ALOHA, FRIENDS!

I am excited to be here in the lovely Portland area and back in the Pacific Northwest! I am truly honored to be serving the Oregon community as the new Executive Director of the Japanese American Museum of Oregon and continuing to share our history with the world. I have been involved in preserving Japanese American history for the last 16 years, starting with my service as part of Friends of Minidoka and most recently with the National Park Service at Honouliuli National Historic Site.

It is an honor to be able to help steward our ancestors’ stories and make sure they are not forgotten in the larger fabric of American history.

For those of you who do not know me well, I am a Yonsei/Gosei and second generation Korean American; I carry the last names of both sides of my family. My mother is an immigrant from Seoul, Korea. On my father’s side, we immigrated from the Hiroshima area to Hawai‘i, then to the continental U.S. My great grandmother was born in Honolulu and my great grandfather was Issei. My great grandparents fell in love in eastern Washington and ran away to Oregon where they were able to marry and start their family. My grandfather and my older great aunts and uncle were born in Oregon. My grandfather specifically was born in The Dalles, before my family moved down to Southern California. During World War II, a majority of my family were incarcerated at Manzanar. I also had family incarcerated at Minidoka who then settled in Ontario after the war; their surname was Sugai.

I grew up in Idaho where I got involved with the Minidoka National Historic Site and continued my service working or volunteering at Tule Lake National Monument, Manzanar National Historic Site, Amache National Historic Site, Kooskia Internment Camp, and Honouliuli National Historic Site.

Coming to Portland feels like coming home to a community that I have known forever—one that is special to me and just feels like family. I appreciate all the work that Lynn Fuchigami Parks, JAMO staff (Kiyo, James, Lucy, Elissa, Erin, and Chisao), and the Board of Directors have done to get the museum to where it is today. I can only hope that I will be able to serve the community as effectively as my predecessor and I promise to do so to the best of my abilities.

A MESSAGE FROM THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS

On behalf of the Japanese American Museum of Oregon, we are thrilled to welcome Hanako Wakatsuki-Chong as our new Executive Director. Since her arrival on June 6, a special Executive Transition Team has worked with Hanako to share their collective knowledge and history. We look forward to supporting Hanako in the development of a vision for JAMO’s future.

The JAMO Board of Directors expresses our gratitude and appreciation to the executive search committee for their contributions throughout the hiring process. Along with consultant Joe Wahl and Associates, we sincerely thank committee members Chisao Hata, Connie Masuoka, Peggy Nagae, Ted Nakamura, Curtis Suyematsu, and Matt Tsugawa for all their work. Additionally, we extend our thanks to Mark Takiguchi for his role as Interim Deputy Director during this transitional period.

or volunteering at Tule Lake National Monument, Manzanar National Historic Site, Amache National Historic Site, Kooskia Internment Camp, and Honouliuli National Historic Site.

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Hideo Ouchida was a boy of 15 when he entered Minidoka with his parents, Shigeta and Shitsuka, and four siblings. They were assigned to Block 39, Barrack 2, Unit E—a barren room furnished only with a stove, army cots, and a bare light bulb hanging from the ceiling. To make their space more habitable and escape the boredom and depression of life in camp, Shigeta and Shitsuka became prolific craft makers. Artmaking tended to be a communal activity in camp, with many taking art classes and showing their work in exhibits. While his parents were making artwork, Hideo was busy playing sports and building model airplanes.

The family saved the crafts they made at camp, along with templates and some of the raw materials. Hideo Ouchida donated this extraordinary collection of over 120 objects to the Japanese American Museum of Oregon in 2022.

Shitsuka was an expert at crafting jewelry out of tiny shells, bits of ribbon, and metal found around Minidoka. Shell brooches and corsages were first crafted at Tule Lake but later were also made at Topaz and Minidoka. Shells were dug up, sorted, bleached, and painted, then arranged into flower shapes to replace real corsages at weddings and funerals.

Shigeta’s handiwork included small drawings on reclaimed boards, carved birds mounted on greasewood branches, and over 55 carved animals embellished with paint and scrap metal. Not only did Shigeta and Shitsuka save many examples of their handiwork, but they also kept the supplies used to create them: tools, pins, string, wire, cardboard templates, paintbrushes, and 14 jars of carefully bleached and sorted shells.

The Japanese American Museum of Oregon is grateful to the Ouchida family for this generous donation, a testament to the resourcefulness and creativity of Japanese Americans forced into imprisonment. With very little to work with, they embodied the spirit of gaman—bearing the unbearable with dignity—by beautifying their living spaces and creating a sense of normalcy through these crafts.
In April, the Japanese American Museum of Oregon held its first round of new docent training. The goal was to support docents in developing the knowledge and skills needed to lead museum tours and was developed with the guidance of current docents. The Docent Advisory Committee helped determine what to include in the printed manuals and which skills and concepts to prioritize in the training series. A huge thank you to Amy Peterson, Joni Kimoto Reeves, Marleen Wallingford, and Rie Nakanishi—I couldn’t have done it without their contributions.

During the training, we covered some basics of museum interpretation, strategies to engage different audiences, ways to support visitors as they process the content of the museum, and more. Several committee members also joined the sessions to pass along their advice and expertise. At the end of April, three new people joined our team of docents—Mary Crull, Joyce Kikkawa, and Raynette Yoshida. We are thrilled to have their support! Board Member Raynette Yoshida describes the experience:

Elissa Dingus created a user-friendly training model for all skill levels. The lessons and materials were detailed, organized, and succinct, including handouts and PowerPoint presentations. Lessons are well-paced, there’s time for short breaks, student interaction, facilitated Q&A’s, and practice tours. Each individual feels valued and appreciated for their volunteerism regardless of their skill and experience. Personal style is encouraged to connect and engage with visitors, have fun and be open to inviting guests to become Friends of JAMO.

We plan to hold another round of these training sessions in the fall. Please reach out if you might be interested in attending!

—Elissa Dingus, elissa@jamo.org

A SENSE OF PLACE: THE ART OF GEORGE TSUTAKAWA

September 7–December 31, 2023

The Japanese American Museum of Oregon presents an exhibition of artwork by renowned Seattle artist George Tsutakawa. His paintings and sculpture are inspired by his life in the Pacific Northwest and informed by his Japanese heritage.

Born in Seattle and educated in Japan, Tsutakawa was a painter, teacher, and sculptor. His public art works, including his signature fountains, can be seen in cities across the U.S., Canada, and Japan. Visit us this fall to learn more about George Tsutakawa and his work.

Votive Sculpture No. 1. Courtesy of the Tsutakawa Family.
part asian, 100% hapa, an exhibition organized by the Japanese American National Museum and photographer Kip Fulbeck, broke new ground 15 years ago by exploring multiracial Asian American identity. Fulbeck photographed people who identify as hapa and asked them to write response to the typically posed question, “What are you?” In the new exhibition, hapa.me: 15 years of the hapa project, participants’ updated portraits and statements sit side-by-side with the older ones, showing not only their physical changes over the years but also their changes in perspective and outlook on the world. The Japanese American Museum of Oregon thanks the Portland JACL for sponsoring our local exhibition of this work, which will be on view at the museum until August 13.

Kip Fulbeck was here for the exclusive Friends of JAMO opening on May 20 and gave a public talk the following day, telling stories about the people he has photographed and how viewers identify and see themselves represented—sometimes for the first time—in this project.

Participate in the local exhibition by adding your own photograph and statement. There is an instant print photo station set up in the gallery along with paper and pencils so you can write down your own reaction to the question, “What are you?” Join company with the students, parents, teachers, athletes, artists, and citizens of Earth who have already added their portraits.

hapa.me: 15 years of the hapa project is on view now at the Japanese American Museum of Oregon through August 13, 2023. JAMO will continue to add visitor photos during the run of the exhibition while supplies last.
CONGRATULATIONS TO THE 2023 MINORU YASUI STUDENT CONTEST WINNERS!

This year’s contest theme was Community Responsibility.

Students were asked to submit an artwork and statement describing how their piece connects with the theme and Min Yasui’s legacy.

Counterclockwise from top:

Junior Division, First Place: Violet West, 5th Grade, Alameda Elementary School, Portland, Oregon.

Junior Division, Second Place: Aika Peraza, 7th Grade, Twality Middle School, Tigard, Oregon.

Senior Division, First Place: Gabriella Ejercito, 11th Grade, Aragon High School, San Mateo, California.

Senior Division, Second Place: Evie Chan, 9th Grade, Oregon Episcopal School, Portland, Oregon.
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A FORGOTTEN COMMUNITY: A TOUR OF PORTLAND'S LOST JAPANESE AMERICAN COMMUNITY

NEW INTERACTIVE DIGITAL STORY MAP HIGHLIGHTS 20 SITES IN NIHONMACHI

The final Story Map project meeting was held at the end of March 2023. In the background, one could hear the machines tearing down the Yamaguchi Hotel. It was a moment of mourning and the end of a year-long collaboration with the Architectural Heritage Center to create an interactive digital map of historic Nihonmachi. Supported by the National Trust for Historic Places, the online resource tells the story of the history, places, and people of a once thriving Japantown.

The sudden destruction of the historical building was a tragic reminder of what is currently at stake and why projects like this Story Map are so vital.

JAMO would like to give special thanks to Nicole Possett, Executive Director of Restore Oregon; Lynn Fuchigami Parks; Michael Hayakawa; and Jackie Peterson-Loomis for their hard work during the process of mitigation, education, and years of working for the preservation of Old Town.

The Story Map team was composed of Dale Gronso, designer; Lauren Yoshiko Terry, writer; and Stephanie Whitlock and Val Ballestrem of Architectural Heritage Center. Research was provided by Cynthia Basye, Chisao Hata, Lynn Fuchigami Parks, and Lucas Carmichael-Tanaka.

Top:
A ceremony was held to honor the history of the Yamaguchi Hotel on March 12, 2023. Photograph courtesy of Rich Iwasaki.

Bottom:
Images from A Forgotten Community story map.
2023 MINORU YASUI DAY

You could feel the excitement in the air as the Japanese American Museum of Oregon and the Minoru Yasui Legacy Project created an in-person and virtual event on April 1 honoring the life and work of Oregon’s native son and Presidential Medal of Freedom honoree, Minoru Yasui.

This year we unveiled several firsts under the theme Behind These Bars: An Activist Is Born.

• We expanded awareness of Min Yasui’s cross-cultural work addressing diverse issues through the words of his brother Dr. Homer Yasui and niece Dr. Robin Yasui.

• We heard from Yonsei Jessica Asai and Weston Koyama and University of Oregon Minoru Yasui Fellow Anna Ruetin, who addressed Min’s relevance to multiple generations.

• We engaged new students by including art as well as the written word in the annual contest, tying the theme of Responsibility to Community back to Minoru Yasui’s legacy of justice.

• We filmed the dedication of the jail cell where Min Yasui spent nine months in solitary confinement, which included a reading of Yasui’s poetry written from behind bars and an original musical piece of music created by No-No Boy.

Over 180 people joined us in-person and online. Afterward, we invited our guests back to JAMO for an after-hours reception with the event speakers.

—Maija Yasui, Minoru Yasui Steering Committee

OREGON RISES ABOVE HATE

The 2023 Oregon Rises Above Hate celebration provided an apt kickoff to Asian American, Native Hawaiian, and Pacific Islander Heritage Month, bringing hundreds to the Flanders Festival Street for speakers, performances, food, and community outreach. Emcee Jeff Selby introduced speakers U.S. Senator Ron Wyden; U.S. Representatives Earl Blumenauer and Suzanne Bonamici; Multnomah County Commissioners Lori Stegmann and Susheela Jayapal; Beaverton City Councillor Nadia Hasan; Oregon State Representatives Hoa Nguyen, Khanh Pham, and Hai Pham; Sokho Eath of the Immigrant and Refugee Community Organization; and Becca Uherbelau for Governor Tina Kotek’s office. Cathy Sampson-Kruse of the Waluulapum Band of the Confederated Tribes of Umatilla Indian Reservation opened, followed by Oregon Rises Above Hate founder Anne Naito-Campbell. Sponsors included Lan Su Chinese Garden, Japanese American Museum of Oregon, Portland Chinatown Museum, Coalition of Communities of Color, and the Oregon Commission on Asian and Pacific Islander Affairs. Additional support was provided by the Portland Events & Film Office. Local museums were free, with JAMO drawing over 250 visitors.
On May 27 in partnership with Vanport Mosaic, the Japanese American Museum of Oregon presented A Day of Remembrance at the Portland Expo Center for the 8th annual Vanport Mosaic Festival.

An important component of the event was creating a way to engage with the history of this site and envision what we want to see happen in the future. To do that, JAMO worked with a group of artists to create First, We Remember. And After? to honor the many layered histories in the town known as Vanport: land theft, flooding, displacement, and incarceration that continues to affect the Indigenous, Black, Japanese, Japanese American, and Vanport communities.

First, We Remember. And After? investigates the responsibility of the present moment. Once you become aware, what happens next?

Currently, Oregon Metro is developing a process to envision a new use of the Expo Center and surrounding 53 acres of land. Because of the atrocities that happened in Hall A following Executive Order 9066 and the destruction of Nihonmachi/Japantown, this is an important site of memorial for our community. Will Metro’s plans truly center the justice and healing this land cries out for? Artists Sia Hanna, Tonya Abernathy, and Daniela del mar, along with Colloqate Design and JAMO, collaborated to create First, We Remember. And After? to gather community feedback. JAMO continues to meet with Expo Center staff, Metro Commissioners, Metropolitan Exposition Recreation Commissioners, and others to inform and create conversations around this history.

At this year’s Nikkei Community Picnic (August 20), JAMO and our partners will be present to answer questions, find more Japanese American Vanport survivors, and present an interactive project to collect community input with the goal of influencing Metro’s long term planning. What demands do you have for the future of the Expo Center? Your comments and connections are crucial to future outcomes.

—Chisao Hata

Metro awarded a Community Place Making Grant for The Assembly Center to research, develop community engagement, and create opportunities for community healing around the historic Portland detention center. An original theater piece created from historic documents will be directed by the Creative Director of Living Arts, Chisao Hata. Additional funding will come from a Regional Arts and Culture Council individual artist grant. The Ronald W. Naito MD Foundation has funded the Living Arts Program to develop programming for expressive arts programs, Inaka—Back to the Land, InterACT: The Art of Creating Together, intergenerational outreach, and community healing circles. We are deeply grateful for their support!
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In memory of Seitaro
& Shikie Shimojima
Anne Shimojima

In memory of Ike & Mary Iwasaki
Roger Iwaski

In memory of Jimmie Kanaya
Lynn Kanaya

In memory of John
& Frances Ota
Jeremy Ota

In memory of Robert, Sue
& Carole Takiguchi
Mark Takiguchi

In memory of Wimpy Kawata
Michael Kawata

In memory of Kinko
& Tomoko Yamaguchi
Tomoko Yamaguchi

In memory of Lury Sato
Norto Roberts

In memory of Mika
& Harold Higa
Aleen Huga Mulgrove

In memory of Minoru Yasui
Barbara Yasui

In memory of The Hiehachi
& Sakayo Miyazawa Family
Kastine Kimura

In memory of William Sumio Naito
Erica Naito-Campbell

In memory of Miriam Kiso
Valerie Miller

In memory of Molly K. Maeda
Diane Sugimura

In memory of Sadao Tochihara
Tama Tochihara

In memory of Mosier Japanese families
David Wilson

In memory of Ned Minamoto
Betty Ann Minamoto Wantroba

In memory of Nick Fish,
Portland City Commissioner
2008–2020
Patricia Schechter

In memory of Patty Hayashi Bauer
Steve Bauer

In memory of Paul
& Alice Oyamada
Debra Oyamada

In memory of Ada Shibahara
Virginia Ewuer Wolf

In memory of Paul Sho Kimura
Robert Kimura

In memory of Richard K. Mishima
Amy Peterson

In memory of Sagie
& Tomie Nishihara
 Janet Nishihara

In memory of Frank
& Miyoko Morishita
Alyssa Morishita

In memory of Shizue Sato Warner
Elizabeth Asahi Sato

In memory of Shohei/Tei Endow
& Shoihi/Aya Endow
Shirley Cree

In memory of Tamiki
& Marie Asai
Marta Cannell

In memory of Eric Yasui
Dag Yasui

In memory of Tomiko Iwata
Fred Iwata

In memory of Toshio Ando
& Michi Yasui Ando
Chris Ando

In memory of Toyo Sugeno
Nana Ochiai

In memory of Valerie Otani
Linda Wysong

In memory of Yukitaka
& Shizue Ansai and
Yoshio & Tomie Watanabe
Kari Sormers

In honor of Homer & Miki Yasui
Anonymous
Lise Yasui
Barbara Yasui
Mari Hayman

In honor of Lynn Fuchigami Parks
Nami Koida
Elen Rosenblum
Ken & Loree Sakai
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Marleen Wallington
Homer Yasui
Keely Campbell
Bob & Janet Keegan

In honor of Vicki Nakashima
Penny Serretti

In honor of Bessie Asai’s
100th birthday
Debbey Chenoweth

In honor of Dorothy Sato’s
100th birthday
Linda Tamura & Michael J. Lee

In honor of Eugene Tochihara
Tama Tochihara

In honor of Lydia M. & Ray
Sherry Muramatsu

In honor of Akiko Cybulski
Macek Koladzieczak

In honor of Masaki Kinoshita Family
Diane Watari

In honor of Morishita Kasai Family
Alyssa Morishita

In honor of Neil Watanabe
Virginia Ewuer Wolf

In honor of Yoji & Martha Matsushima
Patrick Davis

In honor of Roku & Rae Yasui
Dag Yasui

SAVE THESE DATES

**July 30:** Japanese American Historical Plaza Cleanup

**August 9:** Hiroshima/Nagasaki Remembrance,
Japanese American Historical Plaza

**August 20:** Nikkei Community Picnic,
Oaks Amusement Park
Welcome to new and renewing Friends of the Japanese American Museum of Oregon

November 1, 2022 through May 31, 2023

Yes, I Want to Join!

My support will help ensure that the history, art and culture of the Nikkei are preserved and shared with the community for generations to come.

- Student $30  
- Senior (62+) $35  
- Individual $50  
- Couple $75  
- Family (up to 5 members) $100

- Check Enclosed (Please make payable to JAMO)  
- My Company Will Match My Gift

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Have you considered putting the Japanese American Museum of Oregon in your will?

- Benefactor $1,000  
- Special Educator Rate $35

Mail to: Japanese American Museum of Oregon | 411 NW Flanders Street | Portland, Oregon 97209
411 NW Flanders Street
Portland, OR 97209

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Thursday through Sunday
11 AM to 3 PM

Adults: $8
Seniors (62+): $6
Students: $5
Children 11 & under and Friends of JAMO: Free

Telephone: 503.224.1458
E-mail: info@jamo.org
Website: www.jamo.org

Multnomah County Commissioners
Lori Stegmann and Susheela Jayapal
and Beaverton City Councilor
Nadia Hasan take in the performances at Oregon Rises Above Hate.