



# PORTLAND JACL NEWSLETTER

Portland JACL · Supporting Civil Rights Since 1928

• JULY 2020 | VOLUME 26 ISSUE 7 •

## Board Member MESSAGE

By Sachi Kaneko

***"The ultimate measure of a man is not where he stands in moments of comfort and convenience, but where he stands at times of challenge and controversy."***

Martin Luther King Jr.

This is a call to action. In an article for the Washington Post, Dr. Obasogie recently characterized the death of George Floyd as the spread of the **"police violence pandemic."** This combined with the effects of the novel Coronavirus are two massive problems within our country that disproportionately affect Black people. Black men in America are 3.5 times more likely to be killed by law enforcement than their White counterparts (Obasogie, 2020). Available data about the Coronavirus show that counties that are primarily Black have "three times the rate of infections and almost six times the rate of deaths as counties where white residents are the majority" (Thebault, Tran, and Williams, 2020). This is the current climate of being Black in America- it is not chance or happenstance or a series of isolated incidents, it's systemic.

Systemic racism is a pivotal piece to the founding of our country. Our economy was built on the cheap or free labor of non Whites- a system that continues to persist

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## COMMUNITY CALENDAR

### Tadaima - A Community Virtual Pilgrimage

June 13th - August 16th

### Virtual Obon

August 1st

Oregon Buddhist Temple

### Virtual Hiroshima/Nagasaki Day

August 6th

6pm

### Virtual JACL National Board Meeting

August 15th

### Nikkei Community Picnic

August 16th

**\*Cancelled\***

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today. The implicit biases that were fostered by that system to enforce racial hierarchies are long standing and deep.

***"The very serious function of racism... is distraction. It keeps you from doing your work. It keeps you explaining, over and over again, your reason for being. Somebody says you have no language and so you spend 20 years proving that you do. Somebody says your head isn't shaped properly so you have scientists working on the fact that it is...."***

Toni Morrison, Writer and Speaker

As a member of the Japanese American community I know that the real tragedy of our experience was not isolated to the concentration camps, but radiated out from the larger problem of systemic racism- which continued long after the camps were dismantled. We as the Japanese American community should know that you don't have to build fences and walls to trap a person from their full potential.

So where do we start? Tackling a system that has been present long before we were born can feel overwhelming, but it is imperative that we do the work to be self critical and actively anti-racist. Here is a list of suggestions:

**Question everything** - even your own beliefs. Feeling uncomfortable about the violence published by the media in relationship to the protests? Read articles that shed light on the fact that African Americans are more often characterized as violent in the media than Whites (suggested read: The Double Standard of the American Riot by Kellie Carter Jackson in the Atlantic, available online). Remember the words of Ruhel, an immigrant from Bangladesh whose livelihood burned down in Minneapolis

from the protests: "'Life is more valuable than anything else,' he said, hours after his restaurant had burned. 'We can rebuild a building. But we cannot give this man back to his family' (Hensley-Clancy, 2020)."

**Listen and trust-** what Black community members are saying. If you are not Black, you cannot understand the experience of someone who is. Listen to them. They are doing you a favor. However, keep in mind that it is not the responsibility of the Black community to teach or talk about their experiences. Avoid tokenizing behavior. Additionally, there is a lot of material available online- take the lead on your own education on anti-Black racism.

**Talk with non-Black community members** - investigate the biases present within yourself and within your community without making it the work of a community that is already suffering from so much. Take the time to teach your elders and your children about the ways that racial injustice functions in this country. I'm happy to speak with anyone that has any questions: [sachi@pdxjacl.org](mailto:sachi@pdxjacl.org). There is also a wonderful google docs online that was constructed for Asian Americans who are looking to be anti-racist by Ellie Yang Camp. The document takes the reader through a series of self-reflective questions and can be a great start to having a dialogue with others (<https://www.ellieyangcamp.com/new-blog/anti-racism-for-asian-americans>) .

**Educate yourself** - on the nuances behind racism in the US. Dr. Camara Phyliss Jones provides a theoretical framework to describe the levels of racism: institutionalized, personally mediated and internalized. I highly suggest reading her paper Levels of Racism: A Theoretic Framework and a Gardener's Tale (<https://ajph.aphapublications.org/doi/pdf/10.2105/AJPH.90.8.1212>). Also, educate yourself on the ways that the US prison system overwhelmingly affects

Black and Brown people. Due to the systemic quality of racism, the checks and balances that were designed to safeguard the rights and liberties of citizens in this country aren't working; African Americans are disproportionately affected by police violence and incarceration (Suggested read: The New Jim Crow by Michelle Alexander). Former officer Derek Chauvin, who murdered George Floyd, was the senior officer in the area and in the process of training two new cadets just days on the job, demonstrating how police brutality is taught, and therefore perpetuated, within police forces. Investigate what we can do to help keep our law enforcement accountable.

**Donate:** to Black run organizations and charities. Visit our website for a suggested list at <http://www.pdxjacl.org>.

**Support Black owned businesses!** In case you're hungry here's a directory of Black owned restaurants in Portland: <https://>

[iloveblackfood.com](http://iloveblackfood.com), but there's a lot of other products besides food that you can buy to help support these businesses.

### **Speaking on behalf of all our board**

**members:** we at the JACL commit to using our position as community leaders to engage our people in conversation. We commit to doing the necessary work of dismantling anti-Blackness within ourselves and confronting how we have benefited from the "model minority" myth that contributes to anti-Black racism. **We stand for Black Lives Matter. Join us.**

**A works cited for this article is available on our website:** <http://www.pdxjacl.org>

**Many thanks to Hiroshi Kaneko, Marilou Carrera and the rest of the board for their meticulous editing skills.**

### **Current Board Members**

**Co-President**  
Chris Lee

**Co-President**  
Amanda Shannahan

### **Vice President**

Jeff Matsumoto

### **Treasurer**

Jillian Toda-Currie

### **Secretary**

Heidi Tolentino

### **Membership Chair**

Setsy Larouche

### **Board Members:**

Sachi Kaneko  
Lynn Fuchigami Park  
Connie Masuoka  
Marleen Wallingford  
Jenny Yamada

If you would like to contact the Board, their email address is **First Name@pdxjacl.org**

# Portland JACL in solidarity with Black Lives



We, as the Portland JACL, send condolences to George Floyd's family for his murder. We are saddened and outraged, yet we are not surprised. We recognize that the murder of Black and Brown people at the hands of police is part of an ongoing pattern that plagues our country and our city. While we mourn Mr. Floyd, we must also remember Keaton Otis, Quanice Hayes, Aaron Campbell, and Patrick Kimmons who are among the more than 14 African Americans killed by police in Portland since 1996. We are in solidarity with the Portland protesters as they stand in opposition to police violence that disproportionately affects Black and Brown people.

We demand justice for Black lives. At the same time, we know that we must grapple with the anti-Blackness that exists within our own community, our families, and ourselves. We commit to using our position as community leaders to engage our people in conversation and the necessary work of confronting ways in which we have benefited from the "model minority" myth and contribute to the perpetuation of anti-Black racism.

We know that this is a challenging time right now and that recent events are weighing heavy on peoples' hearts and minds. We also know that neither sadness nor silence will bring about the change we so desire. We call on our community to take action to elevate Black voices seeking justice in this country. Will you join us?

## **Take action today.**

### **Donate to a local Black-led fund or organizations:**

- **Black Resilience Fund:** Provides direct support to Black Portlanders so they have an opportunity for some healing in the wake of a painful month.  
<https://gf.me/u/x59zzr>
- **Don't Shoot PDX:** Advocates for marginalized communities through social justice art and free legal resources. [dontshootpdx.org](http://dontshootpdx.org)
- **Portland African American Leadership Forum:** Helps the Black community



*Graphic courtesy of Kalaya'an Mendoza.*

imagine the alternatives the community deserves and build the civic participation and leadership to achieve those alternatives. [paalf.org](http://paalf.org)

- **Urban League of Portland:** One of Oregon's oldest civil rights and social service organizations, empowering African-Americans and others to achieve equality in education, employment, health, economic security and quality of life. [ulpdx.org/](http://ulpdx.org/)

#### **Demand justice for:**

- **George Floyd:** Text FLOYD to 55156 to sign the petition

- **Breonna Taylor:** Sign the petition
- **Ahmaud Arbery:** Text JUSTICE to 55156 to sign the petition

#### **Continue to read, learn, & educate yourself:**

- 20+ Allyship Actions for Asians to Show Up for the Black Community Right Now
- 6 Ways Asian Americans Can Tackle Anti-Black Racism in Their Families
- Addressing anti-Blackness as non-Black POC
- How to Be an Antiracist by Ibram X. Kendi



# 2020 Henjyoji Shingon Buddhist Temple Art Awards

By Francis Sumida Palk

This award was established by the family of the late Rev. Kazuko Wako Henjyoji, in recognition of her lifetime of service strengthening cultural ties between the United States and Japan. She was devoted to education, teaching Japanese and Americans alike both the art of Japanese tea ceremony and the art of Ikebana, flower arranging. This year four outstanding young people were selected to receive this recognition.



## Alexander Masog

Scappoose High School  
28 miles from Portland to the West toward  
beach  
Expected Major: Psychology  
Honor Roll

Alexander is an outstanding varsity athlete, hockey, swim team, football varsity and a first chair trumpet player and lead singer in Shrek playing the role of Donkey.

Alexander has been recognized for his musical abilities.

He has also attained a first degree black belt in Taekwondo and Japanese sword.

## Emiko Wingren

Sandy High School  
GPA 4.0  
Major: Arts and Fine Arts  
Minor: Education

**Awards:** Emiko has received Scholastic Art and Writing Award  
2018 NW Oregon Conference Art Competition.

She has been actively involved in the Oregon Buddhist Temple.

She draws and is interested in photography.

She plans to be an art teacher.





### **Mito Dennise Smith**

Grant High School

Major: Art Design at Rhode Island Art of Design

Her Grant Counselor, Amy Gervais, wrote that Mika shows " ...incredible artistic vision, ability to communicate, and strong work ethic, make her deserving of your scholarship and have earned her my highest recommendation."

As a Member of Epworth Methodist Church youth group she helped lovingly fold 10,000 Tsuru for Solidarity for each NW person incarcerated in the World War II camps. She is co-president of Grant High Asian Pacific Islander Alliance.

**Awards:** 2019 Scholastic Art and Writing Awards, at Pacific NW College of Arts, both in Gold and Silver Categories.

Mika wrote "From a young age I have been fascinated by the traditional arts surrounding my Japanese background. In my free time I have ventured in Shi yuji and Sumi-e. I have admired the traditional colors, patterns, and tales seen on Kimono, manga, Mokuhanga. And drawn inspiration from all ranges of art forms from my multicultural background."

### **Nicholas Shibata**

Sunset High School

Major: Biology

Nicholas is a member of the Epworth United Methodist Church.

Nicholas has tutored in chemistry, history, anatomy, Japanese language arts. He has volunteered in community services scouting activities such as trail and shed building and demolition.

He folds beautiful origami pieces. "I relate to the modern and contemporary styles of origami. Examples are of modular origami, created from multiple identical pieces to create a 3 dimensional structure. Been practicing for 17 years, altering the patterns to create new forms. Final example of work is called "firework" which combines 3 colored papers, flipped inside out to show distinguishing pattern of colors, such as a firework changes colors. It brings me to the cultural significance this art form has to me, family and friends of whom I have gifted with the origami."

He is a member of Asian American Alliance, an after school interest group, studying Asian culture through food, language and cultural understanding. Nicholas is a member of the Japanese National Honor Society.





## Sato School in Bethany



Sato Elementary School opened in September 2017. The Bethany community was asked to submit names for the new Beaverton school and the overwhelming choice was to recognize the Japanese American family who began farming in the area in 1926.

During World War II, the Sato Family was sent to Minidoka. Two sons, Shin and Roy, enlisted. Roy was wounded twice and received the Purple Heart. Shin was also a member of the Japanese American 442 Regimental Combat Team that took part in the heroic battle to save the Texas Battalion that was trapped in the treacherous Vosges Mountains. Nisei soldiers were able to overcome the German defenses. Shin posthumously received the Purple Heart as a result of that battle.

Karen Sato continues to remember her family. Her sister, Lois who passed away in 2013 was the last family member to live on the farm.

When Col. Mike Howard who lives in the area heard the story of the Sato Family, he wanted to make sure the community understood the historical significance of the heroism of Shin and the sacrifice the family suffered. He worked with the school's principal, Annie Pleau to obtain Beaverton School District's permission to place the plaque.

It was a labor of love for Col. Howard. He grew up living next to the Shimotani Family in Ventura, California. This is where he first heard of the 442 and saw the film, "Go For Broke". "I was saddened when I first visited Sato School and there was no memorial. History is a fragile thing and I wanted the kids to know the truth ... good and bad, so they can learn from it."

The bronze plaque was produced at a cost of \$6200. Skanska Construction donated the concrete base and backing at a value of \$6200. Bethany Presbyterian Church had donated \$3000 but funding still needs to be raised to cover the rest of the cost. The Portland JACL is helping with that effort.



*Marleen Wallingford, Karen Sato and Ron Iwasaki at the Sato School dedication of the history of the Sato Family placed at the front of the school.*



## Newsletter Update

By Christopher Lee  
Co-President Portland JACL

At the beginning of the year I shared some changes that Portland JACL has experienced with our newsletter recently. Since then our board has been busy looking for ways to cut costs and alternative methods of providing a paper newsletter to our members. Unfortunately, without changes to the format, quantity, frequency or labor, our costs are unlikely to decrease significantly.

Before we make any decisions, we would like to gather your input on what is most

important as we consider our next step. On the next page there is a survey that will help us understand your priorities for the monthly Portland JACL newsletter and communications from our chapter. You may also respond to the survey online here: <https://forms.gle/zYMWVxv8Y89XbWUA8>

You may have noticed that a copy of this newsletter is now delivered to your inbox via mailchimp now. It is almost a given that email will be part of our strategy for reducing newsletter costs in 2021. With so many important current events, we have also started using email for other communications. It will help us be more

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## Survey Questions

Name:

1. How important is it to have a regular Portland JACL newsletter? (Circle one)

Very Important  
Somewhat Important  
Neutral  
Somewhat Unimportant  
Unimportant

2. What do you think about getting the paper newsletter on a quarterly basis rather than monthly? (Circle One)

Like  
Somewhat Like  
Neutral  
Somewhat Dislike  
Dislike

Comments:

3. Would you be willing to get the newsletter by email?

4. Would you be willing to pay an annual fee of \$25 to get a paper newsletter?

5. Would you be willing to pay an annual fee of \$50 to get a paper newsletter?

Other comments or suggestions:

Return survey to Portland JACL:

PO Box 86310  
Portland, OR 97286

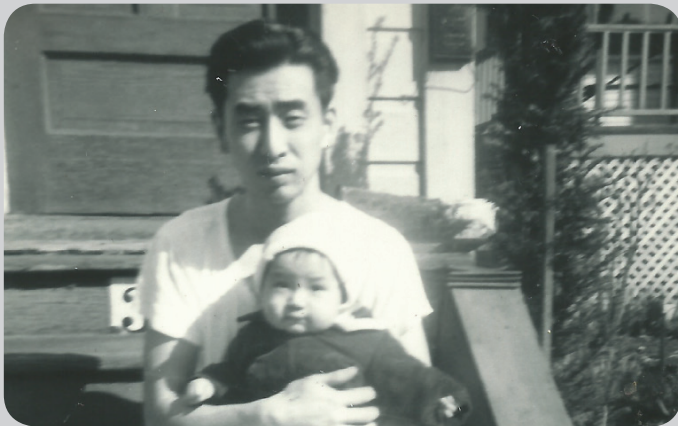
Online Survey:  
<https://forms.gle/zYMWVxv8Y89XbWUA8>

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responsive and agile as an organization. Plus, we can get information to you faster! In addition to the survey, I also want to share a bit more background on the costs of the newsletter and the impact to our chapter's finances. Previously we paid less than \$200 per issue of the newsletter, which included editing, layout, printing, mailing and postage. In 2019 we budgeted \$2500 for the newsletter expenses that year, which was only about 13% of our annual expenses. Since then a lot has changed and current costs are about \$750 for each monthly issue. Our revised 2020 budget has us spending \$9600 for newsletter costs, which is almost 4 times as much as before.

To put this in perspective our chapter's annual income is expected to be just over \$13,000 in 2020. We had already planned to run a small deficit this year and will now absorb more newsletter costs than planned. Our reserves can handle the unexpected jump so there's nothing to worry about financially this year. However, we can't fund the newsletter this way forever. Help us come up with a plan by returning the survey or taking it online. You can always email us at [newsletter@pdxjacl.org](mailto:newsletter@pdxjacl.org).

## Marleen Wallingford turns 70 this year.



**Here she is with her dad, Sab Ikeda in NW Portland. He eventually owned a bakery in Hillsdale. Her birthday is August 1.**

Help her celebrate by donating to the Portland JACL to support our programs You can donate on our website, [www.pdxjacl.org](http://www.pdxjacl.org) or you can send donations to:

**Portland JACL**  
PO Box 86310  
Portland, Oregon 97286.

Birthday cards would be appreciated.

This year we have had increases in the costs of our programs. We have relied on the generous donations but now our expenditures are outpacing our income.



## Tsuru for Solidarity Virtual Taiko Performance



## Orange Story

Portland JACL showing of the Orange Story on May 31st with a follow-up panel discussion with the director, Jason Matsumoto.







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Because of You I Am

WE ARE WHO WE ARE BECAUSE OF THOSE  
WHO CAME BEFORE US. OUR ANCESTORS  
SACRIFICED EVERYTHING FOR US TO  
GIVE US A BETTER LIFE. WE SHOULD DO  
THE SAME FOR THE NEXT GENERATION,  
THE 2020 CENSUS IS OUR CHANCE.

Learn More at  
[countusin2020.org/takeaction](https://countusin2020.org/takeaction)

Despite the COVID-19 epidemic, you can still fill out your 2020 Census online and over the phone! Click the link below to visit the Census website to start!

<https://2020census.gov/>

**#AAPI2020**  
National Council of Asian Pacific Americans