

## Congratulations! Diane Wong in the Alameda County Women’s Hall of Fame

I am honored to share the wonderful news that our very own, Diane Wong, Executive Director, has been selected for induction into the Alameda County Women’s Hall of Fame! Diane is receiving this prestigious honor recognizing her outstanding contributions in the category of Community Service for her 40+ years in older adult services. Diane will be recognized for her dedication and achievements along with other extraordinary women, during an induction ceremony in April. Many of you have been touched by Diane’s amazing work and know that she is truly special. Through her commitment, vast knowledge and experience as well as her empathetic and trusting approach to leadership, J-Sei has grown and continues to thrive. Her work outside of J-Sei has also helped shape senior services in many communities. We are fortunate to have such an impactful and one-of-a kind Executive Director! – Pam Honda, J-Sei Board President



## Asian American Heritage Month Give in May for J-Sei

J-Sei is honored to participate for the fifth year in the Give in May campaign organized by Asian Pacific Fund. J-Sei is deeply grateful to our team of community fundraisers who have worked tirelessly to ask their families and friends to support J-Sei programming through this campaign. Last year, this team raised over \$132,000 which included a matching gift of \$55,000 from 6 generous anonymous donors. This is the most significant fundraiser we hold.

This year is a special year for J-Sei. We would like to dedicate this year’s Give in May Campaign to Diane Wong, J-Sei’s Executive Director who after 15 years will be retiring later this summer/fall. If you are interested in joining the fundraising team we would be so happy to have you! The campaign kickoff breakfast will be in April at the J-Sei office. Please contact Tara Kawata, tara@j-sei.org, for more information.

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#### Contributors

Editing – J-Sei Staff  
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## J-Sei Weekly Class Schedule

For more information or to register, contact [jill@j-sei.org](mailto:jill@j-sei.org) or visit [www.j-sei.org/classes/](http://www.j-sei.org/classes/)

### In-Person Classes

Mon - Watercolor, 10-12

Tues - Let's Groove, 11:30 am -12:30 pm

Tues - Community Ukulele, 1-2 pm

Tues – Tai Chi, 1-2 pm

Wed - Brain, Balance and Body Work, 10-11 or 11-12

Wed – Mah Jong Club, 1-3 pm

Wed- Japanese 1, 1-2 pm

Wed – Japanese 2, 2:15-3:15 pm

Wed – Sogetsu Ikebana, 2-4 pm

Thurs – Watercolor, 1-3 pm

Fri – Tai Chi for Arthritis, 1-2 pm

Nihongo Corner 1 & 2, 1-2 pm

1st Tues – J-Sei Sings, 10-11 am

1st Wed - Aging Together, 10-11:30 am

2nd Mon - Let's Talk, 12:30-2 pm

3rd Th – Kimekomi Doll, 9:30 am -12 pm

### Online Classes

Mon - Tanoshii Japanese, 10-11 am

Mon - Tai Chi, 1-2 pm

Mon - Staying Healthy

Tues - Gentle Yoga, 10-11 am

Tues - Writing, 2:30 -4 pm

Wed - Qi Gong, 10-11 am

Thurs - Strength & Balance, 10-11 am

Thurs - Minyo no Odori, 9-10 am

3rd Wed - Aging Together, 10-11:30 am

4th Thurs - Family Caregiver, 4-5:30 pm

## On-Going Programs

To participate in any of the On-Going Programs, email [jill@j-sei.org](mailto:jill@j-sei.org).

### J-Sei Connect

J-Sei Connect offers a variety of virtual workshops and community forums to engage individuals in reflection, dialogue and creative expression. To see what is upcoming, visit [www.j-sei.org](http://www.j-sei.org) and sign up for our eBlast news.

### J-Sei's Book Club

Join J-Sei's Book Club, an opportunity to delve into a new book each season. Share your questions, thoughts, and personal reflections on what you are reading on a protected book club webpage. Engage in a Book Club meeting to discuss the latest book and share your discoveries.

### J-Sei at the Movies

J-Sei at the Movies meets monthly on a Friday evening to discuss Japanese and Japanese American films of different genres and subjects. Special guests have appeared via Zoom to talk about their work in film and to participate in audience Q&A.

### Movie Talk: K-Drama Series

J-Sei is hosting a series of Zoom meetings to talk about films and TV shows. The first topic for discussion is K-dramas: what folks have enjoyed and are currently watching and what makes K-dramas so compelling. The K-drama genre has proven to be so popular that it is continuing as an ongoing group meeting for fans, both beginners and aficionados.

## Upcoming Programs and Exhibits



### **Gambatte! Legacy of an Enduring Spirit Photographs by Paul Kitagaki, Jr.**

**Exhibit Dates:** February 10 - May 2, 2025

**Gallery Hours:** Mondays & Thursdays 10am-4pm, and by appointment.

Group Tours available by request.

Presented by J-Sei & Friends of Topaz Museum, with support by Topaz Museum

*Gambatte! Legacy of an Enduring Spirit* explores *Gambatte! Legacy of an Enduring Spirit* explores the legacy of an enduring spirit as Japanese Americans triumphed over adversity in the WWII incarceration camps.

As he was searching through photos at the National Archives in 1984, Kitagaki found a photo taken by famed documentary photographer Dorothea Lange of his grandparents and father preparing to board a bus in Oakland, Calif., enroute to a World War II incarceration camp. Through slow and painstaking research, Kitagaki has spent 15 years locating and winning the trust of the families who lived through the internment



*Paul Kitagaki, Jr with sisters Mae Yanagi Ferral and Jane Yanagi Diamond standing in front of historic photos taken as children by Dorothea Lange, and contemporary photos by Kitagaki.*

camp, documenting their stories of survival and inner strength to overcome injustice, racism, and wartime hysteria.



eri oura



Tomo Hirai



Ellen Tanouye

### Okaeri Northern California presents **Letters to Home; Art & Writing by LGBTQ+ Nikkei and Allies**

Saturday, April 5, 2025

1:30 - 4 pm

Join Okaeri for the Northern California launch of Okaeri's book *Letters to Home: Art & Writing by LGBTQ+ Nikkei and Allies*. Hear from contributors Eri Oura, Ellen Tanouye, and Tomo Hirai in an engaging dialogue with moderator Stan Yogi. Book sales and signing, and light refreshments will follow. Live stream will be available. To access the live stream, please register and we will send out a link in advance. J-Sei is ADA-accessible, and there is a free parking lot and street parking available. The event is presented by J-Sei and Omusubi.



*Letters to Home*, edited by: Cody Uyeda, Michael Matsuno, and Rino Kodama, is among the first anthologies to spotlight LGBTQ+ Nikkei experiences and allyship through an intergenerational lens. Bringing together

art, poetry, and story-telling from nearly 50 contributors across the US and Japan, it offers a nuanced exploration of the trials and triumphs of finding community, and the process of co-constructing a sense of belonging for queer and trans Nikkei.

RSVP: <https://bit.ly/OkaeriNorcal-booklaunch>



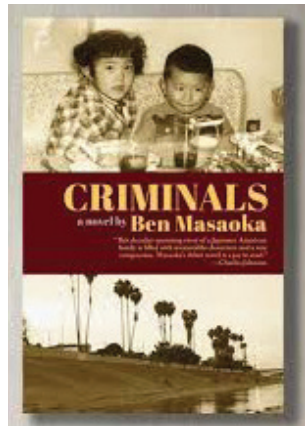
***Criminals*, a book reading and conversation**  
Saturday, April 26, 2 pm

Join us for a live book reading of Ben Masaoka's "Criminals" and conversation with friends Steven Okazaki and Judi Nihei on the book and the post-war Sansei experience.

*Criminals* follows the lives of a sister and brother, Ruth and Hank Tanazaki, as they struggle to free themselves from the weight of their parents' generation in a small Japanese American community in Los Angeles in the late 1950s and early 1960s. This poignant story of the double-edged nature of community—a force that supports the group, at cost to the individual—explores the possibilities and limits of seeking personal freedom through creativity. Masaoka's dazzling, deeply-moving debut is also an eloquent addition to the canon of Asian American literature.

*"In **Criminals**, America is Godzilla rising from the sea at Venice Beach to stomp on the Japanese American Dream, barely noticing the dreamers below as they fight back with rocks, sticks and gaman. Masaoka's hang-loose brilliance takes us on a vividly observed, wonderfully quirky, and deeply moving exploration of generational trauma."* —Steven Okazaki, Academy Award-winning filmmaker

Ben Masaoka (1952–2024), born and raised in Venice, California, took off for Hawai'i as soon he could, living on the beach and working odd jobs so he could surf. He eventually settled in Seattle where he married, taught High School English, and raised a family. His short stories have been published in the Chicago Review of Books and Catamaran Literary Reader. *Criminals* is his first and only novel. He died in September 2024 a few weeks before it was published.



Join us for a book reading, book sales, and conversation.

***We Are Not Strangers*, a book talk by Josh Tuininga**

Sunday, May 4, 11 am

The Magnes Collection of Jewish Life & Art, UC Berkeley

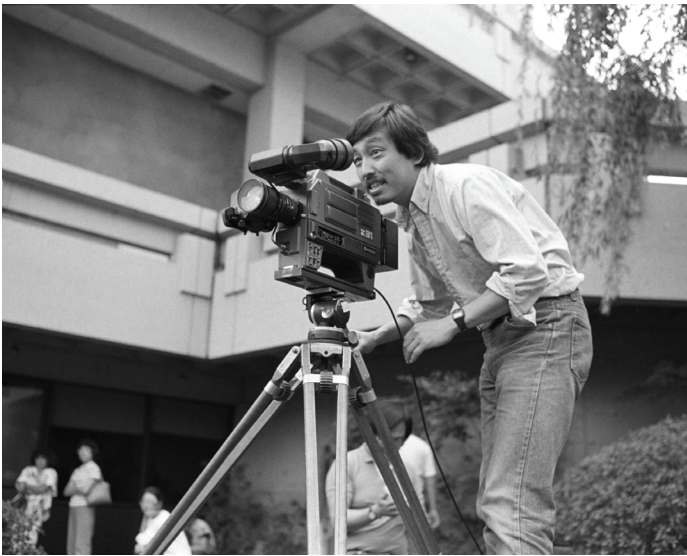
Inspired by a true story, the national award winning graphic novel, *We Are Not Strangers* follows a Jewish immigrant's efforts to help his Japanese neighbors while they are unjustly incarcerated during World War II.

Through a visually rich presentation, Josh Tuininga will share his creative process and research, weaving together narratives of Jewish and Japanese communities united by resilience and allyship during the turbulence of wartime. This program is part of Jewish Arts and Bookfest, presented in honor of Jewish American Heritage Month and Asian American, Native Hawaiian, and Pacific Islander Heritage Month. Tuininga will also be joined by guest speaker Shizue Seigel, author of *In Good Conscience: Supporting Japanese Americans During the Internment*. J-Sei is pleased to support this book event to be held at The Magnes Museum, located at 2121 Allston Way, Berkeley.



**A Storied Career in Filmmaking: John Esaki**  
Saturday, May 10, 2 pm

Filmmaker John Esaki will share selected clips of his work and stories from his long career in film, which was shaped and guided by a community spirit of pioneering Asian American filmmakers. John Esaki retired from the Japanese American National Museum in 2024 after more than 25



years. At JANM, he was videographer, director and editor for several documentaries, including: *Words Weavings & Songs*, a profile of three Nisei women artists, and *Harsh Canvas—The Art & Life of Henry Sugimoto*. He later served as Director--Frank H. Watase Media Arts Center, V.P. of Programs, and Senior Philanthropy Officer.

He pursued an MFA in film at UCLA in the late 70's. Under Prof. Robert A. Nakamura, who had recently founded Visual Communications Asian Pacific Media Arts Center, John volunteered as a production assistant for *Hito Hata: Raise the Banner* (1980) and eventually became involved with the scripting. The lure of making films about one's own history and community enticed John to remain in Southern California for the next five decades.

For 20 years on staff at Visual Communications, John worked in development and production, directing *Yuki Shimoda--Asian American Actor*, *Maceo: Demon Drummer from East L.A.* the taiko odyssey of a Chicano teen, and *Stand Up for Justice*, a short film about Ralph Lazo, a Mexican/Irish American high school student who voluntarily accompanied his classmates to the Manzanar concentration camp during WW2.

## WORKSHOPS



### Botanical Printing on Paper

Fri, May 30 OR Sat, May 31, 10 am to 4 pm

Learn to make prints on paper with nature's own special botanicals. We will look at how to make papers print what nature can give. You can use the results for cards, origami, books and more. Delve into the world of botanical printing, using natural leaves, flowers, roots or fruits of nature. All materials will be provided for the workshop. Instructor Dorothy Yuki, an innovative designer.

Dorothy Yuki studied to be something other than an artist. She began as a fashion designer immediately after college but soon she became a partner of a manufacturing company, In Good Company, and designed kitchen soft goods and linens. She served as a production and design consultant for music production companies and start-ups. She returned to designing linens for Macy's in the 80's and lived internationally in Barcelona Spain, Lisbon, Portugal, Montevideo Uruguay and Tequisquiapan Queretaro Mexico. Now in her 70's and living in San Francisco, she is engaged in many volunteer activities, Ruth's Table, Artseed, SCRAP-sf, and FabMo.

This workshop has been generously sponsored by Steve Ichinaga. Discounted Workshop Fee: \$50 Choose from Fri, May 30 or Sat, May 31.

Space is limited. Send email to [jill@j-sei.org](mailto:jill@j-sei.org)



## FEATURED CLASS



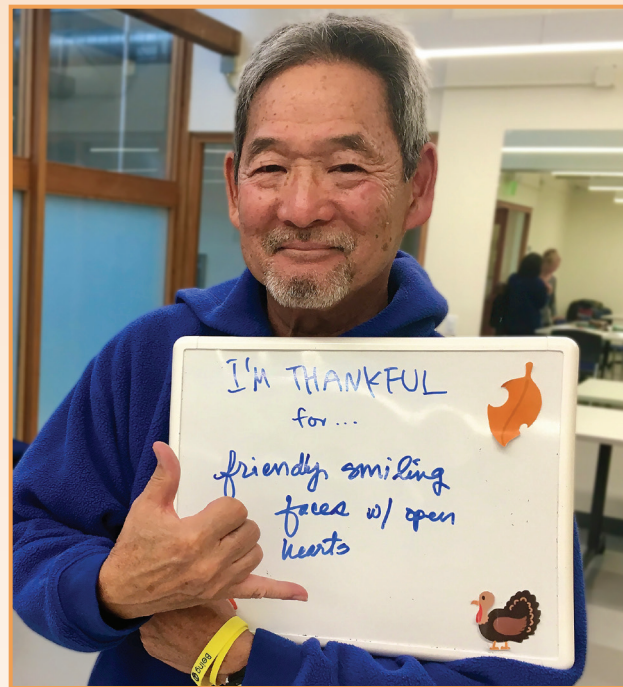
### Brain, Balance and Body Work

Taught by Midori Lambert, a certified trainer of the National Academy of Sports Medicine, BBBW is celebrating its one year anniversary at J-Sei in March. Each class is a new adventure with strength, balance, and cardio workouts as well as fun brain stimulating activities. Many of the students have participated the whole year, noting that the class is full of energy and laughter every week whether tossing bean bags while counting down by 3 or stepping through an agility ladder with Bee Gees playing in the background. Who knew even Rock, Paper, Scissors or Pat-A-Cake could be a brain game? Two class sessions are offered on Wednesdays (10am & 11am). We invite you to check it out. The instructor can modify exercises to accommodate individual needs.

#### Testimonials:

*"We really love this class! Midori keeps it lively & fun with great music and challenging memory games. By the end of the session we feel like we've had a great workout!" - Mimi and Ron*

*"The class is fun and interactive. I've enjoyed getting to know my classmates, and have made some new friends!" - Donna*



### In Memory of Alan Maeda

With deep sorrow, we are sharing the news that Alan Maeda has passed away. Alan connected deeply with those that he met and greeted each with a loving aloha bear hug. As a Marriage Family and Child Counselor, he reminded us all to be in tune with our humanity and feelings. His compassion and skills led to his development and leadership of J-Sei's four discussion and support groups Aging Together, Healthy Aging, the Men's Support Group and the Family Caregiver Support Group and with a ukulele in hand he was a member of the Sentimental Strummers.

As a seven-year board member, Alan helped to guide J-Sei through wonderful growth and inclusion in a way that was consistent with our mission of caring and culture. He touched the lives of so many in the J-Sei and Sakura Kai communities and we all hold onto his warmth and sense of acceptance and openness with a commitment to pay it forward. Our hearts and thoughts are with his wife and family.

## Welcome Back to the Board!



### Jane Tanamachi

I am returning to the J-Sei board after serving the six-year term limit that concluded in 2020 (same year I retired from Lawrence Berkeley Lab as a program manager). I grew up in Southern California and am a proud UCLA Bruin. In the late 70's, I worked with some amazing Sansei women on a project that developed into Daruma No Gakko - established in 1978 and still going strong. I am honored to be considered one of the founders.

I am amazed at how the leadership and staff at J-Sei were so creative, agile and quick in stepping up to continue supporting our seniors when the pandemic hit. Besides serving on the board, I moderate the K-drama discussion group, the J-Sei Book Club and host the BTS fan club. They are all fun groups - please join us. Programs and services are still growing and it is an exciting time!

### Kevin Toyama

Kevin Toyama is the books editor for Make:, the organization that publishes Make: magazine and produces Maker Faire Bay Area. He's worked in book publishing for 20 years, including projects with the Golden State Warriors, Lucasfilm, and the California Academy of Sciences. Kevin grew up as a member of the Sacramento Japanese United Methodist Church, but can now be found working the beer booth at the Berkeley Higashi Honganji Buddhist Temple's summer bazaar.

After initially serving on J-Sei's board of directors from 2015–2022, Kevin rejoins with an eye toward welcoming new members to the J-Sei community and expanding its reach. One of his most meaningful J-Sei experiences was delivering lunches, where he chatted with seniors and saw how the meal program directly impacted lives and nourished not just bodies, but also spirits.





## A Wonderful Addition to J-Sei

Originally from Florida, Hanna Yamaguchi grew up in a small but tight knit Japanese community that shaped her sense of connection and care for others. After nearly eight years in political advocacy, she grew a particular emphasis on environmental justice and its impact on vulnerable communities including older adults. Hanna is pursuing a path in social work to continue uplifting and empowering others, joining J-Sei as our new Program Coordinator. In many ways, this role feels like a full-circle moment, allowing her to foster the same kind of intergenerational connections that influenced her own upbringing.



## Feasting Together at J-Sei's 34th Annual Crab Feed

The winter months bring us special seasonal foods and dungeness crab is one of the most celebrated dishes of this time of year. About 200 people joined J-Sei's 34rd Annual Crab Feed at the Fratellanza Club. Musical entertainment by Glen's Trio kicked off the evening along with a fun raffle drawing. Guests managed to share conversation and laughs between crab shelling, sips of red and white wine and homemade cookies. A festive and hearty eat-all-you-can meal was readily enjoyed.

We thank everyone for participating in this community meal and for supporting the raffle drawing. Matt Fujikawa, was the chair of the event for the sixth year! Wow – thank you Matt! Also, a special shout out to Cole Yoshida, MC of the evening, and Tiffany Nguyen, Operations Manager, for handling all the event logistics. So many people continue to enjoy the salad dressing created by Hiko and Susan Shimamoto. The delicious home bakes were made possible by Wendy Kiniris, Aiko Kurokawa, Andrea Maoki, Susan Nishizaka, Yuki Otake, Suzie Price, Amy Shinsako, Anne Takizawa, Nancy Teshima, Naomi Yamada, Maya

Yonemura, Carrie Yoshida, Daruma No Gakko families, and Ohtani members. And we are extremely thankful for the many volunteers that helped at the event including students from Albany and El Cerrito High Schools.





## J-Sei in the News

Scan the QR Code or go to the address below to watch the CBS story




<https://www.cbsnews.com/sanfrancisco/news/japanese-american-internment-anniversary-photo-exhibit-tule-lake/>

LOCAL NEWS

### Bay Area photo exhibit recreates the Japanese American internment experience of WWII

By Ryan Yamamoto  
Updated on: February 20, 2025 / 12:51 PM PST / CBS San Francisco



KPIX CBS NEWS BAY AREA  
3:02 PM HEADLINES BIKE LANE IN SAN FRANCISCO

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### Bay Area Japanese Americans Draw on WWII Trauma to Resist Deportation Threats

LISTEN

By Cecilia Lei Jan 23 Save Article



Sadako Nimura Kashiwagi, 91, holds a photo of her parents, Junichi Nimura and Shizuko Nimura, at her home in Berkeley on Jan. 15, 2025. Sadako was incarcerated at Tule Lake concentration camp at the age of 9, where she lived with her family for four years. (Gina Castro/KQED)

Scan the QR Code or go to the address below to read the KQED story



<https://www.kqed.org/news/12021919/bay-area-japanese-americans-draw-on-wwii-trauma-resist-deportation-threats>

## Hiring for a Senior Nutrition Manager

Hey J-Sei community! J-Sei is still looking for a full-time nutrition services manager (full-time with benefits) to join our team. Part of the job will require a good amount of leadership skills, in addition to managing overall food services. We are looking for someone who not only is knowledgeable about the service delivery itself, but who can also create community responsive offerings. We hope to find someone who can guide a team and collaborate to improve and grow our existing programs (home delivered lunches, on-site nutrition program, food pantry,

etc.) This is a unique opportunity for someone to also add their own value and input to the greater J-Sei community.

Please share it with anyone who you think might be interested/qualified. As always, the full job description can be found on our website here: <https://j-sei.org/nutrition-services-manager/>. Email Diane Wong at [diane@j-sei.org](mailto:diane@j-sei.org) for any questions or if you are interested in applying. Thank you.

## J-Sei in Memorium

*Below are gifts received from December 1, 2024, through February 28, 2025.*

### **In Memory of Sumiye Akiyoshi**

*Steven Oishi*

### **In Memory of Ruth Fukuchi**

*Jeanne Elyea*

*Thomas Fong*

*Kathryn Hashimoto*

*Peter Hikido & Debra*

*Natsuhara-Hikido*

*Ruth Ichinaga*

*LDA Architects, Inc.*

*Cindy Lee*

*Susan & Norma Naito*

*Leslie Shirasawa & Dave*

*Yamada*

*Ann Yamamoto*

*Paul Yatabe*

*Scott Yokoi & Suzanne Ishii*

*Susan Yonekura*

### **In Memory of Richard "Fuzzy" Furuzawa**

*Harvey & Hisako Nakaya*

### **In Memory of George Goto**

*Paul Chong*

*Kathy & Winston Dang*

*Midori Goto*

*Arlene Hashimoto*

*Reggie & Laura Kho*

*Dean & Denice*

*Nakamura*

*Paul & Sumi Okada*

*Brian Tamamoto*

*Michael Yee & Donna*

*Uyemoto*

### **In Memory of Hamae Hori**

*Glenn Hori*

### **In Memory of Gary Hoshiyama**

*Burnice E. Sparks*

### **In Memory of Art Minoru Ishida**

*Eunice Ashizawa*

*Nobuso & May Doi*

### **In Memory of Kikuko Ito**

*Susan Ito*

### **In Memory of Barbara Kitagawa**

*Gary Kitagawa*

### **In Memory of George Kobayashi**

*Anonymous*

*Gary Kitahata*

### **In Memory of Yuri Kochiyama**

*Pamela Wu Kochiyama*

### **In Memory of Mary Komiya**

*Mona Komiya-Chan*

### **In Memory of My Parents**

*Patricia Nagamoto*

### **In Memory of James & Hazel Nakabayashi**

*Lynn Noma*

### **In Memory of Rose Nieda**

*Meri Lane*

### **In Memory of Elsie Ogata**

*Betty Kano*

### **In Memory of Raymond Ogata**

*Nobuso & May Doi*

*Jennifer Lew*

### **In Memory of Makoto & Amy Oto**

*Susan Obayashi*

### **In Memory of Helen & Hiro Sato**

*Rosalind Winter*

### **In Memory of Alice Shibata**

*Ruth Ichinaga*

### **In Memory of Bob Sekigahama**

*Janet Sekigahama*

### **In Memory of Bob Sekiguchi**

*Doug & Betty Yamamoto*

### **In Memory of Jane Yee Shiga**

*Kathy Masaoka*

### **In Memory of Toshio & Kimiko Shiozaki**

*Linda Shiozaki*

### **In Memory of Yoshiko "Yo" Sumimoto**

*Milton Tamura*

### **In Memory of Sachiye & Taichi Takagi**

*Miye Takagi*

### **In Memory of Michi Takata**

*Kaz Takata*

### **In Memory of Tami Tanabe**

*Candace Tanabe*



**In Memory of Sharon Uejo**

*Curtis Uejo*

**In Memory of Jerry Yahiro**

*Nobuso & May Doi*

**In Memory of Harold & Chiharu Yamanoha**

*Edith Yamanoha*

**In Memory of Skip Yamashita**

*Reiko Nabeta*

**In Memory of Chiaki Yokoi**

*Stephen Yokoi*

## Senior Center Partnerships

Contact the Senior Center Partnership for details on their post-pandemic operations schedule.

### Berkeley Nikkei Center

1901 Hearst Street, Berkeley  
(510) 809-5202

Director:  
Kayo Fisher

### Eden Senior Center

Eden Japanese Community Center  
710 Elgin Street, San Lorenzo

Contacts:  
Pam Honda  
(510) 676-3820

### Extending Connections

Buena Vista United Methodist Church  
2311 Buena Vista Avenue, Alameda  
(510) 522-2688

### Goen

2261 Morello Avenue #C Pleasant Hill, CA  
94523

Kurumi Japanese School  
Contacts:  
Aiko Katayama or Ema Hiura  
Please contact us by email:  
circle3ph@gmail.com

### Sakura Kai Senior Center

5625 Sutter Street, Richmond  
(510) 672-7160

ecsakurakai@gmail.com  
Coordinator:  
TBD



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*Congrats to J-Sei Executive Director Diane Wong for being selected to  
be inducted in the Alameda County Women's Hall of Fame!*

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## Save the Date!

- Apr 5** Letters from Home; Art & Writing by LGBTQ+ Nikkei and Allies
- Apr 26** Criminals – A Book Reading and Conversation
- May 4** We Are Not Strangers at the Magnes Museum, Berkeley
- May 10** A Storied Career in Fimmaking: John Esaki
- May 26** Memorial Day – J-Sei Closed