



Greater Los Angeles Chapter
Japanese American Citizens League

Newsletter 456 November 2023



GLA JACL is inviting you to a scheduled Zoom meeting:

Topic: GLA JACL November Program

Time: Nov 12, 2023 01:00 PM Pacific Time (US and Canada)

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/83558750191?pwd=K000V1A1T2JpNnV3RnN0YjVXdFc2QT09>

Meeting ID: 835 5875 0191

Passcode: 644958

Nov 12 GLA JACL Meeting Agenda:

1pm - "Japanese American artists of the South Bay" Program moderator: Alvin Takamori

1:45pm - GLA JACL members meeting

- Board nominations:

Mary Yamabe, Lisa Akiyama Robinson, and Barbara Jean Tamura

- WWII Camp Wall event review

- Gentrification in Little Tokyo community forum review

2023 GLA JACL Scholarship and Chapter Fundraiser Dance

MONETARY DONORS Updated from list in September Newsletter. Donors since September are in bold.

\$500 Louise Sakamoto**
\$400 Chris Orimoto (Benevity Fund Donation)
\$270 Miyako Kadogawa
\$250 Monty Yamaga|
\$200 Doug Ikemi, **Jeff Dohzen (Schwab Charitable Donation)**
\$100 Yasuko Fordiani, Joyce Inouye, Grace Masuda, Mitchell & Gail Matsumura, Lyn Nishimura,
Aya Okada, Layne Sakamoto, Ron Wakabayashi
\$ 50 Chester Hashizume, Betty Kobata, Shirley Shishido, Mary Yamabe
\$ 35 Yoshie Sakai*
\$ 25 Barbara Takumi
\$ 20 **Susan DeGracia**

*Yoshie Sakai wanted to donate though she is not a GLA member and did not attend the dance.

**Louise made the decision to have bento instead of a table of donated food.

Donation is to offset cost of bento.



“Japanese American artists of the South Bay”

Sunday, November 12, 2023 Zoom Program at 1pm – 1:45pm

Featuring local artists working in different mediums: pastel artist Mike Ishikawa, batik artist Donna Nakasone, traditional sumi-e artist Asako Ota, multidisciplinary artist Yoshie Sakai who works with video, sculpture, installation and performance, and watercolor and acrylic painter Alvin Takamori.

Program moderator: Alvin Takamori

Born in Los Angeles, as the younger of two boys, to an accountant and a seamstress from Hawaii, Alvin grew up in Gardena. The encouragement of a kindergarten teacher introduced him to painting, and he’s been attracted to a creative life ever since.

After studying physics at Occidental College from 1979-1981, the desire to pursue creative interests led to a transfer to study industrial design at CSU Long Beach. In 1987, he began working at the studio of one of his former instructors. Stacy Dukes. There he was primarily a craftsman, building custom signage, displays, and benches and installing them. But he also did work as a draftsman, sculptor, model maker, designer and photographer.

With the development of computer technology, Alvin transitioned to a career in graphic design. For many years, he has created the graphics from ideation to production for the Gardena Valley Japanese Cultural Institute. It included flyers, posters, postcards, programs, calendars and signs.

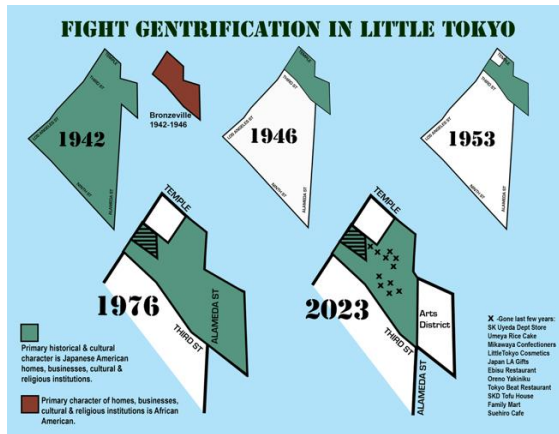
In the last decade, Alvin has returned to fine art, painting watercolors and acrylics. In his work, he depicts nature, family and community.

To RSVP and Zoom link: greaterlajacl@gmail.com

FIGHT GENTRIFICATION IN LITTLE TOKYO!

Join us for a community forum to strategize against evictions

Sunday, October 22nd
Union Church
401 E 3rd St, Los Angeles, CA 90013
2 to 4pm

Recap: Recent Gentrification in Little Tokyo

Our community was shocked to learn this summer that Suehiro Cafe being evicted from Little Tokyo by Tony Sperl

Suehiro's eviction is only the tip of the iceberg; in the last few years, we've lost at least a dozen community businesses

Little Tokyo stores closed, moved away, or evicted:

S.K. Uyeda Department Store	Mikawaya
Little Tokyo Cosmetics	Bar-B-Cue
Umeya Rice Cake Co.	SKD Tofu House
Tokyo Beat Restaurant	JapanLA Gift Shop
Oreno Yakiniku Japanese	Family Mart
Ebisu Japanese Tavern	Suehiro Cafe



Every time a community business closes, anywhere from a half dozen to twenty workers lose their jobs.

J-Town Action & Solidarity, Save Our Seniors Network, and GLA JACL cohosted a community forum about gentrification in Little Tokyo. We had a great meeting. 50 attended.

Suehiro Cafe in Little Tokyo is being evicted. What can we do about gentrification? The future of Little Tokyo on the line. A community forum was held October 22 at Union Church in Little Tokyo.

Plan of action:

- 1- We will have a rally by end of the year. Stay tuned for details.
- 2- More community forums planned to focus on issues at hand.
- 3- Coalition building. Many organizations to support.

Continuum Partners is partnering with longtime Downtown property owner Los Angeles Cold Storage to redevelop 7.6 acres of property at the intersection of 4th Street and Central Avenue. The project, named Fourth & Central, would include up to:

- 1,521 residential units
- 401,000 square feet of office space
- 93,000 square feet of shops and restaurants
- 68-room hotel

**Following are nominations for the GLA JACL Executive Board.
Elections will be held at the November 12 meeting.
Questions regarding nominations, email Mitchell mmatsumura@sbcglobal.net
or email Louise at LSakamoto@sbcglobal.net**

2024 GLA JACL EXECUTIVE BOARD

CABINET OFFICERS

President	Mitchell Matsumura
Past President	Janet Okubo
Vice President, Legislation	open
Vice President, Programs & Membership	Louise Sakamoto
Vice President, Young Adults Group	Andrew Gruhn
Treasurer	Layne Sakamoto
Recording Secretary	open

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

2nd Year

Joyce Inouye
Joyce Okazaki
Kanji Sahara

1st Year

Miyako Kadogawa
Lisa Akiyama Robinson (new to board)
Mary Yasui Yamabe (new to board)
Barbara Jean Tamura (new to board)

Miyako Kadogawa resigned as Co-President and will become a Board Member.

Erica Harris resigned as Recording Secretary. She is attending U.C. San Diego.

Layne Sakamoto was also Scholarship Chair. Layne resigned as Scholarship Chair.

Scholarship Chair is a board position. A board member may volunteer to be Scholarship Chair.

Vice President, Legislation was left open when there were two co-presidents.

Kanji Sahara formerly held the position

Board of Directors may have maximum of 20 directors. Would anyone like to be a board member?



Lisa Akiyama Robinson is a long time member of the Torrance/Gardena community. Her family owns the nursery Sunflower Farms that has been serving the South Bay since 1962. Most recently she completed Leadership Torrance, a program offered through the Torrance Chamber of Commerce and is currently co-directing Leadership Torrance 2024.

Lisa Akiyama Robinson serves as a Board Member of OCA Orange County and has been involved since 2009. OCA-Asian Pacific American Advocates is a nonprofit organization founded in 1973 that has been dedicated to advancing the social, political, and economic well-being of Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders. She served as the Education and Multicultural Affairs Chair during her first year, and in 2010 as Chapter President. During her time as Chapter President, she also served as the Public Affairs Chair for the Orange County President's Council.

Lisa graduated from the University of California, Irvine with a major in Political Science and a minor in Education. As a member of the Legislative Staff for State Senator Tom Harman, she directed the District Internship program, represented the Senator at events, and organized all aspects of District Advisory events.

Lisa is deeply honored for the opportunity to work with JACL!



Mary Yamabe serves as Board Member on the Board of Directors of the Kinecta Federal Credit Union which is headquartered in Manhattan Beach CA. She has served as Past Chair of the Kinecta Federal Credit Union Board of Directors and Past Chair of the Kinecta Financial Management Company, LLC Board of Directors.

Ms Yamabe has served as a Credit Union Volunteer since 1994.

Ms Yamabe was the founding President of the Hughes Asian Pacific Professional Association which was sponsored by Hughes Aircraft Company and transferred to Boeing and Raytheon as an employee association. She also served as the Founding Chair of the Hughes Diversity Council reporting to the CEO of Hughes Aircraft Company. In 2001, Ms. Yamabe received the LEAP (Leadership Education for Asian Pacifics) award for Outstanding Asian Pacific American Leadership.

Her financial career with Hughes Aircraft Company began in 1977. A highlight of her career was a three year special assignment in London, England to establish the business organization for a Hughes /GM subsidiary. Upon her return to the USA, she was appointed as the Chief Financial Officer for Hughes Research Laboratories, LLC (HRL) owned jointly by Boeing , General Motors and Raytheon from 1996 to 2006. HRL Laboratories is located in Malibu, California where she also served on the Board of Directors of the Malibu Chamber of Commerce from 1998-2006.

After Mary retired from HRL Laboratories, she obtained a real estate broker license and established the Mary Yamabe Realty.

She has been a long time member and supporter of the GLA JACL.

Mary Yamabe received a BS in Finance from California State University in Los Angeles and a MBA from Loyola Marymount University.



Barbara Jean Tamura is a Sansei Japanese American, born in San Mateo, CA in the 1960's. She moved to Foster City before relocating to Torrance in the late 1970's, when her father accepted an Art Director position at Mattel in Hawthorne, CA (his 1923 birthplace). Barbara was introduced and interested in the JACL when her parents were active members of the San Mateo JACL in 1960-1977.

Her Father Robert Asaka Tamura was a record-holding track athlete with friend Jackie Robinson when competing at the LA Coliseum before going to the Olympics. But in 1942, his family was evacuated to Rohwer, AK internment camp per EO 9066. From camp, he served in the Army MIS/110th Battalion. After camp, the GI bill granted him attendance at LA Art Center where later he became a Disney illustrator at Paramount Studios New York, and before retirement, was a freelance artist and the Sr. Art Director at Mattel in Hawthorne, CA. Barbara's Mother Mary (Izumi) Tamura was interned in 1942 in Gila River, AZ camp before she quickly got bored and left the camp in a month after seeing a poster calling for young women to become an RN for free at Mayo Clinic in Rochester, MN due to a shortage of nurses who went overseas in WWII. Her Uncle Kats realized that after camp, many Japanese Americans needed beds and appliances, so he opened the Tamura & Co. Furniture store in Los Angeles.

Barbara's parental experiences and love for helping others less fortunate lead her to pursue a degree from CSU Long Beach in Elementary Education, with a minor in Asian American Studies. After working as an Editor for TRW/Northrup, she obtained her teaching credential and taught at an inner-city school in Watts for many years. Later, her love for fast cars lead her to a career change to the Automotive Industry where she was employed at the headquarters for Nissan, Mitsubishi, and currently works at DENSO Sales, an affiliate of Toyota Motors.

On her free time, Barbara loves volleyball, enjoyed teaching Sunday School at her church, was a volunteer at Torrance Memorial Hospital, and held free reading classes/gave away books to needy children and adults at the Hope for the Homeless organization in downtown LA Skid Row. She is involved in the dog rescue community and loves her 3 formerly abused dogs.

Barbara recently joined JACL and is looking forward to being of service and involvement to the Los Angeles and South Bay communities.