



Greater Los Angeles Chapter
Japanese American Citizens League

Newsletter no. 450

April 2023

VIRTUAL PROGRAM/MEETING
Sunday, April 16, 2023

1:00 pm Program: Japanese American Support for African American Reparations
Speaker: Ron Wakabayashi

2:00 pm Business Meeting



Ron Wakabayashi

Assembly Bill 3121 was enacted on September 30, 2020 and establishes the Task Force to Study and Develop Reparation Proposals for African Americans. AB 3121 charges the California Department of Justice with providing administrative, technical, and legal assistance to the Task Force.

AB 3121 charges the Reparations Task Force with studying the institution of slavery and its lingering negative effects on living African Americans, including descendants of persons enslaved in the United States and on society. Additionally, the Task Force will recommend appropriate remedies of compensation, rehabilitation, and restitution for African Americans, with a special consideration for descendants of

persons enslaved in the United States. By statute, the Task Force will issue a report to the Legislature by June 1, 2022, which will be available to the public.

Ron Wakabayashi, National Director of the Japanese American Citizens League in 1981 and former Regional Director with the U.S. Department of Justice, Community Relations Service will be presenting.

The presentation is for the purpose of requesting endorsement of the AB 3121 mission. An endorsement campaign has been initiated to support broad community engagement with this issue.

For a Zoom link to the program, please RSVP to email: greaterlajacl@gmail.com

SAVE THE DATE

53rd JACL National Convention
Little Tokyo, Los Angeles

July 19-23, 2023

What Does a TV Production Assistant Do?

GLA JACL member, Nicole Suganuma, was the March virtual program speaker, well-spoken and articulate. Nicole is a freelance TV production assistant, an entry level position. She works 12-14 hours a day and travels to locations and studios within Southern California. She has also worked outside of the state when a job requires it. The frequency of work varies from full time, five to six days a week, to dayplaying* on an as needed basis. Some jobs are as short as one day while others may last several months.

Nicole has been a production assistant for four years and learned on the job what a production assistant does since she did not attend film school. Responsibilities vary from controlling pedestrian traffic (lockups) to managing cast, crew, and background actors on set.

Nicole made friends on the job. One can see why she would easily make friends. Nicole comes across as personable, friendly, and pleasant. The friends learn from each other where the next job is.

Nicole enjoys her work. It is varied and interesting.

Co-President Miyako Kadogawa said Nicole is vibrant, enthusiastic and a great presenter. With a mind so well organized as she is in her work, excitement came through the Zoom screen.

Thank you to Nicole for the fascinating presentation.

report by Louise Sakamoto with Nicole's help

*Dayplaying: The Day Player is responsible for working on the production on a daily basis to ensure they fill in for missing crew members or offer additional help wherever it is needed on the set. This role requires a flexible individual with strong working knowledge of film production and sets. (from the Internet)

GLA JACL Membership

Since January 2023, GLA gained 13 new members, 9 in March alone. GLA has about 100 members.

New member Kaylilani Minami writes:

My name is Kaylilani and I currently live in my hometown of Cerritos. I am currently pursuing my MA in Intercultural Studies at Biola University with the hope to build intercultural bridges in our diverse community. I participated in the Kakehashi program in the Spring of 2019 and greatly valued that experience as a Japanese American visiting Japan for the first time. As such, I decided to join the JACL once I moved back here so that I can stay connected to my community, learn more about my culture, and pursue opportunities that may help me through grad school.

My grandfather is part Native Hawaiian and Japanese. He grew up in Lahaina, Maui.

SAVE THE DATE

GLA JACL Scholarship and Chapter Fundraiser Dance
Saturday, July 29, 2023
Nakaoka Community Center
1670 W. 162nd St., Gardena

Music by Asian Persuasion
Co-chairs: Miyako Kadogawa and Mitchell Matsumura

MR. NOBUHIKO "NOE" YAMABE



With heavy hearts, the Yamabe family Regrets to announce the passing of our beloved Noe Yamabe.

His warm heart, generous fun spirit and artistic talent will be deeply missed. He is survived by his loving family. Beloved husband to Mary; Beloved Father to Scott, Dayna, Jodi; Beloved grandfather to Makenna, Addison, Connor. His artistic talent portraying the Japanese American WW II Internment Camps are Memorialized with Dignity and Truth. A service and remembrance will be held at the, Orange County Buddhist Church, 909 S. Dale Ave., Anaheim, CA 92804 On Friday, March 17, 2023 at 2:00PM. www.Fukuimortuary.com (213) 626-0441

RAFU SHIMPO 3/4/2023 p.3

GLA, as Greater Los Angeles Singles, was the founder and promoter of the National JACL Singles Convention. There were 11 such conventions held in various cities and states. GLA sponsored a National JACL Singles Convention in 1995.

Mary Yamabe emails:

I first met Noe at the Singles Convention in 1995. I had recently returned to Los Angeles after spending three years in England where I had been working. I had a new boyfriend at the time and he took me and my single girlfriend to the dance. When they introduced Miyako and Noe as the "do-overs", I saw this handsome guy and my girlfriend wanted to meet him. So she and I walked over to where he was sitting and we introduced ourselves. I thought he was going to ask my friend to dance, but instead he asked me to dance instead!

The rest is "history" and he became the Love and Fun of my Life! I will miss him greatly, but I have many wonderful memories of our life together!

You can share this with the GLA friends!

Mary

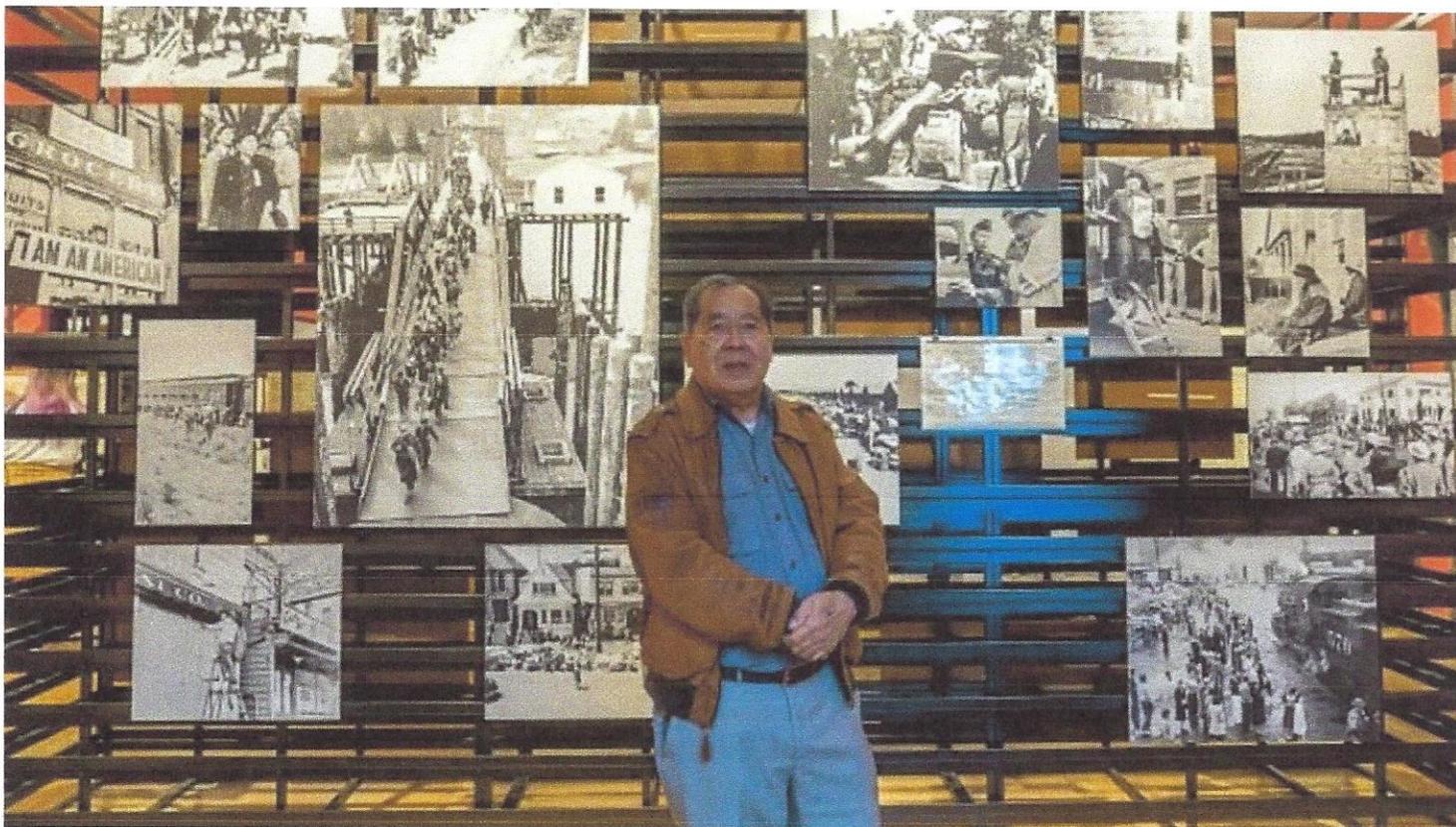
Japanese Americans won redress, fight for Black reparations

February 25th, 12:27 AM EST

Updated:

February 25th, 12:27 AM EST

By **The Associated Press**



Ron Wakabayashi tours the Japanese American National Museum in Los Angeles on Feb. 11, 2023. (AP Photo/Damian Dovarganes)

JANIE HAR

SAN FRANCISCO (AP) -- When Miya Iwataki and other Japanese Americans fought in the 1980s for the U.S. government to apologize to the families it imprisoned during World War II, Black politicians and civil rights leaders were integral to the movement.

Thirty-five years after they won that apology — and survivors of prison camps received \$20,000 each— those advocates are now demanding atonement for Black Americans whose ancestors were enslaved. From California to Washington, D.C., activists are joining revived reparations movements and pushing for formal government compensation for the lasting harm of slavery's legacy on subsequent generations, from access to housing and education to voting rights and employment.

Advocating for reparations is "the right thing to do," said Iwataki, a resident of South Pasadena, California who is in her 70s. She cited cross-cultural solidarity that has built up over decades.

Black lawmakers such as the late California congressmen Mervyn Dymally and Ron Dellums played critical roles in winning the Civil Liberties Act of 1988, which formalized the government's apology and redress payments.

Last Sunday marked the 81st anniversary of President Franklin D. Roosevelt signing an executive order that allowed the government to force an estimated 125,000 people — two-thirds of them U.S. citizens — from their homes and businesses, and incarcerate them in desolate, barbed-wire camps throughout the west.

"We want to help other communities win reparations, because it was so important to us," Iwataki said.

After stalling for decades at the federal level, reparations for slavery has received new interest amid a national reckoning over the 2020 police killing of George Floyd. Amid nationwide protests that year, California Gov. Gavin Newsom signed legislation that established a first-in-the-nation task force to address the topic of slave reparations.

Other cities and counties have since followed, including Boston, St. Louis, and San Francisco, where an advisory committee issued a draft recommendation last year proposing a lump-sum payment of \$5 million apiece for eligible individuals.

In December, the National Nikkei Reparations Coalition, alongside more than 70 other Japanese American and Asian American organizations, submitted a letter calling on the Biden administration to establish a presidential commission.

Japanese American activists in California are studying the landmark report issued by California's task force — and plan to reach out to college students, churches and other community groups to raise awareness about why Black reparations is needed — and how it intersects with their own struggle.

Reparations critics say that monetary compensation and other forms of atonement are not necessary when no one alive today was enslaved or a slave owner, overlooking the inequities today impacting later generations of Black Americans.

Retired teacher Kathy Masaoka of Los Angeles, who testified in 1981 for Japanese American redress and in 2021 in favor of federal reparations legislation, says they are just beginning to educate their own community about Black history and anti-Black prejudice.

She said that starting conversations in her community is "undoing a lot of ideas that people have" about American history and the case for reparations, said Masaoka, 74.

San Francisco attorney Don Tamaki, who is Japanese, is the only person appointed to California's nine-member task force who is not Black.

At meetings, he shared how critical it was for organizers to arrange for former detainees to tell their stories to national media outlets. Redress advocates had to make hard decisions though, such as agreeing to legislation that denied reparations to an estimated 2,000 Latin Americans of Japanese descent who were also incarcerated.

There is no equivalence to the experiences of the Japanese American and Black American communities, Tamaki said, but there are similar lessons, such as the need for a massive public education campaign.

Only 30% of U.S. adults surveyed by the Pew Research Center in 2021 supported reparations for slavery, 77% of whom were Black Americans. Support among Latinos and Asians was 39% and 33%, respectively, and white Americans had the lowest rate of support, at 18%.

Some advocates said that the idea of reparations for the World War II incarceration camps was once considered outlandish. But many young, third-generation Japanese Americans were inspired to mobilize from civil rights and ethnic pride movements, including the Black Panther Party and the Brown Berets, who promoted Chicano rights.

Some advocates were outraged by — and threatened to boycott — hearings set up by a 1980 federal commission on Japanese internment, called it a delaying tactic. But the testimonies that came out of public hearings the following year served as a turning point.

For the first time, many survivors shared stories that even their families didn't know, educating not only the younger generation but the broader American public.

"There was not a dry eye in the house at those hearings," said Iwataki, who worked with the National Coalition for Redress/Reparations to arrange transportation to the hearings, as well as meals and translators, for former detainees.

Many young Japanese Americans went from frustration with their grandparents and parents for not fighting back to understanding how vulnerable they were, said Ron Wakabayashi, who was then national director of the Japanese American Citizens League. The average age of second-generation Japanese Americans who were incarcerated in the camps was only 18, he said.

"Probably the more important thing that we got out of that was the generational healing, and the restoration of our identity," said Wakabayashi, 78.

The commission found no military necessity for the camps, saying the detentions stemmed broadly from "race prejudice, war hysteria and a failure of political leadership," according to a report issued in 1983.

President Ronald Reagan signed the Civil Liberties Act of 1988, providing living survivors with a formal apology and \$20,000 each for the "grave injustice" done to them. It would cost the U.S. government about \$1.6 billion.

Throughout the process, activists said, the Congressional Black Caucus remained a steadfast supporter of reparations. Then-Rep. Dymally authored a reparations bill in 1982 and later, provided his staff and office support so that advocates could lobby other members of Congress.

Another California congressman, Rep. Dellums, delivered a searing speech on the House floor of being a 6-year-old boy watching as his best friend, a Japanese American boy of the same age, was taken away to the camps.

A year after Reagan signed Japanese reparations into law, the late Congressman John Conyers introduced a bill to consider slavery reparations, named after the promise of 40 acres and a mule that the U.S. initially made to freed slaves. The bill has gone nowhere.

Dreisen Heath, an advocate for Black reparations, plans to travel from her home in the Washington, D.C. area to California in coming months to join artist and writer traci kato-kiriyama, whose parents were incarcerated as children, in leading workshops and educational forums. They hope to engage young Japanese American and Black American students in the current movement.

"Nothing ever worthwhile in this country has ever happened without intergenerational, multiracial (coalition) building," said Heath. "I see the Japanese American community, and by extension the Asian American community, indispensable to realizing reparations for Black people."

Kina Grannis is a new GLA JACL member.

Shared from the 2/11/2023 The Rafu Shimpo eEdition

Stem Cell Donor Sought for Musician Kina Grannis' Mother



Kina Grannis and her mother, Trish.

Dozens of celebrities – including Gemma Chan, Aloe Blacc, Kurt Schneider, Chef Melissa King, Colleen Ballinger and more – are coming together to support Japanese American YouTuber and singer-songwriter Kina Grannis' mother, Trish Grannis, as she searches for her life-saving blood stem cell donor.

Trish, or Mama G as she is lovingly called, was diagnosed with myelofibrosis in 2021, but her journey with blood cancer began long before when she was diagnosed with polycythemia vera, an incurable cancer, in the 2000. After years of experimentation with her medical team, Mama G found a treatment plan that seemingly eliminated all signs of the disease.

Unfortunately, following her more recent myelofibrosis diagnosis, she was informed that she needs a blood stem cell transplant to survive and partnered with DKMS, the world's largest blood stem cell donor center, to locate a match.

Through the outpouring of support from a starstudded list of celebrities – Mama G's son-in-law, Jesse Epstein, singsongwriter of Imaginary Future, her three daughters and more – over 4,000 individuals have signed up as potential donors on Mama G's behalf via DKMS' virtual registration drive.

However, being of Japanese descent only makes her search that much more difficult, as those of diverse heritage are underrepresented in the donor pool and individuals are more likely to match with donors of the same background.

The on-line drive, which can be found at <https://www.dkms.org/getinvolved/virtual-drives/amatchformamag>, has signed up 4,882 potential donors toward the goal of 5,000 as of Friday afternoon. The message from the family reads as follows: "Hi! Kina, Emi, and Misa Grannis here. Thanks for coming to help save our mom's life. Here's the deal: If you know our family, you know that our mom is an incredibly magical human. If you don't know our family, trust us when we tell you that she brings light to everything and everyone she touches. Right now, she needs your help ...

"1. Mama G has a bone marrow cancer called myelofibrosis.

"2. She needs a blood stem cell donor* as soon as possible to save her life.

"3. To see if you are her match, all you have to do is swab your cheeks with DKMS-provided swabs.

"4. Click the red REGISTER button to order your free swab kit and become our hero.

"Our mom is one of the best humans on Earth and her whole purpose in life is to spread joy wherever she goes. With your help, our hope is that she can keep spreading joy for many, many years to come ...

"If you are outside of the U.S., please register with your local DKMS or other bone marrow registry as our search will be conducted worldwide. We have included some helpful links at the bottom of the page.

"Our mom is Japanese, so there is a higher probability her perfect match is also Japanese. Please help spread the word if you know others of Japanese descent.

"The likelihood of Asians and other people of color finding a match is significantly lower due to a lack of representation in the registry. Let's change that!

"You can register if you're between the ages of 18-55. If you fall outside of that range, please consider sharing with people of those ages.

"If you don't match with Mama G, there's still a chance you could match with someone else and save their life.

"You are amazing. You are awesome. Thank you times infinity.

"*Due to our mom's specific condition, she needs a blood stem cell donor, not a bone marrow donor. It's a different (and much simpler) donation process. Either way, all that's required up front are cheek swabs."

International registries: (U.K.) www.dkms.org.uk/register-now (Africa) www.dkms-africa.org (India) www.dkms-bmst.org/register (Germany) www.dkms.de (Poland) www.dkms.pl (Chile) www.dkms.cl (Canada) <https://www.blood.ca/en/stemcells> or <https://www.hemaquebec.qc.ca/cellules-souches/donneur/index.en.html> (Japan) <https://www.jmdp.or.jp/sp/reg/about/For> all other countries, visit: <https://swabtheworld.com/en/become-a-donor>

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