



From left to right: PJCI President Bryan Takeda, Councilman Gene Masuda, 2015 Miss Pasadena JCI Veronica Ota, Pasadena Mayor Bill Bogaard, Consul Izuru Shimmura, Yuko Shimmura, and 2014 Nisei Week Queen Tori Nishinaka-Leon

Annual Luncheon Celebrates Community Service

The PJCI Annual Party was held recently, highlighted by the honoring of outgoing Pasadena Mayor Bill Bogaard for his many years of support and collaboration with the PJCI. A number of local community members were also recognized for their volunteer service to the Pasadena Nikkei community, and the 2015 Miss Pasadena JCI was also introduced.

Along with Mayor Bogaard, Pasadena City Councilman Gene Masuda and Consul Izuru Shimmura from the Los Angeles Office of the Consulate General of Japan were in attendance. Tori Nishinaka-Leon, the 2014 Nisei Week Queen who represented Pasadena, along with members of her court, were also on hand.

After four terms in office, Mayor Bogaard has decided against running for reelection so that more time could be spent with his family. While in office, he consistently supported many programs at the PJCI. He was often on hand to make special presentations to individuals honored by the PJCI and he always graciously opened the doors to his office whenever the PJCI hosted visitors from Japan. The PJCI presented him a plaque to show its appreciation for his many years of support.

An annual highlight of the PJCI luncheon is the recognition of the young adults who voluntarily give of their time to benefit organizations in the Pasadena JA community. The PJCI Youth Achievement Award is presented to teenage youth involved and committed to organizations of the PJCI. This year's recipients were Frances Ayumi Noland of Pasadena Gakuen and Regina Cecilia of the Pasadena Kendo Dojo.

The Amy Utsunomiya Memorial Youth Community Service Award, presented in the memory of the late Pasadena resident who epitomized community service, was presented to five individuals who mirrored Amy's dedication in serving the public: Angel Alegria, Erika Fisher, Andrew Fujimoto, Douglas Ideno, and Lori Meza.

Longtime Pasadena Nikkei Senior board members Kiku Matsumoto and Michiko Iwamoto were also honored for their many years of devoted service to the PNS organization.

Making her public debut was the newly crowned 2015 Miss Pasadena JCI, Veronica Ota. To cap off the proceedings, the large luncheon crowd was entertained by Bando Hidesomi and students from her dance troupe.

Introducing Our 2015 Miss Pasadena JCI



Newly crowned 2015 Miss Pasadena JCI, Veronica Ota, center, is flanked by previous Miss Pasadena JCIs Jamie Hagiya (2010), Tori Nishinaka-Leon (2014), Erika Fisher (2012), and Ashley Honma (2013).

Hello PJCI members, my name is Veronica Toyomi Ota and I am incredibly proud and honored to serve as your 2015 Miss Pasadena JCI. I was born and raised in Pasadena, and recently moved back home after graduating from Tufts University (Boston, MA), with a degree in International Literary and Visual Studies (ILVS). I get a lot of questions about my major, so I'll take a moment to explain my studies.

Tufts' ILVS program is designed to allow students to study cultures in an international context, through the lens of literature, film, or visual arts. I spent my time at Tufts and one year abroad in Japan at Kanazawa University studying Japanese language, culture, and literature. My experience abroad led me to become interested in, and later involved with antinuclear peace movements. For my Seniors' Honor Thesis, I translated and created a collection of Atomic Haiku written by survivors of the atomic bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki. Shortly after graduating, I was able to meet one of the authors whose work I had translated. I presented Mr. Yasuhiko Shigemoto, an 85-year-old haiku poet and survivor of Hiroshima, with a copy of my thesis, and promised him that I would continue to devote myself to promoting peace in the world.

As a fourth-generation Japanese-American Yonsei, I was always interested in my Japanese heritage. However, before I left home, I could have never imagined what my Japanese ancestry would come to mean to me, and how it would affect the course of my post-undergraduate career. It seems that sometimes you really don't know what "home" means until you have the chance to leave it. Now that I have returned home to my family, my community, and my city, I am motivated and determined to further immerse myself in the history, culture, and traditions of the Japanese-American community. I am forever thankful to have been given the opportunity to embrace my heritage and give back to the community that has taught me so much about perseverance, acceptance, and peace. As a cultural and community representative, I promise to follow in the footsteps of the Issei, Nisei, and Sansei by dedicating myself to the preservation and promotion of our heritage.

—Veronica Ota
2015 Miss Pasadena JCI

The 11th Annual Amy Utsunomiya Memorial Youth Community Service Award

At the PJCI's Annual Luncheon, the 11th Annual Amy Utsunomiya Memorial Youth Community Service award was presented to Angel Gomez Alegria, Erika Fisher, Andrew Fujimoto, Douglas Ideno, and Loretta Hatsuko Meza for their community service to the greater Pasadena area Japanese American community this past year. The appreciation of the community and the organizations that were helped was expressed in the presentation of the award to the recipients.



Wade Utsunomiya (far left) presents the Community Youth Service Award to Erika Fisher, Douglas Ideno, Lori Meza, Angel Alegria, and Andrew Fujimoto

The recipients were recognized and thanked for helping the following organizations: Angel Gomez Alegria, Pasadena Gakuen; Erika Fisher, Miss Pasadena JCI; Andrew Fujimoto, Pasadena Bruins and Pasadena Buddhist Temple; Douglas Ideno and Loretta Hatsuko Meza, Pasadena Buddhist Temple. The recipients were nominated by members of the community.

Pasadena - MIRA California Tour scheduled for June 1 thru 5

The Pasadena JCI together with members of the Mishima International Relations Association (MIRA) will be touring California from Monday, June 1, through Friday, June 5, 2015. The five day schedule includes visits to Manzanar Historic Site, Mammoth Lakes, Yosemite, Napa Valley and San Francisco. A Welcome Party is also scheduled for the day of the MIRA member's arrival on Sunday, May 31st along with members of the Pasadena Sister Cities Committee. This will be the third such travel program with MIRA members.

The cities of Mishima and Pasadena are Sister Cities and have engaged in annual student and city exchange programs for over 50 years. The Pasadena Japanese Cultural Institute's Friendship Summer Youth Program has seen the participation of over 200 youth since its start in 2002.

The cost of the tour is \$790 per person (double occupancy) and includes private deluxe motor coach transportation, four night hotel stay, breakfasts and park entry fees. Reservations are still being accepted. To add your name or for more information, please contact Kiyoshi Takeda at (626) 359-3780 or Bryan Takeda at (626) 396-9927 or affinity2000@earthlink.net.

PJCI to host Youth Exchange Program Friendship 2015 Pasadena-Mishima Summer Youth Program

Making new friends, learning Japanese language and culture, sharing your home and your interests, that's what Friendship 2015 is about. For the past 13 years, the Pasadena Japanese Cultural Institute (PJCI) and the City of Mishima have supported the youth exchange program which fosters youth understanding between the United States and Japan while strengthening the US-Japan relationship.

This year, during Friendship 2015, students from Mishima will visit Pasadena from the end of July thru early August. Highlights of the program have included trips to the Grand Canyon, San Diego, Catalina Island, Santa Barbara, a live KTLA Morning Show telecast, Dodgers and Angels baseball games, beach outings, as well as private tours of the Japanese American National Museum.

An informational meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, June 17, at 7:00 p.m., at the Pasadena JCI. For more information—or to participate and/or host a student—please contact Bryan Takeda at (626) 396-9927 or e-mail affinity2000@earthlink.net.



99 Years Young: Glendora Fleischman is surrounded by her fellow QiGong students

Oldest Qi Gong Student Turns 99

The PJCI Qi Gong class is celebrating the 99th birthday of Glendora Fleischman this month. Glendora was born in a small town in Cornelia, Wisconsin on March 25, 1916. She is the second eldest of eight children. When she was young her family moved to Dubuque, Iowa and at the age of 18 she married Donald Fleishman on Valentine's Day and they moved to Los Angeles in 1935.

Glendora didn't learn to drive or to swim until she was in her 40s. In 1962 Glendora and her family moved to Altadena. Thankful she had learned how to drive she was able to drive her youngest daughter back and forth twice a day from Altadena to her high school in Hollywood for three years. After passing her insurance agent exam she helped her husband as an insurance agent for several years. Her husband died in 1982 of cancer.

Her daughter, Mary, saw a PBS special regarding Qi Gong and as a result looked up Qi Gong on the Internet where she found Ernie Fukumoto. Both Glendora and Mary enrolled in Ernie's Qi Gong class in January of 2013, where Ernie has worked closely with Glendora to help her improve her immune system and help relieve her pain from arthritis and sciatica. When Mary decided to enroll her mother for the Qi Gong class, she wasn't aware that she would benefit from attending as much as her mother. When Mary started the classes she was suffering from the pain of osteoarthritis in her right knee. The pain was even more painful when she walked down slopes or steps. After a couple of months in Ernie's class, the pain she had in her knee for several years totally subsided.

Aside from the physical and spiritual benefits of the class, the friendships made by both mother and daughter have been most rewarding. The kindness of fellow students has been a great reward for Glendora and the caring touch of her Qi Gong friends is the greatest blessing. She is now looking forward to her birthday next year when she turns 100.

For more information on how you can join Glendora and Mary and enjoy the benefits of Qi Gong, please visit qiqongwithernie.com or contact Ernie Fukumoto at (626) 833-1935 or eyf713@yahoo.com.

Pasadena Nikkei Seniors

2015 is off and running, and so are the Pasadena Nikkei Seniors. We kicked off the year with our Annual New Year's Party, where nearly 200 members gathered to welcome the New Year. Special guests included Pasadena City Councilman Gene Masuda, Deputy Consul General Masahiro Suga from the Los Angeles Office of the Consulate General of Japan, and the reigning 2014 Nisei Week Queen (and Miss Pasadena JCI), Tori Nishinaka-Leon, along with fellow members of her court.

Special recognition was given to Dr. Osamu Miyamoto and Dr. Kenneth Teshima for their many contributions and years of volunteer service to the greater Pasadena Nikkei community. Also honored were PNS members turning 88 years old this year: Mary Matsumoto, Ritsuye Matsumoto, and Dr. Osamu Miyamoto.

Following lunch, the crowd was entertained by songstress Veronica Ota, who was accompanied by her dad's band, Decades of Rock.



In late February, PNS members were treated to a private tour of Nuccio's Nursery, which is renowned for their abundant inventory of camellias and azaleas. Owner Tom Nuccio provided interesting facts about the flowers and its propagation as he led the group around the nursery.

Upcoming PNS Events

April 16 — A bus trip is planned for flower viewing in Lancaster (poppies) and Van Nuys Lake Balboa (sakura). Event organizers are hopeful the bloom will be cooperative. PNS is covering the cost of bus transportation and a small bento will be provided. PNS membership required.

April 18 & May 9 — PNS luncheons at the PJCI

May 23 — Miss Pasadena JCI BBQ Matsuri at the Pasadena Buddhist Temple

For information on PNS membership or any of the listed activities, please call Kiku Matsumoto at (626) 794-0240 or e-mail Ron Toshima at toshima@sbcglobal.net.

Shotokan Karate Now at PJCI

Mondays: 6:30–7:30 p.m. (Kids)
7:30–9:00 p.m. (Adults)
Saturdays: 1:30–3:00 p.m. (All Ages)

For more information, contact:
pasadenashotokan@gmail.com
pasadena.ska.org | (508) 951-0790

Gakuen News

The students have been working very hard in recent weeks practicing their speeches for the Gakuen Speech Contest. The winners go on to the finals to compete with students from around the Southland, with a chance to win a round-trip ticket to Japan as well as many other great prizes. Ganbattekudasai!

Our Annual Japanese and American Pancake Breakfast is coming up on Sunday, April the 26th from 8:00–11:00 a.m. in the PJCI Auditorium. We are becoming well-known for our amazing food, so don't miss out on this one-of-a-kind event! Pre-sale tickets are being mailed out this week. Tickets also available at the door.

Open House is coming on Saturday, May 30th and June 6th. We think you will be very impressed by the level of interest and motivation of our current students in learning the Japanese language and culture. We have classes for Elementary, Middle, High School Students, and Adults. If you've ever wondered about our school, now is the time to check it out!

First Presbyterian Church of Altadena Spring Events

All are invited to participate in upcoming events at the Altadena Presbyterian Church. Below are some of the activities scheduled for Spring 2015:

April 4, 11:30 a.m.–1:30 p.m. — Easter Egg hunt and lunch (family-friendly).

April 14, 12:00–1:30 p.m. — Senior Workshop on Preventing Falls and Injuries.

April 21, 28 and all Tuesdays in May — After-School Music Program for young children, from 4:30–5:30 p.m., taught by Veronica Ota.

April 21, 28, and all Tuesdays in May — Pickup basketball for youth, supervised by Kevin Hayashi.

April 26, 4:00–6:00 p.m. — Brilliant Strings musical concert (family-friendly).

June 15–19, 9:00 a.m.–12:00 p.m. — Summer day camp "Living a Peace-Filled Life"

All events take place at the Altadena Presbyterian Church located at 2775 Lincoln Avenue. For further information, please call (626) 791-4271.

Pasadena Buddhist Temple Beef Teriyaki Take Out Dinner

Saturday, April 25 — \$10.00, Pre-sale only

Orders due by April 13
Pick up from 3:30–6:30 p.m.

Submit online order at:
PasadenaBuddhistTemple.org

For more info, contact:
Judy Fujimoto (626) 797-1688
or Lynne Ozawa (818) 790-7049



Kendo News

Congratulations to Regina Cecilia (pictured above with Yamasaki sensei) who received the 2015 Youth Achievement Award from the kendo group. She has been doing kendo since January 2014 and has shown so much promise and the will to learn. She says she likes it and her favorite teacher is Yamasaki sensei (the only sensei). Our next local tournament will be the SCKF Championships to be held on Sunday, June 28, at Wilson Park in Torrance. If you are interested in learning kendo, please contact James Yamasaki at jmyamasaki@yahoo.com (or visit www.pasadenakendo.com).

Pasadena Bruins Host 5K Run

The Pasadena Bruins will be hosting a 5K run at the Pasadena Rose Bowl on Saturday, May 9, 2015. The event will begin at 8:30 a.m. and proceeds will benefit the Bruins Scholarship Program. For more information, please contact Debbie Okihara, Bruin Commissioner, at deo24bra@yahoo.com or visit the website at pasadenabruins.org/5K.php.

Although the deadline for registration has passed, entrants can still run and support the event, but there will be no t-shirts.

Save the Date!

Pasadena BBQ Matsuri

Presented by the Miss Pasadena JCI Committee & Pasadena Nikkei Seniors

Saturday, May 23, 2015
5:00–8:00 PM

Pasadena Buddhist Temple
1993 Glenrose Ave. Pasadena, CA 91103

To register online, visit www.PJCI.org!
For more information, contact MissPasadenaJCI@gmail.com.



Akabeko Project

On March 8, the AKABEKO PROJECT hosted “CREATE” its 2nd annual design workshop at the Pasadena Japanese Cultural Institute to support the victims of the 3.11 Fukushima Nuclear Disaster. This year, participants were offered blank akabeko, daruma, or sheep to decorate at the workshop and keep as a remembrance of their contribution and support of Fukushima.

Mr. Shoichi Hashimoto, owner of Dekoyashiki Daikokuya, Fukushima handicraft workshop made a special trip to Pasadena for the event. The daruma and sheep supplied for decorating were crafted and purchased from his workshop. He expressed his gratitude for the support the Pasadena community has given to Fukushima.

This year's event was attended by over 100 participants between the ages of 2 and 90. Proceeds from this event will go toward supporting the victims of the Fukushima nuclear disaster through the production of a feature-length documentary “Voices of Resilience” presented by the Akabeko Project. The documentary is currently in its first stage of research and development. To learn more about the Akabeko Project and Voices of Resilience, please visit www.akabekoproject.org.

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Pasadena Gakuen Japanese Language School

Saturdays 8:45 a.m.-12:15 p.m., and
1:30-4:45 p.m.

Kinder to Adult, High School credit offered

▶ (213) 383-4706

kyodosystem.org

Pasadena Aiki-kai

Wednesdays 7:00-9:00 p.m.

Sundays 9:00-11:00 a.m.

▶ (323) 878-5611 | info@pasadenaaikikai.com

Kodama Taiko

Thursdays 7:30-9:30 p.m.

▶ Contact: Karren Tsutsui

(888) 493-2879 | info@kodamataiko.com

kodamataiko.com

Pasadena Naginata Dojo

Saturdays 9:00-11:00 a.m.

▶ Contact: Cathy Mikuni

(626) 375-4876 | cmikuni@hotmail.com

Bando Hidesomi Nihon Buyo Class

Saturdays Please call for times

▶ Contact: Bando Hidesomi

(310) 800-0118 | bandohidesomi@gmail.com

Integrated Martial Arts

Wednesdays 6:00-7:00 a.m.

Fridays 6:00-7:00 a.m.

▶ Contact: Tim Piering

(626) 688-1645 | timpiering1111@gmail.com

Miss Pasadena JCI

▶ Contact: Erika Fisher

misspasadenajci@gmail.com

pjci.org

Pasadena Nikkei Seniors

Handicraft Class

Wednesdays 10:00 a.m.-12:00 p.m.

▶ Contact: Ron Toshima

(626) 826-1005 | toshima@sbcglobal.net

pjci.org

Ikebana - Sogetsu Ikebana

Meets on the 4th Saturday 1:00-3:00 p.m.

▶ Contact: Yokou Kitajima

(626) 333-3039 | kazhanatoniwa@gmail.com

Pasadena Kendo Dojo

Tuesdays 6:00-7:00 p.m. (beginners)

7:00-8:30 p.m. (advanced)

Fridays 6:00-7:00 p.m. (beginners)

7:00-9:30 p.m. (advanced)

▶ Contact: James Yamasaki

(626) 676-0318 | jmyamasaki@yahoo.com

pasadenakendo.com

Nanka Kyudo Kai

Saturdays 5:30-8:30 p.m.

▶ Contact: Rick Beal

(626) 367-9175 | rick@nankakyudokai.org

kyudosocal.com

PJAA Bruins Basketball

▶ Contact: Debbie Okihara

(818) 261-4626 | deo24bra@yahoo.com

pasadenabruins.org

Qi Gong

Tuesdays 9:00-11:00 a.m.

▶ Contact: Ernie Fukumoto

(626) 833-1935 | eyf713@yahoo.com

qigongwithernie.com

Shotokan Karate

Mondays 6:30-7:30 p.m. (kids)

7:30-9:00 p.m. (adults)

Saturdays 1:30-3:00 p.m. (all ages)

▶ Contact: Evan Viera

(508) 951-0790 | evanviera@gmail.com

▶ Contact: James Uyeda

(213) 709-1596 | james@uyedalaw.com

pasadena.ska.org

Soroban Class (Japanese Abacus)

Thursdays 3:30-4:30 p.m. (advanced)

4:45-5:30 p.m. (beginners)

▶ Contact: Hiromi Fukuyama

hiromi@alcatraz.net