

## Utah Legislature passes Resolution for a Commemorative Postage Stamp recognizing Service of Nisei Soldiers

The Utah Legislature passed Senate Concurrent Resolution (SCR) 7, sponsored by Sen. Jani Iwamoto, urging the Postmaster General to issue a commemorative postage stamp telling the inspiring story of the patriotic service of Japanese Americans during World War II. On February 10, 2017, Masami Hayashi who served in the Military Intelligence Service (MIS) and Retired Judge Raymond Uno were joined along with Attorney General Sean Reyes on the both the House and Senate floor for introduction of the Senate Concurrent Resolution.

All three chapters of JACL signed and submitted a letter of support for the resolution. A strong showing of members of the Japanese American community were present in the galleries of both the Utah Legislature's House and Senate to show support for this important recognition. The Japanese American Veterans Association (JAVA) proposed in 2012 that the U.S. Postal Service issue a commemorative stamp series honoring the military

groups that have been awarded the Congressional Gold Medal for their service during World War II. The stamps would honor the Nisei soldiers who made up the 100th Infantry Battalion, 442nd Regimental Combat Team and the Military Intelligence Service.

Not only does the passage of SCR 7 provide a strong statement of support from the State of Utah, the resolution also specifically provides that a copy of the resolution and letters of support from Utah Governor Gary R. Herbert, Utah Attorney General Sean D. Reyes, the members of the Utah delegation to the United States House of Representatives, United States Senator Orrin Hatch, and United States Senator Mike Lee will be sent to the Postmaster General of the United States, the members of Utah's congressional delegation, and the President of the United States.

Those who are interested in supporting the They Deserve a Stamp effort can visit [www.theydeserveastamp.org](http://www.theydeserveastamp.org) and also <http://niseistamp.org> to be part of the campaign.

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## Presidents Message

By Michael Iwasaki, Co-President



With the start of a new year, I always find myself reflecting on the past year. I think the word that best describes 2016 is CHANGE. Changes were abundant in my life on various levels. On a personal level, I lost both an uncle and grandmother within months of each other. On a communal level, I tried to become more involved in my community through public service and volunteer activities. And on a political level, I witnessed a historical Presidential election that, for once, left me questioning my future and the future of our country. While I recognize some of these changes were only relevant to me, I know the last level of change was one that has reverberated, and continues to do so, throughout our country and the world.

Whether you were disheartened or delighted by the results of the Presidential elections, I believe one constructive outcome was that it stoked a fire in people, especially the younger generation, to become more politically and civically active. Kids who previously would never have even bothered to vote were suddenly engaging in discussions about the Electoral College and gerrymandering. Even I was learning and relearning things about the political process that I had long forgotten and/or taken for granted. This resurgence, in turn, helped inspire me to become more involved in JACL.

As the oldest Asian American civil rights organization in the U.S., JACL has strived to continue its mission of securing and protecting the rights of Japanese Americans, as well as all those who are victimized by injustice and bigotry. Recently, National JACL has released statements condemning various actions by our executive branch, particularly regarding issues of immigration and deportation. There are many disturbing similarities between the wartime fear and hysteria that led to the incarceration of Japanese Americans during World War II and the current xenophobia fueling a hegemonic political

## Membership

Since 1929, JACL has strived to continue its mission of protecting the civil rights of Japanese Americans, as well as all others victimized by injustice and bigotry, and this is made possible by support from its members. And with some of the current issues facing our country, we feel like JACL's mission is even more important and relevant than it has been in recent years.

For all those whose memberships have expired, we encourage you to renew your memberships. And we always welcome new members, so please spread the word about our organization.

To sign up or renew, please go online to [jacl.org](http://jacl.org). If you would like a hard copy to fill out, or if you have any questions, please contact our Membership Coordinator, Tomoko Tanaka, at [tomoko@kizunagroup.com](mailto:tomoko@kizunagroup.com).

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trend. In this time when it seems as if a tragic past is repeating itself, I find it encouraging that JACL has continued its mission of equality. JACL understands the power of persistence, and it keeps on fighting for progressive changes.

While 2016 was not a great one, I cannot say it was completely terrible either. Changes can be both good and bad, and if they are bad, try to change them. As Co-President of Salt Lake JACL, I invite and challenge all chapter members, past, present and future, to be vessels of change. How you choose to do so is up to you. Volunteering, keeping abreast of political and social issues, becoming more involved with JACL; these are all great ways to start. When we work together as a cohesive community, our individual skills and talents are amplified. And if we all choose to be agents of change rather than letting progress stagnate, we can accomplish great strides, not only for our community, but also for society as a whole.

## 2017 Salt Lake JACL Board Members

The Salt Lake JACL Board welcomes its 2017 Board members. They are: Sherrie Hayashi (Co-President); Michael Iwasaki (Co-President); Steve Fukumitsu (Vice President); Jodi Iwasaki (Secretary); Metra Barton (Treasurer); Nate Iwamoto-Fukumitsu (Youth Representative); Sam Tateoka; Tomoko Tanaka; Jeff Itami; and our newest Board member, Kanako Ford. Jeanette Misaka will remain as Ex Officio, and Judge Raymond Uno will be our Chapter Coordinator. We look forward to serving and promoting another successful year.

### NIHON MATSURI UPDATE

Due to unforeseen circumstances, Nihon Matsuri has been canceled this year. However, there are plans to hold a Mini Matsuri in its place. We will send out an email with the flyer for more information. We will provide updates on our Facebook page, Salt Lake City JACL, as well.

### KOTO AND KAGURA CONCERT

There will be a Koto (Japanese string instrument) and Kagura (traditional Japanese dance of Shinto) performance on Friday, April 28. The event will be held at the Main Downtown Salt Lake Public Library at 7:00 P.M. Please contact Kanako Ford at [kanakoford15@gmail.com](mailto:kanakoford15@gmail.com) for more information. Also check out our Facebook page, Salt Lake City JACL, for the flyer.

### MT. OLYMPUS CHAPTER FUNDARAMA FUNDRAISER

Mt. Olympus will be holding their Annual Fundarama Fundraiser this year on Saturday, March 18. The event will take place at Hillcrest Jr. High (5300 S. 178 E., Murray) starting at 6 P.M. There will be a dinner, raffle and bingo. Sushi, manju and other baked goods will be available for sale. Tickets are \$10 person in advance and \$12 person at the door. Children 8 and under are free. We will send out an email with the flyer for more information.

## JACL Scholarships

JACL's Scholarship and Awards Program offers scholarships to students who are active members of JACL for the following categories: entering freshman, undergraduate, graduate, law, student aid and creative & performing arts.

1) **Entering Freshman applications:** Must be postmarked by **March 15**. We have extended this deadline from the original March 1 deadline. These completed applications should be sent to our Salt Lake JACL Scholarship Chair, Jodi Iwasaki.

2) **Undergraduate, Graduate, Law, Student Aid and Creative & Performing Arts applications:** Must be postmarked by **April 1**. These completed applications should be sent directly to the National JACL Scholarship Committee.

3) **Intermountain District Council applications (for entering freshman, undergraduate, graduate and law):** Must be postmarked by **April 15**. This application is specifically for chapter members located in the Intermountain District, which includes Utah, Idaho proper, Colorado, Montana, Southeast Oregon, and the adjoining eastern portions of Nevada and Wyoming. These completed applications should be sent to the Intermountain District Council.

These applications, along with additional information and addresses, can be found online at <https://jacl.org/jacl-national-scholarship-program/>. You can also contact Salt Lake JACL's Scholarship Chair, Jodi Iwasaki, at [miwasaki@xmission.com](mailto:miwasaki@xmission.com). Thank you!



## 2017 Day of Remembrance, Will it Happen Again? A dialogue with Japanese and Muslim Communities

*They called us saboteurs but we were American citizens. We were just rounded up and put in camps. There were guard stations all around the outside. And people said, That is to keep out all of the other people who want to make trouble. But we asked, Then why are all the guns pointed in? But that is just how it was.*

-Dora T. Iwasaki (deceased)  
Gila River Camp Survivor, Transcribed Nov. 24, 2004

On February 19, 1942, President Franklin D. Roosevelt signed Executive Order 9066. The signing of this order resulted in the incarceration of approximately 120,000 persons of Japanese ancestry, two-thirds of whom were American citizens, in internment camps across the country. One of those camps, Topaz, is located here, just outside of Delta, Utah.

This year commemorates the 75th anniversary of the signing of Executive Order 9066. The anniversary comes during a radical and historic shift in American politics. The Japanese American community has been very concerned about the recent political treatment of Muslims in the United States. In particular, we are troubled by the discussions of banning, registering, and singling out and identifying individuals on the basis of race and religion.

This year's event featured a panel discussion addressing the parallels between the history of the Japanese American internment and current issues facing the Muslim community. Panel members were: Congressman Mike Honda, former U.S. Representative of California's 17th congressional district, who was also incarcerated as a young child in the Amache camp in Colorado during World War II; Dr. Abdullah Bin Hamid Ali, current full-time faculty member at Zaytuna College, teaching courses in Islamic Law and prophetic tradition; Dr. Salman Masud, M.D., an anesthesiologist at Shriners Hospital for Children and current President of the Islamic Society of Greater Salt Lake; and Ms. Leah Farrell, staff attorney at the ACLU of Utah, specializing in litigation, negotiation and advocacy. The panel was moderated by Ms. Jennifer Napier-Pearce, current editor of the Salt Lake Tribune.

Although panel members saw similarities between the Japanese American experience and current events, panelists were predominantly optimistic that America would not let it happen again. Differences such as the development of social media and activism by people and communities were seen as opportunities to create different outcomes and opportunities for communities to work together.

The event was well attended with approximately 250 people filling the Salt Lake Public Library Auditorium. On behalf of the Salt Lake Chapter, we extend our thanks to Wasatch Front North, Mt. Olympus, the ACLU, Hon. Paul and Sandy Iwasaki, Islamic Society of Greater Salt Lake, J. Willard Marriott Library, Special Collections, Organization of Chinese Americans, Topaz Museum, Utah Minority Bar Association, Weber Reads-Margaret Rostkowski, and Yumi Creative-Wesley Thomas for their support. This program received funding from the Utah Humanities Council -- The Utah Humanities empowers Utahns to improve their communities through active engagement in the humanities.

On a personal note, I was encouraged to see the diversity of our audience reflecting not only the Muslim and Japanese American communities, but also representatives of the Latino community, ME4U, the immigrant and refugee communities, as well as the broader Utah community. Salt Lake JACL intends to continue these efforts of bridging our relationships with other communities, as we are stronger together than divided.