in his blood, he found it to be almost unbelievable that the other queens were not being hosted in the manner that he expected. So, Uncle Bobby approached the Nisei Week board and volunteered to host all the visiting queens. After reaching out for more volunteers, the Nisei Week Hospitality Committee was created.

In 1987, Uncle Bobby reached out and snagged Leiton Hashimoto. Hashimoto had already met Uncle Bobby. As a chaperone for the Hawaii Cherry Blossom Queen's Court, he had visited the Nisei Week Japanese Festival in the past. When Uncle Bobby discovered Hashimoto was living in Los Angeles, he simply said, "You're here now? You're ours." After Hashimoto had several years of experience with the Nisei Week Hospitality Committee, Uncle Bobby approached him and in a no nonsense voice said, "You run it now."



Uncle Bobby loved to talk story. While holding his favorite beverage, Bud Lite, in a tall glass of ice, he would share his hilarious, personal experiences. To prepare his Kalua pig for roasting in a sand pit, he would trim the leaves on the banana trees in a local park, at midnight. To improve his golf game with better foot traction, he glued cleats to the bottom of his rubber "zori" slippers. He enjoyed wearing his blue and white UCLA outfits and at the sound of Hawaiian music on the ukulele, he would be up dancing hula.

With Uncle Bobby's guidance, the Hospitality Committee would host approximately 45 to 60 guests annually. The volunteers have provided airport transportation, most of the meals, including a Welcome Reception and a closing Aloha Farewell reception, Disneyland Park-Hopper outings, shopping at the outlet stores, and a Hospitality hotel suite for social gatherings. At the age of 84 years, Uncle Bobby passed away on January 10, 2015. Yet, the "Ohana" or family type gatherings for our guests will continue to be followed because his *aloha spirit* lives on.



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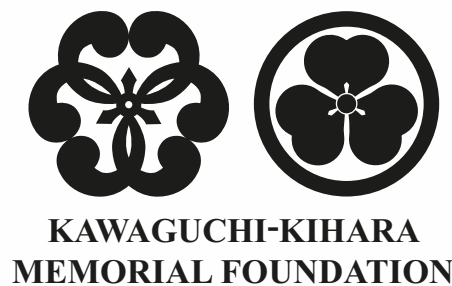


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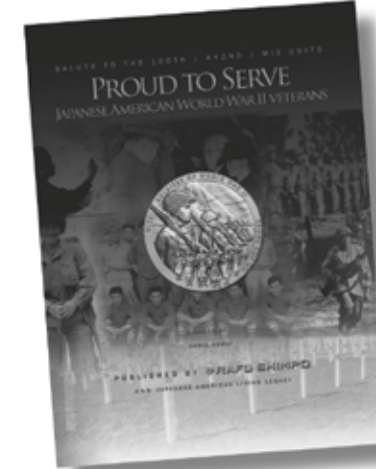


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## Queen & Court Program Celebrating 75 Years... Continuing the Legacy

Since the inception of the Queen and Court Program, a driving force behind it has been the Queen and Court Program Committee. While the committee has evolved through the years, the primary goals have remained the same: to develop a program to help young Japanese American women learn about their culture and community and encourage them to continue to give back to the community following their year of participation as ambassadors.



Photos courtesy of Toyo Miyatake Studio and MPalma Photography



# Imagining Nisei Week: Present and Future



Resilient might be the best word to describe the Nisei Week Japanese Festival, celebrating its 75th year. This August the streets of Little Tokyo will be lined with thousands of people gathered to watch taiko drummers, dancers in colorful yukata and a luminous Nebuta float dramatically lit against the downtown L.A. skyline.

This diamond anniversary is one to truly celebrate. Nisei Week has survived redevelopment, recessions, riots, and the war-time incarceration, which forced Japanese Americans to leave their beloved “furusato” in Little Tokyo for desolate concentration camps. Each era has seen its challenges and each time the Nisei Week Japanese Festival and the Japanese American community has emerged, maybe with some scars, bumps and bruises, but with a spirit that remains strong and undiminished.

There are challenges – as well as opportunities – ahead. The train is a-coming, as the large construction zone that has become Little Tokyo can attest. Construction on the \$1.4 billion Metro Regional Connector is now underway and these next few years will see whether the local community, particularly its mom-and-pop restaurants and businesses, can “gaman” through the duration.

If it can, the opportunities are obvious, not just to longtime J-Towners, but to all the deep-pocketed developers who seem to be gobbling up every open air parking lot and vacant storefront. The scarcity of parking is a critical issue, which will challenge everyone in Little Tokyo, even as the number of riders on the city’s ever-expanding rail networks increase.

Little Tokyo will be at the hub of it all. The First and Central Metro station will be the second busiest station in the entire network, behind only Union Station. Thousands of new folks will be passing through Little Tokyo, some no doubt will be coming to eat, shop, and enjoy the cultural charms of the historic neighborhood.

What kind of neighborhood will Little Tokyo be in 2020 and beyond? Sustainable Little Tokyo, started in 2013, is an initiative supported by more than 100 local organizations seeking to create a cultural eco-district that respects the area’s long history and strong community fabric; while also embracing environmentally friendly practices.



These projects are as small as an organic garden at a temple or church or as far-reaching as a local energy grid powered by a network of solar panels. Little Tokyo has seen so many of its blocks taken over through the years. The point of Sustainable Little Tokyo is stakeholders are asserting their vision for a bright future and is also mindful and respectful of its past.

On Los Angeles Street, where The Rafu Shimpō was once printed, bundled, and delivered by paperboys, including a young Jose Huizar, a gymnasium will rise. The rhythmic sounds of a bouncing basketball are as “JA” as the strikes of a bachi on a taiko drum. So a basketball gym for J-Town is a natural fit. The Budokan of Los Angeles, currently in middle of a capital campaign, will bring basketball to Little Tokyo and provide an important gathering space for the entire Downtown Los Angeles community.

Every weekend, JA parents are driving their kids to basketball games and tournaments. In the future, those kids will be here in Little Tokyo.

Every generation has their version of the Nisei Week Japanese Festival. Nisei Week was first organized in 1934 to lift the gloom of the Great Depression. In 1949, after a hiatus of seven years, Japanese Americans revived the festival and it has continued ever since.

While fewer and fewer JAs reside here, Little Tokyo is still the place that we return to, whether it is to see a show at the Japanese American Cultural and Community Center or an exhibition at Japanese American National Museum, or to honor the veterans at the Go For Broke Monument. They return for Nisei Week as well. The festival is the culmination of a summer filled with obon festivals and is a showcase of the best of Japanese American culture.

The faces may change as the generations have passed, but the continuity and the will to keep Nisei Week going remains. Alan Miyatake of Toyo Miyatake Studio is the third generation of his family to take photos at Nisei Week, following his grandfather Toyo Miyatake and father Archie Miyatake. Now, Sydney, Alan’s daughter, is the fourth generation to continue an important family tradition.

“The older I get the more I realize it’s important that this continues,” Miyatake explained.

Those feelings are shared by Terry Hara, this year’s Nisei Week Foundation president as well as all the other committee members and the countless volunteers who will be there for the Grand Parade and other events.

In the 75 years of Nisei Week, it is remarkable how much has not changed.

Writing a history of Nisei Week Japanese Festival, Togo Tanaka, the late Rafu Shimpō English editor, described the first festival organizers as presenting “the best they could offer in ondo dancing, Japanese floral arrangements, tea ceremonies, martial arts, fashion shows, kimono-clad queen and attendants, calligraphy, art shows, and talent programs, in the hope that the transpacific cultural bridge would somehow flower and bloom.”

That still holds true today, and so I imagine it will be in the future. A new generation will gather on the streets of Little Tokyo to dance in yukata, to watch taiko drummers, to wave at the new queen and her court – and to celebrate another Nisei Week.



Public officials shovel dirt on Sept. 30, 2014 marking the start of construction on the Metro Regional Connector, a 1.9 mile transit project that will connect the Blue, Gold and Expo lines and provide seamless travel throughout the rail network.



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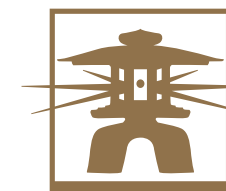
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