



# THE RICE PAPER

A newsletter of the Twin Cities Chapter  
of the Japanese American Citizens League

e-mail: [info@tcjacl.org](mailto:info@tcjacl.org)

website: [www.tcjacl.org](http://www.tcjacl.org) | [@TwinCitiesJACL](https://www.instagram.com/TwinCitiesJACL)

## January 2025

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### CHAPTER CONTACT INFORMATION

Twin Cities JACL, PO Box 580325,  
Minneapolis, MN 55458

[www.tcjacl.org](http://www.tcjacl.org) (click on "connect";  
then write message in box)

[info@tcjacl.org](mailto:info@tcjacl.org)

### PRESIDENT'S REMARKS

明けましておめでとうございます!  
Happy New Year!

I hope you have all had a pleasant start to the new year. Earlier this month, the board gathered to plan our chapter activities for the coming year. Following last year's chapter elections, we currently have a team of 15 board members and committee representatives. Departing the board after long records of dedicated service to our community, we wish Lisa Shakerin and Asia O'Neil the best of luck on their next journeys and hope that our paths continue to cross. I would also like to announce that we have vacancies for a Treasurer and a Youth/Student representative, so please reach out if you or anyone you know would be interested in getting involved!

This year, we are looking forward to several great opportunities to gather as a community. Next month, we will be holding our [Day of Remembrance screening of the film \*Kintsukuroi\*](#) at the Minnesota History Center on Sunday, February 16th and hope to see many of you there! In March, we will be hosting representatives from JACL chapters across the Midwest for the Midwest District Council summit. In July, we will have another installment of our popular Summer Picnic. In August, we will gather at the Como Park Obon Festival. In October we will have another exciting guest speaker for our annual Chrysanthemum Banquet. And in between, we will have many other events, workshops, and opportunities to eat together, so keep your eyes on your inbox and social media feeds!

This past Monday, January 20th, we observed the inauguration of Donald Trump as the 47th president of the United States. As a civil rights organization first and foremost, we will remain vigilant of the incoming administration and do what we can to protect the rights and liberties of everyone who calls our great country home. Please reach out any time if there is any way we can better support you as your chapter.

良い一年になりますように。  
May it become a good year.

In solidarity,

Vinicius Taguchi  
Chapter President

# UPCOMING EVENTS - Save the Dates

## JK's Table Fundraiser

On Thursday, January 30, 2025, from 6:30-8:30 PM, TaikoArts Midwest and Wooden Hill Brewing Company, are co-sponsoring a fundraiser to help Junko Kumamoto and her husband Kuma who own a wonderful Japanese restaurant, JK's Table in Edina. Kuma was injured in a car accident last October and unfortunately has not been able to work full time. They have been forced to shorten their business hours.

One way to help them is to attend the fundraiser on January 30. It will be at the Wooden Hill Brewing Company, 7421 Bush Lake Road in Edina, MN. A taiko performance by Enso Daiko will be featured. Ten percent of taproom purchases will go to JK's Table. Donations can also be made by going to Venmo@Junko-Kumamoto.



## Day of Remembrance

### KINTSUKUROI: Twin Cities Premiere Film Screening

**Sunday, February 16, 2-5 PM**

**Minnesota History Center, 345 W. Kellogg Blvd., St. Paul**

The TCJACL, the Minnesota Historical Society, and Ikeibi Films are partnering for a Twin Cities Premiere Film Screening of KINTSUKUROI. The event is in commemoration of the Day of Remembrance, observed yearly on February 19<sup>th</sup>, as a day for the Japanese community to reflect and share the history of the forced incarceration of over 120,000 people of Japanese ancestry shortly after the start of World War II. Following the screening will be a panel discussion moderated by Steve Ozone (TCJACL member, Filmmaker and Photographer) with Kerwin Berk (Director), and Jon Funabiki and Gregory Wada (Film Consultants and descendants of MIS servicemen).

KINTSUKUROI follows members of the Ito family from their pre-war life in San Francisco's Japantown to the concentration camps of the American West to the battlefields of Europe as they struggle to pick up the pieces of their shattered lives. The film features Ryan Takemiya, Kealani Kitaura, Ken Takeda, Ron Munekawa, Kiyomi Koide, and Chizu Omori. "Kintsukuroi" is a Japanese word meaning – 1. the Japanese art of repairing pottery using gold; and 2. The strength and beauty found in something that has been broken.

The event will close with a reception, catered by JK's Table. Proceeds in part from this event will benefit the Twin Cities chapter of the Japanese American Citizens League. It is sponsored by the TCJACL Suzukamo Fund. Visit <https://www.mnhs.org/events/3094> for more information and to purchase tickets.

The event is planned to be live streamed and recorded.

*Submitted by Kimmy Tanaka*

## Book Club Discussion

The next book club discussion will take place on February 27 at 7 PM. The group will discuss the novel, Vegetarian, by Kang Han. She was born in South Korea and teaches creative writing at the Seoul Institute of the Arts. The Library Journal describes the novel as spare and spectacular in which a multigeneration, seeming traditional Seoul family implodes. The main character, Yeong-hye, has torturous dreams and renounces eating meat. What follows is her family's attempts to change her and the results of their efforts.

If interested in the discussion to come, or the book club in general, contact Ammanda Neitz at [amneitz@gmail.com](mailto:amneitz@gmail.com) for more information.

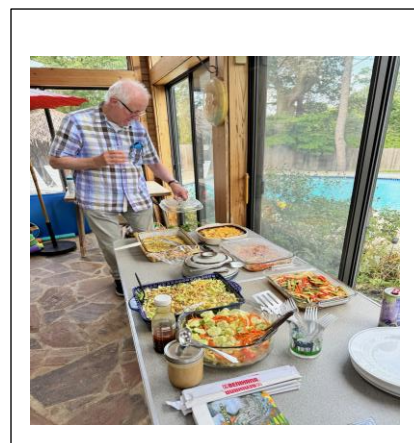
## Music Makers

The National Japanese American Historical Society is planning its last workshop for the season for Saturday, March 1 from 9 AM to 4 PM. It is titled "Musicmakers: Bands Behind Barbed Wire" and will be accessed virtually. The workshop investigates why Japanese American youth embraced American jazz during the difficult times of incarceration. The workshop can be audited.

For more information, contact Kimmy Tanaka at [Kimmy.tanaka@mnhs.org](mailto:Kimmy.tanaka@mnhs.org).

## Cookbook Potluck

TC JACL updated and republished their cookbook, Bridging the Generations in 2022. About two to three times a year a group of members and partners meet for a casual potluck dinner. We each make a dish from the cookbook to share with everyone. There are good conversations and people meeting new and old friends.



The photos above were taken at last summer's cookbook potluck, hosted by Gloria Kumagai and Steve Savitt. In the foreground Sylvia Farrells, Karen Suzukamo, and John Bennett are enjoying conversation while Les Suzukamo, Lani Bennett, Steve Lucas, and Jon Dickerson are setting up. On the right, Jon Dickerson looks at the prepared dishes, deciding which ones he wants to try.

The next TC JAACL Cookbook Potluck is being hosted by Lani Bennett on Sunday, March 2, 2025 from 5-7 PM. Her address is 915 Albion Avenue in St. Paul. Please let Lani know if you are planning to attend – 651-238-7250 or [lanibennett808@gmail.com](mailto:lanibennett808@gmail.com).

If you are interested in participating in these events, please contact Gloria Kumagai at [gloriak377@aol.com](mailto:gloriak377@aol.com) or 612-201-7447 OR Amy Dickerson at [adickerson323@gmail.com](mailto:adickerson323@gmail.com) or 612-554-5023.

## Book Talk and Panel

Professor Ka Wong's new book, Enmity and Empathy: Race, Resettlement and Remembrance of Japanese Americans in Minnesota during WWII is being published by the Minnesota Historical Society (MHS) and should be available in May 2025. The program will be on Saturday, March 22, 2025 from 2-3:30 PM at the Minnesota History Center. Ka Wong will present the historical context of the wartime incarceration and Twin Cities resettlement. Currently MHS is hosting a traveling exhibit from the Smithsonian called "Girlhood: It's Complicated". So, in concert with the book and the exhibit, MHS will host a panel discussion with Twin Cities residents, Sally Sudo and Anna Tanaka Murakami, about their experiences in Minnesota.

## MDC's Spring Meeting

The Midwest District Council (MDC) is holding its semi-annual meeting in the Twin Cities on Saturday, March 29. Most of the meeting will take place at the Carlisle in downtown Minneapolis. About 15 representatives from the other Midwest chapters will be discussing issues of interest and concern to this area of the country. One of the exciting events planned for those attending the meeting is the opportunity to attend the opening night's performance of Rick Shiomi's play, Secret Warriors.

## Secret Warriors

The History Theater in St. Paul will present Rick Shiomi's play, Secret Warriors, from March 29 – April 19, 2025. Rick Shiomi, the playwright, received the inspiration for his play from the Japanese Americans who studied at Camp Savage and Fort Snelling to become fluent in speaking, reading, and writing Japanese to help in the war effort in the Pacific Theater during World War II.

"Secret Warriors" features two men, Koji Kimura and Tamio Takahashi, who took extraordinary risks to save their fellow soldiers in the Pacific Theater during World War II. As the eyes and ears of General MacArthur, they saved countless Allied lives and shortened the war by two years. Discover their compelling personal journeys and heartfelt love stories set against the backdrop of the war and the incarceration of their families. [Excerpt from the History Theater's website]

The TCJAACL's Education Committee was asked to provide a display in the lobby. It was decided to provide three pull up panels covering the JA experience during WWII and four photo panels for the theater vestibule. Kimmy Tanaka and the MHS staff are developing the panels.

*Submitted by the TCJAACL Education Committee*

## Meet and Eat

Do you want to meet up with friends for a delicious dinner, catch up with friends and meet new friends? TC JACL is putting together several Meet and Eat Events this year. This is how it works: We choose a restaurant (Asian theme) to meet at. Then you come and meet up with us. Everyone is responsible for their own dinner and you enjoy a fun night out!

The last Meet and Eat was held last summer at the Gyokaku Japanese restaurant in south Minneapolis. It was an all you could cook and eat meal. The group chose a pre-set selection of entrees (several kinds of beef, chicken, and a seafood and then had to cook them on table grills. There also was a variety of other sides such as a salad and pickled vegetables. We ate til we were “stuffed” and yet there was still food to take home.

Our next event is planned for April, then another on September 16. If this is an event that you want to receive information about, please contact Amy Dickerson at [adickerson323@gmail.com](mailto:adickerson323@gmail.com) or her cell at 612-554-5023 OR Gloria Kumagai at her cell 612-201 7447 or at [gloriak377@aol.com](mailto:gloriak377@aol.com)



Pictured (start from left and then clockwise) are James & Sylvia Farrells, Karen & Steve Lucas, Amy & Jon Dickerson, Vincent Platt & Carolyn Nayematsu, and Gloria Kumagai

## History Forum

The Minnesota Historical Society will be presenting Catherine Ceniza Choy at its Saturday, April 12, 2025 forum. Her topic will be “Asian American Histories of the United States” and is part of a series of six History Forums. The program is from 11 AM to 12 noon at the Minnesota History Center, 345 W. Kellogg Blvd., St. Paul.

Professor Choy is an Asian American historian and professor of Ethnic Studies at the University of California, Berkely. She has written several books about nursing in Filipino American History and international adoption in America. At the forum she will be speaking of a nearly 200-year history of Asian migration, labor, and community formation in the United States. She writes of a profound lack of understanding of Asian American history in American culture and tells of the experiences and diverse voice of immigrants, refugees, US-born Asian Americans, and multiracial Americans. (Information taken from the Minnesota History Center website.)

# Twin Cities JACL Scholarship News

## 2025 High School Graduate Scholarship Applications Available

Twin Cities JACL scholarship applications for 2025 high school graduates are available at the following link: <https://www.tcjacl.org/scholarships/apply/>

Hardcopy applications will be sent to the following students no later than January 31, 2025. Please contact Pam Dagoberg at [scholarship@tcjacl.org](mailto:scholarship@tcjacl.org) if you are interested in being sent a hardcopy application but are not listed below, or if you would like to recommend someone for a scholarship.

- Eva Bissonette (Andover High School)
- Alexander Sasha Bly (Irondale High School)
- Molly Hanson Hilton (Minnetonka High School)
- Sage Kiritschenko (East Ridge High School)
- Chaise Olson (Andover High School)
- Romare Onishi (Minneapolis)
- Melody Parkhurst (Chaska High School)
- Nathanael Sahara (Minneapolis)
- Sumiko Webb (Minneapolis)

In addition to completing the application form and submitting a transcript, students must write a short essay entitled “The Relevance of JACL Today.” Applications are evaluated based on:

- Scholastic achievement
- Extracurricular activities
- Community Service
- Essay

Students may choose to apply for the Twin Cities JACL Service Scholarship. This scholarship will be awarded to a student who has demonstrated outstanding JACL volunteerism. If applicants are not selected for this scholarship, they will be considered for other awards.

Scholarship recipients must be current Twin Cities JACL members (individual student membership or family membership is required). Membership information can be found at the following link: <https://www.tcjacl.org/join/>

Completed applications for Twin Cities JACL scholarships must be postmarked by April 2, 2025.

## 2024 Undergraduate Scholarship Award

The 2024 Undergraduate scholarship was recently awarded to a Twin Cities JACL member pursuing a Bachelor’s degree. **Zackary Sikkink** was honored with the **2024 Twin Cities Japanese American Citizens League Earl and Ruth Tanbara Memorial Undergraduate Scholarship**. Zack is currently pursuing a Bachelor’s degree. He is a Systems Engineering and Computer Science major at the University of Virginia. A few of his accomplishments include being on the Dean’s List and a member of the Phi Eta Sigma Honor Society. Zack is a Research Assistant for the Intelligent Systems Lab at UVA and for the Graph and Network Data Research Group. Last summer he was a software engineering intern at Unwired Consulting and worked at Bear Cave Brewing Co. He is also active in the UVA Japanese Student Association, the Sports Chair of the Korean Student Association, and plays pickleball and dodgeball with the UVA Clubs.

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In his scholarship application essay, Zack acknowledges how technological systems are becoming more complex and permeate nearly every aspect of our lives. Systems engineering appeals to him because it will teach him how to understand, design, and optimize these increasingly intricate systems. As technology's influence grows, Zack believes the need for engineers who can manage, optimize and ethically guide these systems grows as well. By creating models that foster interdisciplinary research and developing technologies that enhance human work, Zack hopes to contribute to a future where technology empowers individuals and creates new opportunities.

Congratulations, Zack! We wish you nothing but the best as you continue your studies at the University of Virginia.

### **Additional Scholarship information**

Information about the history of the Twin Cities JACL scholarship program can be found at the following link: <https://www.tcjacl.org/scholarships/history/>

Donations may be sent to Twin Cities JACL Scholarship c/o Fred Tsuchiya, 5311 Scenic Heights Drive, Minnetonka, MN, 55345.

If you are interested in learning more about available scholarships, please contact [scholarship@tcjacl.org](mailto:scholarship@tcjacl.org).

In addition to the Twin Cities JACL Scholarship Program, graduating high school seniors may also choose to apply for a **National JACL Scholarship**. This is a separate scholarship program with its own application form and unique requirements. More information can be found at the following link:

<https://jacl.org/scholarships>

*Submitted by Pam Dagoberg*

## **JA Veterans Program Cancelled**

After last year's extremely successful and heartfelt program at Fort Snelling National Cemetery in May, the committee had thought to plan another program for May 2025. However, after careful consideration, it was decided NOT to have another program this year. Instead, at a yet undetermined date and time, TCJACL members and friends will place flowers at each veteran's grave site. After more definite plans have been made, volunteers will be needed to help with the flower placements. An announcement will be made regarding the date, time, responsibilities, etc.

It was pointed out that donations made in 2024 for the Memorial program are restricted for future Memorial Day programs.

## **Cooking Class with Sally Sudo**

It's a first! Planned for June 15, 2025, Sally Sudo, one of the queens of Japanese cooking, will reveal her secrets for making "manju." According to an internet site, "manju" are small buns that are steamed or baked and filled with sweet bean paste or some other sweet filling (the article didn't say). They are traditionally round with a smooth outer layer, but baked versions in various shapes are also popular. Examples of the baked versions include "momiji-manju" from Hiroshima. Details will be given in the next issue.

## Annual Summer Picnic

When the temperature drops to near zero here in Minnesota, one has to dream of all the events one can experience during warm weather. Did you think of TC JACL's summer picnic? Look for the location and date in the next newsletter. Thank you to Asia O'Neill for her leadership in the planning of the picnic for the last two years. If you like eating cotton candy, that was one of Asia's ideas. At this time, there is no firm commitment to lead the picnic planning. If you are interested in being on the committee, please let a board member know.

## Obon Festival

Why are we concerned about the Obon Festival now? The festival is already planned for August 17. The answer is DONATIONS!

TC JACL's major fundraiser each year is the Obon Festival in Como Park. This event is on the third Sunday in August. We sell our festival items and donated items from our members. In the past few years, the member donations have been a major part of the funds raised. We have received books, kimonos, dishes, cooking items, Japanese dolls, etc. Many of you may be thinking of down-sizing or decluttering. You can spend these cold winter days finding treasures.

If you have items you are interested in donating to the TC JACL, you can contact Amy Dickerson at [adickerson323@gmail.com](mailto:adickerson323@gmail.com) or on her cell phone 612-554-5023.

**Thank you to all those who have donated in the past!**



See the different kinds of items that are available for sale at last summer's festival!



## Recent Events

### Community Activism – Alien Land Laws in the U.S.

Last week, on Wednesday, January 8, 2025, Karen Tanaka Lucas attended a workshop focused on the resurrection of Alien Land Laws in the U.S. About half of the 50 states have already passed laws that prevent the Chinese from purchasing homes/businesses. Minnesota was not mentioned, but Gloria Kumagai, who the webinar on the same subject, later discovered that Minnesota has an Alien Farm Law that was passed in 1977. Here are some of Gloria's notes on the information presented.

#### From Internment to Birthright Debates: Protecting Civil Rights for All

National JACL sends out a weekly digest that includes national news and webinars on various social justice issues. You can sign up for it at [Weekly Digest – JACL](#). Recently, webinars have focused on alien land laws and the Alien Enemies Act, which have been used against Japanese Americans in shaping our history. Birthright citizenship has also been discussed.

#### Alien Land Laws: Historical Context and Modern Echoes

Enacted in the early 1900s, Alien Land Laws primarily targeted Asian immigrants, especially Japanese, by restricting their ability to own or lease land. For instance, California's 1913 Alien Land Law prohibited "aliens ineligible for citizenship" from owning land or entering into long-term leases, effectively discriminating against Asian immigrants who were barred from naturalization. Japanese immigrants had to lease land for farming. Or, buy land in the name of their American-born children.

Although these laws were eventually overturned or repealed, recent legislative trends have evoked their memory. In recent years, there has been a resurgence of legislative efforts reminiscent of the Alien Land Laws, primarily targeting foreign nationals from specific countries:

- **State Legislation:** Between January 2023 and July 2024, at least 22 states have enacted laws regulating foreign ownership of real property. Many of these laws specifically restrict land ownership by Chinese entities and individuals, citing national security concerns. (Minnesota has an Alien Farm Law, enacted in 1977 when Southeast Asians were immigrating to Minnesota. Only citizens of the United States, permanent resident aliens, and business entities that have less than 20% foreign interest can own or lease land.)
- **Florida's Senate Bill 264 (SB 264):** This law prohibits Chinese nationals, and those from other countries deemed to be a threat, from purchasing property near military and other critical infrastructure, as well as agricultural land. Critics argue that such laws are reminiscent of historical discriminatory practices and may lead to racial profiling.

These contemporary laws have raised concerns about their broader implications:

- **Targeting U.S. Citizens:** There are reports that these laws have been applied to American-born Chinese scholars and U.S. citizens of Chinese descent, leading to fears of discrimination based on ethnicity rather than actual national security threats.

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- **Legal Challenges:** Some of these laws have faced legal challenges on grounds that they violate constitution rights and may be preempted by federal law. For instance, Florida’s SB 264 has been contested in court, with plaintiffs arguing that it infringes upon their rights.

The revival of such restrictive land ownership laws has prompted comparisons to the Alien Land Laws of the past. Groups like the American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU) have expressed alarm, stating that these modern laws are “terrifyingly reminiscent” of the 20<sup>th</sup> century Alien Land Laws that targeted Asian immigrants.

The implementation of these laws under the guise of national security echoes past justifications for discriminatory policies, raising fears of repeating historical injustices against minority communities.

### **Alien Enemies Act: From World War II to Contemporary Debates**

The Alien Enemies Act of 1798 grants the U.S. president authority to detain or deport citizens of enemy nations during wartime. During World War II, this act provided the legal basis for the internment of Japanese Americans, among others, leading to significant violations of civil liberties.

In recent years, there have been discussions about invoking the Alien Enemies Act to implement mass deportations. Notably, President Donald Trump has proposed using this act as a means to expedite the removal of certain immigrant groups.

Such suggestions have been met with strong opposition from civil rights organizations, including JACL, which condemns the potential misuse of this historical law.

While the original Alien Land Laws and the wartime application of the Alien Enemies Act are historical, their legacies persist in the collective memory of Japanese Americans. We need to remain vigilant against policies that echo past injustices. The resurgence of legislative proposals reminiscent of Alien Land Laws and discussions about the Alien Enemies Act serve as reminders of the need to protect civil liberties and prevent discrimination based on nationality or ethnicity.

Although the Alien Land Laws and the Alien Enemies Act originated in specific historical contexts, their implications continue to resonate. Ongoing debates and legislative proposals highlight the importance of remembering past injustices to inform present and future policy decisions, ensuring that the rights of all communities, including Japanese Americans, are safeguarded.

### **Birthright Citizenship**

The topic of birthright citizenship, guaranteed under the 14th Amendment to the U.S. Constitution, has been a recurring subject of political debate, especially in recent years. President Trump has and is proposing ending birthright citizenship, specifically targeting children born in the United States to undocumented immigrants or non-citizens. This proposal has reignited fears within communities, including Japanese Americans, who are sensitive to policies reminiscent of discriminatory practices from the past

The 14th Amendment, adopted in 1868, was designed to ensure citizenship rights for formerly enslaved individuals. Its "Citizenship Clause" declares that all persons born or naturalized in the United States are U.S. citizens. Over the years, it has been interpreted to include children born to immigrants, regardless of their parents' legal status. This principle of *jus soli* (right of the soil) has been a cornerstone of U.S. immigration and civil rights law.

President Trump continues to propose using an executive order to end birthright citizenship, arguing that the U.S. Constitution does not require granting citizenship to the children of undocumented immigrants. This proposal raises significant constitutional questions, as altering this right would likely require a constitutional amendment or judicial reinterpretation.

Such a move would have far-reaching consequences, particularly for immigrant communities. Critics argue that ending birthright citizenship could create a large stateless population within the U.S. and exacerbate inequalities by targeting specific racial and ethnic groups.

### **Impact on Japanese Americans and Historical Parallels**

During World War II, Japanese Americans, including U.S.-born citizens, were interned under the guise of national security, highlighting how citizenship alone was insufficient protection against racism and xenophobia.

Ending birthright citizenship could lead to a redefinition of American identity, drawing new lines of exclusion. JACL and civil rights groups have voiced concerns about these proposals, emphasizing the need to protect constitutional guarantees that uphold equality and inclusion.

Japanese Americans, along with other marginalized groups, have actively opposed attempts to undermine birthright citizenship, recognizing the interconnectedness of struggles for racial justice and immigrant rights. Their advocacy underscores the importance of learning from historical injustices to resist policies that could repeat such exclusions.

The proposal to end birthright citizenship represents a significant challenge to the principles of equality enshrined in the U.S. Constitution. For communities like Japanese Americans, who have faced historical discrimination, these debates are more than political—they are deeply personal reminders of the ongoing fight for civil rights and justice. Safeguarding birthright citizenship is not just about protecting a legal principle; it is about ensuring that all individuals born in the United States are recognized as equal members of the nation, regardless of their heritage or ancestry.

Proposals to eliminate birthright citizenship evoke memories of policies like the Alien Land Laws and the Alien Enemies Act, which systematically targeted our community. Will Japanese Americans be targeted again? Or, is the question when will we be targeted again?

*Submitted by Gloria Kumagai*

## **Creating Connections: The Role of Community in Minnesota-Japan Relations**

Creating Connections: The Role of Community in Minnesota-Japan Relations was a free event held on October 15, 2024 in partnership with the Embassy of Japan in the United States. It was funded by the Japan Ministry of Foreign Affairs, and the East-West Center in Washington. It coincided with the visit of Ambassador of Japan to the United States Shigeo Yamada and included an exemplary taiko performance by TaikoArts Midwest,, an informative discussion, and reception at the Minneapolis Institute of Art with local experts on Japan-Minnesota relations and remarks from Ambassador Yamada.

Speakers were:

- **Ambassador Yamada**, Ambassador of Japan to the United States
- **Representative Samantha Sencer-Mura**, District 63A, Minnesota House of Representatives
- **Bob Luck**, President, Japan America Society of Minnesota
- **Steve Gullickson**, President, MGK
- **Bob Sinner**, President, SB&B Foods, Inc., North Dakota
- **Dr. Satu Limaye**, Vice President, East West Center & Director, Research Program and East-West Center in Washington
- **Dr. Matthew Welch**, Deputy Director and Chief Curator of the Minneapolis Institute of Arts
- **Dr. Arthur Mitchell**, Chair and Associate Professor of Asian Languages and Cultures, Macalester College

Ambassador Yamada spoke about arriving in Minnesota with limited English and being overwhelmed by the generous welcome and support he received.

Representative Mura talked about her trip to Japan with Minnesota farmers and how she authored the bill for teaching ethnic studies in our schools.

Panelists Luck, Gullickson, Sinner, Welch, Limaye, and Mitchell spoke about the shared values and mutual trust between Japan and Minnesota. I learned that Sinner, the President of SB&B Foods, produces tofu in North Dakota. It is the best-selling tofu in Japan!

The panel discussion was followed by a reception where one could network with the other attendees and Ambassador Yamada.



Pictured from left to right are Gloria Kumagai, Ambassador Yamada, and Linda van Dooijeweert



Several TCJACL Board members at the luncheon with Ambassador Yamada

This event can be seen on YouTube at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qow97Fu-gE0>

## Fall 2024 Happenings

### Give to the MAX Day

It was announced that the fundraiser, held in November, just before Thanksgiving, resulted in 20 individual gifts.

### Annual Board Election

Ammanda Neitz, chair of the Nominations Committee, announced at our December Annual Meeting that all three of the candidates running for the TCJACL Board were elected. They are Karen Tanaka Lucas, Steve Ozone, and Vini Taguchi. Check out page 1, left column, to see what positions on the board they will hold for 2025. Congratulations to all of them!

## More about the TCJACL Annual Chrysanthemum Banquet October 6, 2024



Standing outside the Round Tower are Amy Dickerson, Naomi, and Carolyn Nayematsu



Amy Dickerson and Naomi Ostwald Kawamura

“To pass stories to the next generation,” is the meaning of the Japanese word, Denshō and was the theme of this year’s Chrysanthemum Banquet, which took place on October 6, 2024. Naomi Ostwald Kawamura, the Executive Director of [Densho](#), a nonprofit organization, was the keynote speaker. Speaking to a full room at the Minnesota Humanities Center, she shared the history of Densho, which started in 1996 with a mission to preserve oral histories from Japanese Americans who were incarcerated during World War II. Since then, they have collected thousands of photos and first hand accounts about Japanese American history in their digital archives. Expanding beyond oral history, Ostwald Kawamura described the breadth of their work including the Densho Encyclopedia (a free on-line resource), the Names Registry (searchable database of individuals held in the WRA camps), Sites of Shame (an interactive map of all WWII incarceration sites), along with a variety of educator resources for teachers to use in their classrooms. This was Ostwald Kawamura’s second visit to the Twin Cities within five months and expressed delight at our warm welcome and continued partnership between the TC JACL and Densho.

A highlight of the evening was the presentation of the National JACL Silver Pin Award from Sally Sudo and Vini Taguchi to Cheryl Hirata-Dulas to honor the nearly thirty years of contributions to the Education Committee and to the Twin Cities Japanese American Citizens League as a whole. Hirata-Dulas served on the board for ten years and was president of the chapter from 2000-2003. She was instrumental in founding the TC JACL Education Committee and since the 1990s has coordinated hosting traveling exhibits, teachers' workshops, partner projects with the Minnesota Historical Society and Densho, digitized publications of the Rice Paper, and most recently, organizing the Japanese American Veterans Memorial program in May of 2024. As Sally described, Cheryl has worked quietly behind the scenes for many years and is an "unsung hero" among us.



Congratulations, Cheryl, for all the wonderful things you have done for the chapter over the years!

Another thank you to the following TC JACL members who donated item to the sales table at the Chrysanthemum Banquet: Lani Bennett, Peggy Doi, Lucy Kirihara, Gloria Kumagai, Karen Tanaka Lucas, Joyce Miyamoto, and Asia O'Neil.

## A Life of Love, Lessons, and Loss for a 91 year old Eden Prairie Woman

Renee Rushdy begins the article in an Eden Prairie community paper that was published in November 2024. She was writing about a long time JACL member, Saki Tsuchiya, whom many know well or at least have heard of the activities and accomplishments of her large extended family. Ms. Rushdy continues "...after World War II internment, Saki Tsuchiya built a life in Minnesota, raising a family and reflecting in a complex past...The 91 year old exudes positivity and a desire to share her story and the lessons she learned along the way." If you didn't know, she is Pam Dagoberg's aunt (Pam's dad's sister) and Sally Sudo's sister.

If you would like to read the entire article that was published in November, follow these steps:

- Go to <https://www.eplocalnews.org>
- Click on "Official Website-Eden Prairie"
- On the far right, click on "More"
- Scroll down to "Legacy"
- Scroll down to the article

## Who Is Kimmy Tanaka?

If you are a faithful reader of The Rice Paper, you may have noticed that Kimmy Tanaka's name has been seen quite often. You might be wondering who she is. She is the new chair of the Education Committee and Community Engagement Manager at the Minnesota Historical Society! She has been a wonderful resource for our chapter and has planned and participated in many of our recent events.

Kimmy Tanaka grew up in Tamba-Sasayama, Japan where she gained an appreciation for history, architecture and food. She has both a BA and a Master of Architecture degree from the University of Minnesota. She is a community engagement manager for the Minnesota Historical Society where she expands cross-departmental capacity for building sustained and meaningful relationships with community partners. She previously worked as a manager at Historic Fort Snelling where she developed programming around the Military Intelligence Service Language School.

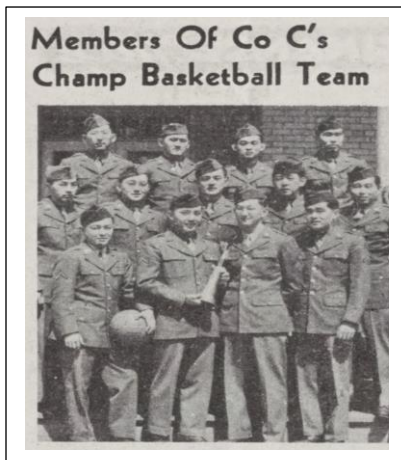


## The Fort Snelling All-Star Basketball Team

Kimmy Tanaka found at this article and thought it would of interest to the readers of this newsletter. You can find it at:

<https://minneapolisparkhistory.com/2024/12/01/the-fort-snelling-all-star-basketball-team/>

Kimmy also found the attached photos from the Fort Snelling Bulletin and the Pacific Citizen.



The photo above was published in the Pacific Citizen on Saturday, February 10, 1945. The headline reads FORT SNELLING ALL STARS and the members of the team are identified as – Front row, left to right: Pfc. Sakaye Hayashi, Asst. coach; Sgt. Jon Matsuo, Asst.

coach and business manager. Seated: Pfc. Shigeru Fukuyama, center; T/5 John Leddy, guard; Pfc. Wat Misaka, forward; Pfc. Kenji Hosokawa, guard; Pfc. John Oshida, forward. Back row standing: Warrant Officer Sal Jio, coach; Cpl. Cheek Matsuo, special service representative; Pfc. Frank Katsuyama, forward; Pfc. Harold Noguchi, guard; Pfc. Masaru Nishibayashi, center; T/5 Merle Gulick, guard; Pfc. Johnny Okamoto, forward; Pfc. Frank Kuramoto, guard, and Major Fred R. Keller, Battalion Commander. Army Signal Corps photo.

## Sansei Yonsai Kai News



### Sansei Yonse Kai 5<sup>th</sup> Trip to Japan

Sansei Yonse Kai dance group is once again heading to the beautiful country of Japan. This time, our goal is to catch the beautiful cherry and wisteria blossoms from April 10-24, 2005. Participation is open to anyone who enjoys Japanese culture. Travelers are free to take exploratory trips on their own, while enjoying a few pre-planned activities, such as perhaps visiting Nagasaki to celebrate the 70<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the St. Paul – Nagasaki Sister City partnership. This is an ideal time to visit Japan due to the value of the yen to the dollar – right now trending at 157 yen to one dollar. If interested, contact Linda van Dooijeweert, [linda@urbantraveler.com](mailto:linda@urbantraveler.com)



To be notified of JACL activities, relevant opportunities, and events that occur on shorter notice than our [Rice Paper](#) can communicate, please sign up for the TC JACL "email Blast" by contacting us at [info@tcjacl.org](mailto:info@tcjacl.org) or by visiting [www.tcjacl.org/subscribe](http://www.tcjacl.org/subscribe). Sign up now. Don't miss out! Update us when your email changes.

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Thank you. Your TCJACL Board of Directors.

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