Keeping Traditions Through Generations
50 Years of Celebrating Dreams and Generations

The dream of the Japanese Cultural and Community Center of Northern California (the Center) was built upon the foundation of our community and the generations of our past, present, and generations yet to come.

The hope was that this Center could stand as a symbol of the resiliency of our community as we faced the uncertain times of a Japantown that, in just a few years, would completely be leveled to the ground, torn apart - one house, one business, one block, one memory at a time by the San Francisco Redevelopment Agency to build a tourist-driven Japantown.

The Center was envisioned so that our community would not fade away with the loss of our historic Japantown. The Nisei led the vision and fundraising campaign to build a Center that would be owned and operated by the community. They donated millions of dollars, leading our community’s largest fundraising effort to construct the largest community-owned facility in Northern California. In subsequent years, the Sansei leadership helped develop thousands of programs and initiatives that brought the Nisei vision to life and grew far beyond the borders of Japantown. These programs would impact the entire state and reach 5000 miles across the Pacific Ocean.

We organized the California Nisei Diploma Project and reached out to every high school, college, and university throughout California so that the Nisei could finally receive their high school and college diplomas denied to them due to WWII. Millions of dollars were raised to provide relief aid for the earthquake in Kobe and the triple disaster in Tohoku region of Japan. The Center created a Japanese American U.S.–Japan grassroots relations program that brought over a thousand Sansei and Yonsei to Japan, making the journey of the Issei come full circle.

The opening of the Center changed the future of Japantown and the Japanese American community forever. More than four million people have walked through our doors to participate in programs, attend workshops and community events, play sports, and support non-profit activities. Today, the support of the Center comes from the entire San Francisco Bay Area and reaches throughout California and the nation, including Hawaii.

50 years ago, a new beginning for our community was born. Our story began with the Nisei and Sansei, whose commitment made the Center a reality. From their vision, many more dreams from future generations will unfold. The next 50 years of the Center and beyond belong to the next generations, and these generations, each with their own struggles, adversity, determination, and dreams, shall write new chapters for our Center and the community.

Thank you to the entire community for helping to make our 50th anniversary a reality.

Okagesama de. “We are who we are because of those who came before us.”

Paul Osaki
Executive Director

MISSION

The Center is a nonprofit organization which strives to meet the evolving needs of the Japanese American community by offering programs, affordable services and administrative support and facilities for other local organizations. The Center also provides educational, cultural and recreational programs that meet and address the interests and concerns of the community. Our goals remain rooted in preserving the Japanese American cultural and historical heritage as well as fostering the foundation for future generations of Japanese Americans.
Tabemasho 2023

The Center’s 50th Celebrates the Spirit of Community

PHOTOS BY WILL LEE

On October 7, the Center hosted its 50th Anniversary Tabemasho celebration with over 380 guests in attendance, 14 community chefs from Bay Area establishments and three artisans from Japan. This year’s gala was the largest Tabemasho turnout since the pandemic and was a show of community celebration, lively cultural entertainment and reflections on the Center’s 50 years of serving the community.

The gala was emceed by veteran Bay Area news icons and longtime friends of the Center, Wendy Tokuda and Mike Inouye. DJ Marty Garrett of Tokyo Beatniks set the vintage atmosphere in the gym with old-school Japanese pop, and three artisans from Japan — Moriei and Sachiko Watanabe of Watanabe Daruma and cutlery artisan Hiroki Tanaka of Tanaka Kama Kogyo — showcased their family trades and artistry, with the opportunity for guests to purchase and take home their handmade treasures.

A highlight of this year’s event was the presentation of Japan’s Foreign Ministry Award to Paul Osaki, the Center’s Executive Director, for his outstanding achievements and contributions in promoting friendship between the United States and Japan, as well as his efforts to change perceptions and open dialogue between the two countries. The award was presented to Paul by Consul General Yo Osumi, a distinguished honor for the Center during a meaningful celebration.

A unique musical performance featuring the sounds and heritage of Okinawa concluded the gala, with musicians Wesley Ueuntten, Francis Wong, Naohiro Matsuzawa and Shimadaiko rallying

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Shimadaiko

guests to their feet with authentic Okinawan music. Shimadaiko’s performance ended with the perfect party song, “Celebration,” by Kool and the Gang, as guests exited the Nisei Community Hall at the close of the event.

We want to thank our Tabemasho Sponsors, 50th Anniversary Sponsors, in-kind beverage donors (Ito En, Sapporo, Robert Sakai), and our hardworking community chefs, restaurants and volunteers. We would like to extend a heartfelt thank you to all who made this year’s theme, Celebrating Generations, possible. We couldn’t have done it without you, and we look forward to many more years of community, culture and friendship. Read on for profiles on the featured artisans from Japan, and an overview of the Foreign Ministry Commendation received by Paul Osaki.

Consul General Yo Osumi presents Paul Osaki with Japan’s Foreign Ministry Award
Moriei Watanabe
13th Generation Daruma Master Artist

Sachiko Watnabe
Daruma Artist

Nana korobi ya oki (七転び八起き), which means “fall down seven times, get up eight” — a synonymous Japanese phrase that symbolizes a daruma’s perseverance.

Moriei Watanabe, 13th generation daruma master, and his artist wife Sachiko, who together form the family business of Shirakawa Daruma Sohono (Watanabe Daruma) joined us once again in San Francisco for the Center’s 50th Anniversary celebration.

Taking the 300-year old traditions of the founder, Watanabe Daruma continues to be made by skilled artisans who use the traditional hariko (papier-mache) technique of layering Japanese washi paper. The love for Shirakawa Daruma traces back to the Edo period (1603–1868) in Shirakawa city, Fukushima, where these Daruma bear symbols of fortune with eyebrows shaped like cranes, a mustache with two turtles, squiggly shapes representing plum and pine trees on their cheeks and a beard that resembles bamboo shoots.

Taking on a more whimsical spin on the traditional Daruma is Moriei and Sachiko’s son, Takaaki Watanabe, now the 14th generation artisan. At the age of 24, after studying economics in the U.S., Takaaki began helping with the planning and management of his family’s business and has since collaborated with more than 30 brands and famous character designers. In 2022, Takaaki opened a Daruma Land store in Asakusa, Tokyo. “In order to pass on the traditions of Fukushima to the next generation, I believe that by continuing to take on challenges like a Daruma doll, no matter how many times you fall, you will surely find a way,” says Takaaki about the future of his family’s craft. “If I can give you the energy, I’m very happy.”

Learn more about Shirakawa Daruma Sohono, in Fukushima Prefecture, Shirakawa.daruma.com/Darumaland.jp.

Visit their store in Tokyo: Daruma Land Store 1 Chome-34-5 Asakusa, Taito City, Tokyo 111-0032
In the grassy regions of Nagasaki, Japan, there are blacksmith techniques that have not been documented but verbally passed down.

The Center was excited to welcome cutlery artisan, Hiroki Tanaka, the 5th generation descendant of Tanaka Kama Kogyo founder Shuichi Tanaka, who showcased his fine cutlery and shared his passion for his work.

Shuichi Tanaka founded Tanaka Kama Kogyo in 1933 to carry on the traditional craft of blacksmithing Matsubara cutlery. It is said that descendants of the Hizen clan swordsmith set up his residence in 1474, in what was then called Hizen Matsubara, and trained their apprentices at Hachiman Shrine.

Inheriting the 500-year-old tradition of Matsubara cutlery, Hiroki and his father Katsuto carry out all processes in-house, from forging and sharpening the steel to the attachment of fine wooden handles. Matsubara cutlery, which has a reputation for its tenacity and sharpness, has been growing in overseas markets.

The Shu Brand

There used to be 19 blacksmith shops in Matsubara and products were labeled with an inscription indicating the manufacturer. Tanaka Kama Kogyo’s signature “Shusaku Matsubara” comes from the founder, Shuichi Tanaka. Along with the name SHU, Hiroki and his father have inherited the passion that their predecessors poured into making cutlery.

Tanaka Kama Kogyo, Nagasaki Prefecture e-kajiya.com
In honor of our 50th Anniversary theme, Celebrating Generations, we are dedicating the last newsletter issue of the year to the all-important Japanese tradition of Oshogatsu, as this milestone year comes to a close. As meaningful as the array of food and symbolic dishes are during New Years gatherings, more important are the people who keep the family and community connections, and the spirit of Oshogatsu, alive and well throughout the generations. In this piece, we asked community members to contribute some of their favorite Oshogatsu memories or rituals, and what they cherish most about this important time of the year.

“...I am the oldest grandchild of Yutaka and Chiye Yoshifuji, who lived with us in San Mateo, where we settled after WWII. Our Bachan, who was a very strong, energetic woman, could do anything. She raised 8 children, could repair a sewing machine, kill rattlesnakes (while living on a farm in Pescadero pre-war), kept an immaculate house, tilled the soil for vegetable gardens, sewed beautifully without using a pattern, and cooked delicious meals, of course, without recipes.

Bachan's cooking was the best. This was very evident in our Oshogatsu feast every year. My siblings and I would watch Bachan cook many dishes in preparation for the feast, which she started preparing for at least a week in advance. Our excitement increased with each dish she created. She made dishes like sushi, prawns, teriyaki chicken, kanten, noodles, vegetables (with bamboo shoots, kombu, carrots) and many other dishes for which I cannot recall the names.

The Oshogatsu food was so delicious. But the best memory of New Year’s..."
Day was when all the family members and friends came to the house. What fun! Aunts, uncles, cousins arrived to eat, toast in the New Year, and enjoy a wonderful, social, and happy day. There were so many that they arrived at different times. And each time someone arrived, we had to sit down and eat with them. It always was a most filling day. We toasted many times to the good, prosperous New Year ahead.

Bachan died in 1980. At her funeral, my Uncle Joe Tondo reminded us that Bachan wanted us to carry on the tradition of Oshogatsu for the Yoshifuji clan. We restarted our family Oshogatsu, which is now held annually at the JCCNC. Needless to say, we cannot create the fabulous dishes that Bachan made, but we do try. Bachan knew that it was not the food. Oshogatsu strengthens family ties."

—Rosie McCormick

"It is the smells, the aromas emanating from the kitchen, wafting throughout the house, that have shaped my earliest memories of our family Oshogatsu celebration. The kitchen was in the small 2 bedroom, 1 bath house shared by our multi-generational family (8 of us) after we relocated to San Mateo after our 4 1/2 year incarceration in Topaz, Utah. Ingrained in my memory is the sweet fragrance of simmering dashi, made from scratch, using the dried konbu kelp, which was harvested on a family excursion to a beach along the San Mateo Coast. I can also smell the pungent odor of the vinegar solution (su) that would flavor the 3 or 4 different varieties of sushi.

Oshogatsu was the biggest and most important holiday of the year, trumping birthdays, Thanksgiving, and Christmas. Our Bachan and Jiichan started planning and shopping many weeks prior to the holiday, and the actual preparation of the traditional Oshogatsu dishes was started many days before January 1.

Everything was prepared from scratch—our Bachan would have shuddered at the thought of "gu" from a can, or flavoring from a bottle.

As a family we used to go to several houses on New Year’s Day. I used to call it house hopping. We would start at a family friend’s house where there were many different dishes made. Then it was off to my auntie’s house for another meal. We would already be tired and would take a nap there before eating another meal. I felt like I was eating all day, but the most memorable was just to be with family and friends and be able to visit with everyone. Don’t get me wrong, the food was great! It was being able to see people that you don’t always get to see.

— Jennifer Hamamoto

Back then, the celebration extended over 3 days! On the first day, January 1st, the immediate family would gather to share food and drink, and to herald the New Year. On day two we would visit extended family to offer New Year’s greetings, and of course, to sit down and share food. On the third day, we would visit with friends and neighbors, again offering New Year’s cheer, and sharing good luck New Year’s food.
Over the course of many years, our Bachan and Jiichan continued to oversee and to coordinate our family Oshogatsu. Our Bachan’s dying wish was that the family continue this yearly tradition. We have honored her wishes, and have held a family Oshogatsu celebration every year.

With the passing of the Issei and most of the Nisei members of our family, my generation, the Sansei, have taken over the event. The celebration has morphed into a potluck event, with each family unit contributing several of the traditional dishes. In addition, we have outgrown any one family’s house, as our extended family has grown to include Yonsei and Gosei. For several years we have gathered in the Issei Memorial Hall of The Center, which can accommodate the nearly 100 family and friends who attend.

“Only time will tell whether our children and grandchildren will continue our family Oshogatsu tradition.”
—Karen Boyden

“The smell of vinegar and shoyu, stalks of gobo wrapped in newspaper, the refrigerator packed full of sato imo, fresh age, sashimi and much more! The food of Oshogatsu brings so many memories. I remember my grandmother and my mother would spend the entire New Year’s Eve day cooking. Starting early in the morning, they would make a Shimane specialty called Kiriozu, made of gobo and tofu. I don’t know anyone else who made this, and we would bring this to our relatives’ houses for New Year’s. Throughout the day they made futomaki, inari, nishime, teriyaki chicken and eventually some Japanese-American things like clam dip and chips. When we were young, my mother would cook and then on New Year’s Day our whole family would go and visit other families to wish them good wishes for the new year. Most people had a lot of similar food and we would go from house to house, sometimes at least 4 to 5 houses in the day. Even though some of the food items were the same, we knew there was a real specialty from each home. Then, we would come home and people would come over to our house to feast on the food that my mom prepared.

As my mom got older, my sister and I decided that we needed to learn how to prepare the Oshogatsu goodies. For several years before my mom passed away, my sister and I cooked, and am happy to report that many of my cousins have learned to prepare the Oshogatsu food as well. This is why I put together a family Oshogatsu cookbook too!

“But the other aspect that is even more important to me is the family gatherings. Many members of our extended family still gather together to celebrate New Year’s. Now we all go to my aunt’s house, who is the “last” Nisei in our family who continues to make Oshogatsu food. It is the one time during the year that we can laugh, remember our ancestors who have passed, and look to the younger generations who love to connect with their Japanese American culture.”
— Donna Kotake
On August 24, the Center hosted a special presentation of five scholars to discuss the findings of pre-World War II Issei records and images. The records are from the Center’s Japanese American History Archives (JAHA) collection, specifically the Yokohama Specie Bank (YSB). The following piece was originally printed in the *Nichi Bei News*, and provides an excellent overview of the presentation and the future impact this collection will have in expanding our knowledge of pre-World War II life for Japanese Americans.

Many things likely inspire more excitement than 85-year-old bank records and phone books, but a team of researchers unveiled the exciting potential they hold for Japanese American history.

The Japanese American History Archives is a little known collection of primary materials housed in the Japanese Cultural and Community Center of Northern California in San Francisco’s Japantown. The collection of more than 18,000 documents primarily pertains to Japanese American Issei who settled in the United States prior to World War II, starting in the latter half of the 19th century.

“This is actually the largest collection of primary Issei documents in the community,” Paul Osaki, executive director of the JCCNC, said. “UCLA has a lot. Berkeley has a lot. But in terms of community collection, this is the largest … and it’s really owed to Mr. (Seizo) Oka.”

According to Osaki, as well as Oka’s obituary in the San Francisco Chronicle, the Nisei banking executive started managing the collection in 1977 in what was then known as the Japanese American History Room in the Bank of...
Tokyo of California (now U.S. Bank). Oka managed the collection — which according to his obituary, included memoirs and listings of businesses, which students, scholars and community members used for research — for nearly three decades.

The collection grew, and it moved to the community center as part of a $30,000 donation by the bank as Oka retired. After Oka's retirement, he oversaw the collection up until his death in 2004.

“No one could go in there, it was kind of his collection and he didn’t want anyone messing around with it, or — he didn’t have a regular way of finding things. It was his system,” Osaki said. “And so when he passed, we had to figure out ... what are we going to do with these archives, because we didn’t really know what existed in there.”

Nearly two decades later, a team of Nikkei historians from across the United States and Japan convened to organize the archives and examine what kind of documents it contained. They presented their preliminary findings Aug. 24 after a year of work.

“This is just, hopefully, the beginning of a journey to share the information of the history of Issei with the community, so I’m very excited and honored to be here,” Kay Ueda, curator of the Japanese Diaspora Collection at the Hoover Institution Library and Archives at Stanford University, said.

While organizers expected only around 10 people to attend, around twice that number, including Deputy Consul General of Japan in San Francisco Hajime Kishimori, packed the small conference room in the community center with some attendees left standing to listen to the two hour lecture.

Along with Ueda, four other professors spoke on their respective work with the archives to illustrate the kind of stories and facts that may be gleaned from the collection. Toyotomi Morimoto, professor of human sciences at Waseda University, spoke about the collection’s Japanese language school directories, along with additional work examining meeting minutes from the Kinmon Gakuen and Japanese Teachers Association of America. Meredith Oda, associate professor of history at the University of Nevada, Reno, showed the concentrations of Japanese American residences and businesses in pre-World War II San Francisco using directories from the Shinsekai and Nichi Bei Shimbun located in the archive. Yoko Tsukuda, associate professor at Seijo University in Tokyo, discussed what bank remittance forms could tell historians.

Finally, Eiichiro Azuma, a professor of history and Asian American studies at the University of Pennsylvania, spoke on “tidbits” about pre-World War II life for Issei, particularly around prefectural organizations.

The presentation also focused on records from the Yokohama Specie Bank, which served the Issei community during a time when anti-Japanese sentiments kept them from opening accounts at the white-owned banks. Ueda, who spearheaded the preservation efforts with the community center, told the Nichi Bei News the files survived the war because the FBI had confiscated them when World War II began and later returned them to the Bank of Tokyo, which became the de facto successor of the bank after the war.

The files revealed minutia about pre-war Japanese American society, including a who’s who of Issei community leaders at a banquet held by the bank, the bank’s business dealings with Japanese farmers who settled as far East as Nebraska and where Issei sent money through remittance slips. Diane Matsuda, coordinator of the JAHA collection, said it has not been open to the public because of its fragility. The community center also underwent mold abatement with grants from the Henri and Tomoye Takahashi Foundation, National Historical Publications and Records Commission, and the Mellon Foundation to save the documents.

Matsuda, however, said she hopes that, through digitization, the collection can be uploaded online and made available to the public in the near future.

“JAHA’s goal in the near future is to implement and promote a community digital collection as well as undertake a fully renovated archive, with a virtual and graphically visual history walk of San Francisco Japantown at the Center,” she said.

“It is so important to preserve primary source materials. Without them, I cannot tell you anything about history,” Azuma said in closing. “But preserving, collecting materials, not really a glorious thing. People usually don’t even know about it. But that’s actually very, very important ... In the future, there will be better historians than I am, and they’ll be able to come up with even better stories, as long as we preserve the materials.”
We welcome you to peruse the list below that features all of the fun and enriching cultural and recreational classes that we offer. The first class session is free for any first-time participant (materials costs for select classes still apply). We encourage you to try something new! Please be advised that all in-person programs require participants to be fully vaccinated and pre-register. For more information or to register for a class, please visit our website, jccncc.org, or call (415) 567-5505.

**MARTIAL ARTS AND FITNESS**

**KARATE**
Karate is an Okinawan martial art meaning “empty hand.” Develop self-defense skills and strengthen yourself mentally and physically. Our class is part of the International Karate League (IKL) which instructs a modified Shorin-Ryu style of karate. This class is open to all skill levels age 6+.
Instructor: Craig Hamakawa
Mondays and Wednesdays, 5:30-8 p.m.
Cost: $30 M  |  $48 NM monthly
       $9 M  |  $14 NM drop-in

**KENDO WITH SAN FRANCISCO KENDO DOJO**
Learn the modern Japanese martial art of Kendo. Kendo is an activity that combines martial arts practices and values with strenuous sport-like physical activity. Kendo uses bamboo swords and protective armor to discipline the human character through the application of the principles of the katana. This class is hosted by San Francisco Kendo Dojo.
To learn more and to register, visit sanfranciscokendo.org and info@sfkendo.org
Instructor: Koji Lau-Ozawa
Thursdays, 7-9 p.m.

**PICKLEBALL**
Join the new craze of pickleball that combines elements of tennis, badminton and ping-pong. Learn the game, meet new people, and get some exercise! All skill levels welcome!
Mondays, noon-4 p.m.
Cost: $4 M  |  $6/NM
Wednesday and Saturdays, 10 a.m.-noon
Thursdays, noon-3 p.m.
Cost: $3 M  |  $5/NM

**SWORD CLUB**
The Northern California Japanese Sword Club is the oldest such organization in the U.S., dedicated to the study and preservation of Japanese swords, armor, art, and history. For more information, please visitncjsc.org or email ncjsc.secretary@gmail.com
Third Sundays, 12:30-4 p.m.
Free for Center members

**ARTS AND CULTURE**

**IKEBANA**
Reflect on the simplistic beauty of nature and create a harmony of linear construction, rhythm and color through the traditional Japanese art of Ikebana (floral arrangement). Please contact the Programs Department at least 48 hours in advance if interested.
Instructor: Chizuko Nakamura
Wednesdays, 6-8 p.m.
Cost: $70 M  |  $90 NM monthly
       $22 M  |  $28 NM drop-in

**WATERCOLOR**
Learn the basics of watercolor painting and bring your artwork to life with the help of instructor Wendy Yoshimura.
This class is open to all skill levels.
Instructor: Wendy Yoshimura
Mondays, 10 a.m.–noon
Cost: $40 M  |  $48 NM monthly
       $11 M  |  $14 NM drop-in

**DANCE**

**LINE DANCING**
Learn the dance steps to smooth R&B and pop music and keep in shape while making new friends. This fun anaerobic (low impact) dance class is open to all skill levels. No dance experience required.
Instructor: Darlene Masamori
When: Fridays: 12:30–2 p.m.
Cost: $4 M  |  $5 NM drop-in

**IN PERSON CLASSES**

**SOUTH BAY**

**KEY**
M = Members  |  NM = Non-Members
SPORTS

COMMUNITY VOLLEYBALL
Create a team for your non profit, service or interest organization and join us for a volleyball league filled with fun, food and friends! Each team must consist of either board, staff members or volunteers in your organization. Please contact the Programs Department at programsevents@jcccnc.org if interested in forming a team.

Tuesdays, 7-10 p.m.
Cost: $45 M | $55 NM per season

40 AND OVER BASKETBALL
Sign up for the Center’s Monday Night (draft) Basketball League. Participate in games that are competitive, but friendly! See our website for league information.

Mondays, 6-10 p.m. (up to 15 weeks per season)
Cost: $120 M | $155 NM per season

HYBRID CLASSES
STUDENTS MAY CHOOSE TO ATTEND IN-PERSON OR ONLINE

ARTS AND CULTURE

BEYOND BASICS ART CLASS
This weekly art class is designed for intermediate and advanced students and will allow participants the opportunity to explore new media, subject matter and ways of thinking. This class will use basic drawing, painting concepts and subject matter, but will also look to expand participant’s artistic horizons. The atmosphere of the class is very informal for creating art.

Instructor: Rich Tokeshi
When: Saturdays, 10 a.m.-noon
Cost: $30 M | $40 NM monthly
$11 M | $14 NM drop-in

WASHI NINGYO
Engage in the art of Japanese paper doll making and create your own 3D Japanese washi (traditional Japanese paper) dolls. In this class made for all skill levels, participants will learn the basics, or perfect their skills in doll making. First-time participants must register by phone by the first Saturday of the month. Class fees include all materials.
Class is for ages 18+.
Instructor: Yurie Nakamura/Rochelle Lum
Second Saturday, 9:30 a.m.-12:30 p.m. | 1-4 p.m.
Cost: $30 M | $40 NM monthly
$11 M | $14 NM drop-in

DANCE

YOSAKOI DANCING WITH
ITO YOSAKOI DANCE GROUP
Join the Ito Yosakoi Dance Group’s weekly class to learn the lively, energetic dance style of Yosakoi dancing! Yosakoi dancing features choreographed group dances with traditional movements mixed with modern, uptempo music to make for a captivating dance style that is growing in popularity in Japan and abroad! No dance experience is necessary. Class members have the option of dancing with the class recreationally, or learning the group’s repertoire to perform in public.
Fridays, 7-9 p.m.
In-person: $25 M | $30 NM monthly
Cost: $8 M | $9 NM drop-in
Virtual: $12 M | $17 NM monthly
$3 M | $5 NM drop-in

MUSIC

CHORALE MAY
Be part of a male chorus group and sign a variety of songs, mainly in Japanese with some English.
Instructor: Ruriko Miura
When: Second and Fourth Tuesdays
Cost: $25 M | $31 NM monthly
$15 M | $18 NM drop-in

KOTO
Learn the koto, the classical stringed Japanese instrument. Group lessons for the koto are held weekly on Monday evenings and every other week on evenings for up to five students. Private lessons for individual students also available. Koto instruments are available to borrow directly from the Center and instructor. Students must provide their own finger picks (about $40-$60). Students may rent a koto for 1 hour practice sessions for an additional $10.
Instructor: Kazuma Ishikawa
Monday Group 1 Lessons 8-9 p.m.
Every other Thursday Group 2 Lessons 8-9 p.m.
Wednesday Private Lessons 7-8 p.m or 8-9 p.m.
Thursday Private Lessons 7-8 p.m. or 8-9 p.m (alternating weeks)
Location: The Center
Group Lesson: $30 M | $35 NM
Private Lesson: $35 M | $40 NM
Practice room 1 hour rental | $20/hr
Subject to availability. Please e-mail us at programsevents@jcccnc.org to make a reservation.

SHAMISEN
Learn the classical Japanese 3-stringed shamisen with Master Hidekyouharu Fujimoto! Group lessons for the shamisen are held on Monday evenings for up to 5 students. Private lessons for individual students also available. Rental shamisen instruments are available to borrow directly from the instructor.
Instructor: Hidekyouharu Fujimoto
Monday Group Lessons 7-8 p.m.
Wednesday Private Lessons 7-8 p.m. or 8-9 p.m.
Thursday Private Lessons 7-8 p.m. or 8-9 p.m. (alternating weeks)
Location: The Center
Group Lesson: $30 M | $35 NM
Private Lesson: $35 M | $40 NM
Practice room 1 hour rental | $20/hr
Subject to availability. Please e-mail us at programsevents@jcccnc.org to make a reservation.

ENSEMBLE SHIKI
Let’s enjoy singing a wide variety of songs from Japan and worldwide in this mixed chorus. Instructed in Japanese.

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All levels of singers are welcome. Shiki means four seasons in Japanese. They usually perform at their annual and holiday concerts, Japanese cultural festivals, and other events.

**Instructor:** Ruriko Miura

**Two weekends (Saturday or Sunday)**

**every month, 2-4 p.m.**

**Cost:** $25 M | $31 NM monthly

$15 M | $18 NM drop-In

**UKULELE: ADVANCED**

This class is for experienced ukulele players that focuses primarily on Hawaiian song traditions, as well as chords and rhythmic strumming techniques.

**Instructor:** Don Sadler

**Thursdays, 6:30-7:30 p.m.**

**Cost:** $50 M | $70 NM monthly

$17 M | $22 NM drop-In

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**ONLINE CLASSES**

**SENIOR CHAIR AEROBICS**

Designed for seniors who want to build basic physical strength in a low-impact class. Students will use a chair to participate in exercises to increase flexibility, muscle coordination and strength.

**Instructor:** Kaeko Inori

**Thursdays, 10-10:45 a.m.**

$4 M | $5 NM drop-in

**UKULELE: INTERMEDIATE**

Designed for ukulele players who have prior experience. This class will focus on learning and reviewing chords, as well as songs and strumming patterns. (New students with no prior experience should participate in the Ukulele 101 workshop held twice a year to cover basics such as tuning, basic chords and techniques.)

**Instructor:** Don Sadler

**Saturdays, 11 a.m.-12:30 p.m.**

Cost: $50 M | $70 NM monthly

$12 M | $17 NM drop-In

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**Upcoming Winter 2024 Workshops**

**OSHOGATSU FESTIVAL**

Saturday, January 6

11 a.m.–3 p.m.

In person at the Center

Free

More information:

bit.ly/2024oshogatsu

Ring in the new year with the Center, JCYC and APILO for our annual community celebration of the Japanese New Year holiday. Enjoy craft activities, cultural demonstrations, mochitsuki, and see the winners of our annual children's art contest!

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**GUEST LECTURE: “JAPANESE AMERICANS AND THE RACIAL UNIFORM—CITIZENSHIP, BELONGING, AND THE LIMITS OF ASSIMILATION”**

Saturday, January 20

2–3:30 p.m.

Free

Register: bit.ly/jaracialuniformlecture

Associate Professor Dana Y. Nakano of Cal State Stanislaus presents his recently published book, Japanese Americans and the Racial Uniform – Citizenship, Belonging, and the Limits of Assimilation, an academic study of how Japanese Americans are seen as the “model minority,” a group that has fully assimilated and excelled within the US, yet third- and fourth-generation Japanese Americans continue to report feeling marginalized within the predominantly white communities they call home. Japanese Americans and the Racial Uniform explores this apparent contradiction, challenging the way society understands the role of race in social and cultural integration.

To explore race and the everyday practices of citizenship, Dana Y. Nakano begins at an unlikely site, Japanese Village and Deer Park, a now defunct Japan-themed amusement park in suburban Southern California. Into the present day, third and fourth generation Japanese Americans share feelings of racialized non-belonging and yearning for community. Join us for this special guest lecture, followed by Q&A. Copies of the book will be available for purchase, also available to order online from NYU Press at: nyupress.org/9781479816378/japanese-americans-and-the-racial-uniform/

**UKULELE 101: FOR THE TRUE BEGINNER 4-WEEK VIRTUAL WORKSHOP SERIES**

Tuesday, February 6, 13, 20 and 27

6:30–8 p.m.
pairing botanical dyes with a bundling technique to create a one-of-a-kind silk piece. Using steam, dried botanicals and an insect (cochineal), Lisa will show you how natural shapes and forms can translate to cloth through vivid natural plant-based color dyes.

**FEBRUARY Kaiseki Virtual Cooking Workshop**
Saturday, February 17
11 a.m.–1:30 p.m.
Online via Zoom
$25 M | $30 NM
Register: bit.ly/kaisekifeb2024

Cook together with us online over Zoom with our kaiseki cooking instructors Larry Soko Tiscornia and Kimika Soka Takechi. Inspired by centuries of Japanese culinary tradition from Zen monasteries and tea ceremonies, our seasonal kaiseki cooking workshops feature elegant multi-course menus of small dishes that showcase the colors and flavors of each season.

**January and February Sewing Workshops**

**BOTANICAL BUNDLE DYEING WORKSHOP WITH LISA ROGERS**
Sunday, February 11
11 a.m.–1 p.m.
In person at the Center
$65 Members | $75 General
Register: bit.ly/jcccncbundledye

Sonoma County-based botanical dyer and instructor Lisa Rogers returns to the Center for a craft workshop exploring then enable you to participate in our sewing project workshops! For those of you with your own sewing projects to work on but don’t have enough space at home, need to borrow a sewing machine, or need a little expert guidance from an instructor, Katie’s Open Sewing Studio sessions are perfect for you!

**INTRODUCTION TO SEWING 2-PART WORKSHOP SERIES**
Sundays, January 14 and 28
11 a.m.–2 p.m.
In Person at the Center
$100 M | $115 NM
Register: bit.ly/intro2sewingjan2024

**OPEN SEWING STUDIO**
Tuesday, January 23
6-8:30 p.m.
In Person at the Center
$40 M | $45 NM
Register: bit.ly/jcccncopensewing

**PLACEMAT SET SEWING WORKSHOP**
Thursday, February 15 6-9 p.m.
In Person at the Center
$60 M | $70 NM
Register: bit.ly/jcccncplacematsewing

**OPEN SEWING STUDIO**
Tuesday, February 27
6:00pm-8:30pm
In Person at the Center
$40 M / $45 NM
Register: bit.ly/jcccncopensewing

Join us for Ukulele 101, a virtual 4-week introductory course to playing the ukulele! In this workshop, participants will learn the basic skills of playing the ukulele, beginning with how to tune, hold, and strum your instrument. Students will also learn various chords and techniques that will have them playing and singing seamlessly in no time! This class is open to adults and will prepare budding ukulele players for the Center’s ongoing intermediate Ukulele class. All you need is an ukulele!
Looking Back: Summer and Fall Workshops and Events

**AUGUST**

**INTRODUCTION TO KOTO AND SHAMISEN**
Our introductory workshops kicked off our new ongoing weekly koto and shamisen lessons.

**KNOT BAG SEWING WORKSHOP**
Sewing workshop participants enjoyed making their knot bag with sewing instructor Katie Furukawa.

**COMMUNITY KITCHEN: HAWAIIAN ONO GRINDZ**
Over 60 participants and volunteer committee members learned how to prepare and enjoyed a great dinner with a menu of kalua pork sliders, fish lau lau, lomi lomi salmon, spam musubi, macaroni salad and chocolate haupia pudding pie.

**PICKLEBALL SKILLS CLINICS**
Pickleball instructor Marcia Neishi returned to teach an advanced skills clinic for the Center’s pickleball enthusiasts.

**DESSERT MOCHI WORKSHOP**
Participants learned how to make daifuku manju with fresh fruit, mochi ice cream and mochi donuts with our mochi instructor Yukiko Zinke.

**SEPTEMBER**

**NISEI SHORT FILM SCREENING**
Yonsei film writer and director Darren Haruo Rae and cast members Jonathan Tanigaki and Brent Yoshida presented their recent short film *Nisei*, based on the director’s grandfather’s stories of serving in the 44nd during WWII.

**NOVEMBER**

**WASHI PAPER LAYERING GREETING CARD WORKSHOP**
Instructor Kathy Yoshida of Hanko Designs returned to the Center to teach a papercraft workshop making greeting cards using the recently rediscovered technique of layering decorative washi paper to create beautiful designs.

**BERNAL CUTLERY KNIFE SHARPENING WORKSHOP**
Bernal Cutlery shop owner Josh Donald provided his expertise in how to sharpen and properly maintain and extend the life of attendees’ Japanese kitchen knives.

**MORE THAN BASKETBALL SPEAKER PANEL WITH NIKKEI BASKETBALL HERITAGE ASSOCIATION**
The Center co-hosted a speaker panel with the Nikkei Basketball Heritage Association to discuss how Japanese American community basketball leagues have tied the sansei and yonsei generations of the community together while embodying many of our Nikkei cultural values through the sport.

**OCTOBER**

**HAPA ZOME ECO PRINTING**
Sonoma-based botanical dyeing instructor Lisa Rogers taught participants how to create botanical patterns and prints using actual leaves and flowers using the Japanese technique of *tataki zome*.

**BERNAL CUTLERY OPEN HOUSE**
The Center partnered with local business Bernal Cutlery to offer members a special cooking demonstration of donabe clay pots and oshinko pickling presses, as well as a knife sharpening demonstration.

**HALLOWEEN CARNIVAL**
Over 400 children and family members came to enjoy a fun night of Halloween games and activities at the Center’s annual Halloween Carnival with JCYC.

**COMMUNITY KITCHEN: KATSU CURRY DINNER**
We had another great turnout for our quarterly Community Kitchen dinner, where participants and volunteer committee members made pork and chicken katsu, vegetable curry, croquettes, cabbage salad, kabocha squash soup, miso butter mushrooms, and coffee jelly dessert.
In addition to access to members-only events, Center members enjoy discounts to Japantown businesses, discounts on Center programs, and more. Please visit jcccnc.org, email membership@jcccnc.org, or call (415) 567-5505 for more information or join as a Center member today.

**TRAVEL**

Special offers, discounts and rates to the below.

- **JAPAN AIRLINES**
- **HAWAIIAN AIRLINES**
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- **HAMPTON INN & SUITES**
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- **AKARI JAPANESE BISTRO**

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- **AMIKO BOUTIQUE**
- **PAPER TREE**
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**PURCHASABLES**

Available for purchase at the Center or by calling us at (415) 567-5505.

- **AMC THEATRES**
  - $11.50/TICKET
- **CINEMARK**
  - $10.50/TICKET
- **LANDMARK THEATRES**
  - $10.50/TICKET
- **SFMTA PARKING CARDS**
  - $20 EACH
- **See’s Candies Gift Cards**
  - $22.50

Membership benefits can be redeemed by showing your membership card at membership benefit partner businesses. If you need a new membership card, please contact us at (415) 567-5505 or membership@jcccnc.org. Visit jcccnc.org/membership for more details.
Carrying On Japanese New Year’s Traditions

Ozoni お雑煮 Making and Partaking  
BY DIANE MATSUDA

Back in the day when Uoki Sakai and American Fish Market were around, I remember following my Issei grandmother, aunts and mother to Japantown the day after Christmas to buy ingredients for osechi ryori, the food that is specially prepared to eat and enjoy during the first three days of the New Year.

All of the fancy Imari dishes would come out for their yearly debut and the aroma of dashi filled the air, the foundation of a number of dishes to be made. Items would be created one by one and were stored in a jubako until New Year’s Day, but nothing could be consumed until we all had our first bowl of ozoni.

Nowadays, even in Japan, families no longer have the time to make osechi dishes and modern tastes have changed preferences of what families want to eat during this special holiday. However, the tradition of starting the New Year with a bowl of ozoni remains a constant for many Japanese Americans of all generations. In that spirit, we are sharing simple ways to make this important dish and how you can substitute ingredients to suit your taste.

Ozoni is a soup that contains at least one piece of mochi (pounded rice cake), and is eaten on New Year’s Day. Rice has and continues to play an important symbolic role in Japanese culture – eating rice is said to bring you good luck. This tradition goes back to the Muromachi Period (1336-1573) and each ingredient that is added to the bowl of ozoni has a special meaning.

There are two main types of ozoni: Kanto style and Kansai style. The Kanto style is made with clear broth dashi, whereas the Kansai style uses white miso. For purposes of simplicity and easy access to ingredients, we are sharing the recipe we have printed in our Nikkei Potluck Cookbook.

MISO OZONI

Submitted by: Nikkei Potluck Group (edited)

INGREDIENTS:
- 1 small carrot
- ½ daikon
- 2 peeled satoimo
- 6 cups water
- 1 teaspoon powdered dashi
- 5 shiitake, soaked in water for an hour, stemmed and cut in half
- ¼ cup white miso
- 6-8 mochi
- ½ bunch spinach, parboiled

DIRECTIONS:
Wash, peel and slice carrots, daikon and satoimo. Set aside. Bring the water to a boil in a large soup pot. Add dashi to rapidly boiling water. Add shiitake, carrots, daikon and satoimo. Boil until tender. In a small bowl, mix miso paste with about ¼ cup of hot soup stock. Add to the pot and bring to a boil. Remove from heat. Meanwhile, place mochi in the toaster oven or broiler. Toast/broil until the top of mochi is golden brown and puffy. Place one to two mochi in each soup bowl. Arrange cooked vegetables from the pot over the mochi and then cover with soup stock. Garnish with parboiled spinach and serve.

Note: You can always substitute some of the garnish with other vegetables if the items are not available to you. For example, you can use pieces of potato for the satoimo, turnip for the daikon and regular mushrooms for shiitake. Also, if dashi and miso are not available to you, you can use a chicken stock base and it will still taste great! Mochi is available in vacuum packed packages that can even be purchased on Amazon.

Enjoy and have a great New Year of the Dragon!
Meet Your Nihonmachi:

Akari Japanese Bistro

In this issue of Meet Your Nihonmachi, we invite you to get to know one of the Center’s Membership Partner Businesses, Akari Japanese Bistro. Led by Chef Makoto Kanemaru, Akari’s vision is to provide an elevated dining experience with authentic Japanese ingredients and style. Since its opening last year, Akari has hosted several Major League Japanese baseball players, many who favor the Wagyu Sukiyaki course.

What are currently the most popular dishes on the menu and/or what do you recommend people try at least once they come to Akari?

For lunch, the most popular and recommended is Makunouchi bento gozen. For dinner, the most popular is Kikyo, a five course Omakase Kaiseki menu. The most recommended is Hasu, which is a special Omakase Kaiseki menu prepared by Executive Chef Mako, utilizing the best seasonal ingredients and only can be provided with at least 48 hour prior reservation. Also, we have a whole variety of Japanese Sake to choose from that pairs very well with our food.

Can you talk about the significance of the Center Membership Partner birthday benefits at Akari?

We want to respect and celebrate the 60th, 70th, 77th, 80th, 88th, and 90th birthdays of our Center Members and their families. In Japanese culture, they are called Kanreki (60), Koki (70), Kiju (77), Sanju (80), Beiju (88), and Sotsuju (90). Each milestone has its own interesting meaning. For example, to celebrate Kanreki, families and friends generally prepare red clothing. The color red represents protection from evil. Parents would give their babies something red to wear. During the Kanreki year, the zodiac returns to the same one as the birth year for the 5th time and was considered being back as a baby. Therefore, the celebration with red is said to have become a tradition.

Can you discuss the quality of ingredients that are used at the restaurant and what is special about the dining experience there?

We select the best ingredients possible from our trusted suppliers. We bring certain items directly from Japan as well. We serve the highest quality A5 graded Wagyu which we receive periodically from Japan. Many customers enjoy our fresh delicious sashimi with a surprise. With the creative beautiful presentation from our highly experienced executive chef, you can enjoy with the eyes and the belly. We wish to provide an experience where the customers feel like they are in Japan and enjoy the authentic Japanese food though we are all in our hometown San Francisco.

AKARI JAPANESE BISTRO
1155 Folsom Street
San Francisco, CA 94103
(415) 815-2407
Lunch: 11:30 a.m.-2 p.m
Dinner: 5:30-9 p.m.

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Lunch: 11:30 a.m.-2 p.m
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Community Tribute Gifts

We would like to extend our deepest gratitude to those who remember the Center when making unsolicited community gifts. These gifts remind us how important the Center is to many in the community who appreciate the work that we do. We thank you for thinking of us and allowing us to help remember or honor the special people in your life. Gifts received from August 1, 2023 to November 15, 2023 are listed below.

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In Memory of

MARJORIE FLETCHER

In July of 2023, we lost one of the beating hearts of the Center, Marjorie Fletcher. Marj was 94 years young and passed away in the presence of her family in Utah. From 1989 to 2021, Marj worked at the Center as Executive Assistant, following her retirement from the federal government in which she had already served 41 years. For all that she gave to us and the community, we are forever indebted and grateful to have known such a person.

Mr. Robert Kiyomura, $5,000
Mr. Stephen Oda, $3,000
Mr. Michael and Mrs. Megumi Nakamura, $500
Mr. Vernon Takasuka, $300
Mr. Keith and Mrs. Priscilla Kojimoto, $250
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Every effort is made to include all tributes and donations within the specified timeframe. If a name or donation has been inadvertently omitted, please contact us at development@jcccnc.org. Thank you for your support.
50TH ANNIVERSARY SPONSORS

The Center is honored and proud to have the support of loyal and dedicated sponsors and community members. We thank you for your generous gifts to our 50th Anniversary campaign.

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*deceased
Please join us on a fantastic spring journey to Japan from April 2-11, 2024. We will take full advantage of the season and festivals during this time of the year and enjoy every minute of our stay!

HIGHLIGHTS INCLUDE:

• An ONSEN MATSURI in Beppu, where the entire town celebrates the spring season by opening up many of its hot springs free of charge.

• A day of tea exploration and education in Higashi Sonogi, Nagasaki Prefecture.

• A private tour of the Tanaka Kama Industry, a fourth-generation cutlery company that the Center featured at our 2023 Tabemasho event. Here, you’ll have an opportunity to have your personal knife sharpened and engraved by the masters of this beautiful craft.

• A visit to the Inuyama Matsuri, a festival that dates back to 1635, featuring antique floats lit with hundreds of Japanese lanterns that are carried around the town to complement the viewing of cherry blossom trees surrounding the area.

We will conclude our tour in Tokyo to visit one or two festivals celebrating the cherry blossom season!

The tour will start in Fukuoka and conclude in Tokyo with the ability to have free time to roam, shop and eat in one of the many Tokyo neighborhoods. The tour will accommodate a maximum of 18 persons.

TOUR DATES:

April 2: Departure from SFO to Tokyo
April 3-4: Fukuoka/Nagasaki Area
April 5-6: Beppu-Onsen Matsuri
April 7-8: Inuyama/Nagoya Area
April 9-11: Tokyo

For more information, please contact us at (415) 567-5505 or email at info@jccnc.org.
Being a trusted financial partner to the Japanese American community didn’t happen overnight. Now, joining with U.S. Bank, we continue to invest in the future of our community. Together, we have more than three centuries of business experience to help you realize your goals. With even greater resources, we are well positioned to provide services for generational success.

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U.S. Bank is proud to support JCCCNCC’s 50th Anniversary Gala, Tabemasho: Celebrating Generations.
Congratulations to The Center on Celebrating 50 Years!

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JPMorgan Chase has long been committed to advancing equity and inclusion for Asian and Pacific Islander employees, customers, clients and communities worldwide. We’re working to drive opportunity and progress by raising awareness about cultural identity, enabling economic growth and investing in community development.

We’re proud to support The Center and the Takahashi Youth Ambassador Fellowship Program. Happy 50th Anniversary!

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With love,
In Memory of
Lorraine Suzuki

THE KASHIWADA FAMILY
IS PROUD TO CELEBRATE GENERATIONS WITH THE CENTER

THE NAOKO YOSHIMURA ITO FAMILY IS PROUD TO CELEBRATE GENERATIONS WITH THE CENTER

CONGRATULATIONS!
Congratulations to The Center on 50 YEARS of serving the community!

Kristi Yamaguchi's ALWAYS DREAM

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CONGRATULATIONS!
Marilyn Oshiro and Family Celebrate the Center’s 50 Years

Congratulations
50th Anniversary
KANPAI!
Congratulations to the Center on your 50th Anniversary
From the Ono Family

IN MEMORY OF Marge Fletcher, Tabemasato, JCCNC
Miss you
Ken and Yo

Congratulations to Paul + the staff on fifty great years!
Nob Fukuda Family

CONGRATULATIONS!
David and Jan Yonemoto are proud to celebrate generations with the Center
Congratulations JCCCNCC on 50 Years!

From all of us at ITO EN

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justly • compassionately • humbly with God

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LYNNE OGAWA
AND MYRON OKADA
**CONGRATULATIONS!**

**THE SERATA-KAGAY FAMILY**

Is proud to celebrate generations with the Center

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**MINETTE KWOK & GERRY OKIMOTO**

HAPPY 50TH ANNIVERSARY!
May the JCCNC remain the centerpiece of culture and community in J-Town for another 50 years.

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**CONGRATULATIONS!**

**THE NAKATAS** are ecstatic to celebrate 50 years of the Center

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**MS. SHIRLEY SASAKI**

Is ecstatic to celebrate 50 years of the Center

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**CONGRATULATIONS**

to the JCCNC on 50 years of serving our community!

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**THE SAKURAI FAMILY**

Is proud to celebrate generations with the Center

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**JAPANTOWN MERCHANTS ASSOCIATION**

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CONGRATS TO THE JCCNC!!

Located on the first floor of the Kinokuniya Building
Open Wednesday - Sunday from noon to 7pm
A grateful family congratulates the JCCNC on their 50th Anniversary and thanks them for providing generations of our family a place to come together with the community to enjoy the many cultural and community offerings. Wishing you continued success for future generations!

Our HeartfeltCongratulations!
THE TERRY AND MARIAN HAYASHI FAMILY
IS PROUD TO CELEBRATE 5 GENERATIONS WITH THE CENTER

CONGRATULATIONS!
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