

CHALLENGES AND EXPERIENCES OF  
JAPANESE AMERICANS:  
MAKING AN AMERICAN DREAM

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ICAS Summer Symposium  
August 4, 2012*



A BRIEF HISTORY OF JAPANESE  
IN THE UNITED STATES

STRIVING FOR THE  
AMERICAN DREAM

## THE FIRST

May 5, 1806 - First 8 Japanese to "arrive" in Hawaii.



Placed under the care of King Kamehameha I and returned back to Japan June 17, 1807.

Only 2 survived journey back and were arrested, one committed suicide



1868 - Fall of the Tokugawa Shogunate and start of Meiji Restoration, Japan opens to the West



1869 - 1885 - Japanese government prohibited immigration in Hawaii because it was degrading to the Japanese race

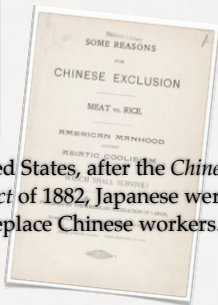


1881 - King David Kalakaua visits Japan and befriends Emperor Meiji

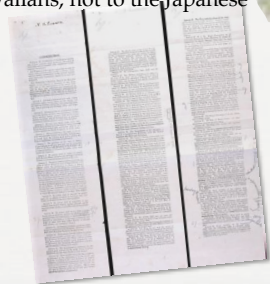
1885 - Japanese allowed to emigrate to Hawaii as contract laborers on sugar and pineapple plantations



In the United States, after the *Chinese Exclusion Act* of 1882, Japanese were sought to replace Chinese workers.



1887 - King David Kalakaua, forced by the Americans, Europeans, and Hawaiian elite, signed the "*Bayonet*" Constitution, creating a constitutional monarchy and giving voting rights to Americans, Europeans, and Hawaiians, not to the Japanese



1891 - King David Kalakaua dies at Palace Hotel in San Francisco

## HAWAII BECOMES TERRITORY OF THE UNITED STATES



1893 - Hawaiian Monarchy is overthrown and Queen Lili'uokalani is held prisoner in her own palace.

1898 - Hawaii becomes Territory of the United States

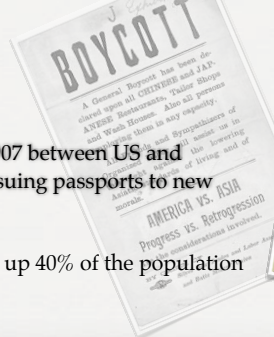


Japanese protest the overthrow of the monarchy and anti-Japanese sentiment begins to grow out of fear that the Japanese will prevent the annexation of Hawaii to the United States.

# THE AMERICAN DREAM DENIED



1905, the *Asian Exclusion League* pressures the San Francisco School Board to exclude the Japanese



**Gentlemen's Agreement of 1907 between US and Japan; Japan would stop issuing passports to new workers.**

By 1920 the Japanese make up 40% of the population in Hawaii



**EXCLUSION!**  
The Solution That Means Peace.

The burden of pro-Japanese opposition, as presented in the conventional literature is largely insubstantial. That, at present, there are not enough Japanese in the United States to cause any harm. Even if this were the case, there still would remain the problem of the West. Immigration laws and under the Gentlemen's Agreement...



1924, Calvin Coolidge signs *Immigration Act*, banning all but a few Japanese from immigrating to the US



The Gentlemen's Agreement has not proved a sufficient check. It has not prevented the steady increase in the number of Japanese in the United States. The problem is not one of numbers, but of quality. The Japanese are not only a burden on the American economy, but they are also a threat to the American way of life. The Immigration Act of 1924 was a necessary response to these concerns.



**1932-1934 PROGRAM FOR THE J. A. C. L.**

To bring about greater cooperation and to make all the chapters realize that they belong to one great national body, a two-year program was adopted as the platform for the Japanese American Citizens League. To make any progress on this program will require the untiring efforts of all the leaders of the chapters.

It will be necessary to secure the results of the concerted work of all national organizations, the first of its kind ever to be attempted in this country.

The program is as follows:

1. That each district council be instructed to hold at least one district convention prior to the third Biennial Convention to be held in the City of San Francisco in 1934.
2. That the national council set up a committee to make an extensive and detailed study on Federal Insurance and old age pension.
3. That the national council work with JACL to conduct a national citizenship convention on the general subject of "Good Citizenship" to be held in the following problems:

- a. To strengthen JACL's program
- b. To have Councils
- c. To have Councils
- d. To have Councils
- e. To have Councils
- f. To have Councils
- g. To have Councils
- h. To have Councils
- i. To have Councils
- j. To have Councils

The most important progress is made.



In 1929, Japanese American groups form a national organization to foster good citizenship and civic participation, called the *Japanese American Citizens League*

## GENERAL PATTON'S PLAN



1920 - 1930 - The US government made lists of Japanese of interest in Hawaii to arrest in the event of war

**Plan of Initial Seizure of Orange Nationals**

*"He even drafted a plan for seizing hostages from the Japanese community's leadership to ensure the cooperation (or at least the acquiescence) of Hawaii's Japanese in the event of war"*

**Honolulu Star-Bulletin 1st EXTRA**

**WAR!**

**OAHU BOMBED BY JAPANESE PLANES**

SAN FRANCISCO, Dec. 7. - President Roosevelt announced this morning that Japanese planes had attacked Manila and Pearl Harbor.

SIX KNOWN DEAD, 21 INJURED, AT EMERGENCY HOSPITAL

Attack Made On Island's Defense Areas

December 7, 1941

*"A date which will live in infamy"*





## INTERNMENT IN HAWAII

- Less than 1% of the Japanese population in Hawaii were interned, the rest were subjected to marshall law
- Males were first to be arrested and placed in camps then their families were given the “voluntary” option to join them



In February 1942, the Sand Island Camp opened on the Island of Oahu. Some detainees were transferred to the camps on the mainland, then others were transferred from the other islands to Sand Island.

## INTERNMENT IN HAWAII

Sand Island Camp closed and on March 1, 1942, Honouliuli Camp opened in central Oahu to accommodate 3,000 - only 320 were interned



## INTERNMENT IN THE U.S.

*Japanese culture equated to Japanese political affiliation and as a result, the Japanese language, clothing, and customs disappeared.*



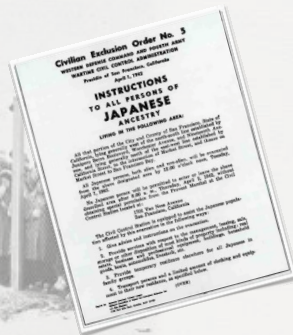




In 1980 President Carter signs the *Commission on Wartime Relocation and Internment Act*, which establishes a federal commission to review the facts and circumstances surrounding the 1942 internment of Japanese Americans



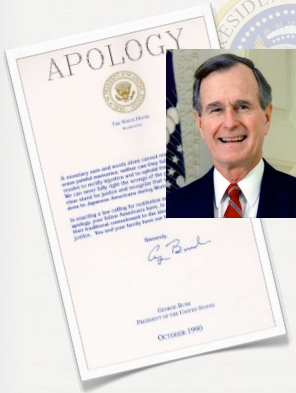
In 1982, the *Commission on Wartime Relocation and Internment* reported that the wartime internment of Japanese Americans was *unwarranted* and that the *causes were race prejudice, wartime hysteria and a failure of political leadership*



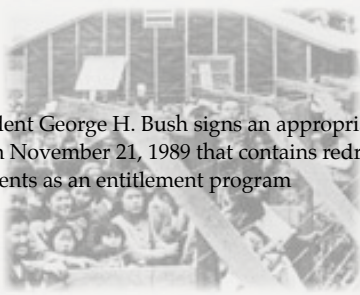
1983 commission report, *Personal Justice Denied*, stated that *Japanese American internment was not a national security necessity* and recommended an apology, compensation for loss of liberty and the creation of an educational fund



President Ronald Reagan signs the *Civil Liberties Act of 1988*, apologizing for Japanese American internment and providing reparations of \$20,000 to each victim



President George H. Bush signs an appropriation bill on November 21, 1989 that contains redress payments as an entitlement program



1959 - Daniel Inouye, first Japanese American in Congress

1963 - Daniel Inouye, first Japanese American in US Senate



1974 - George Ariyoshi, first Japanese American Governor in State of Hawai'i



1965 - Patsy Takemoto Mink, first woman of color in Congress



1978 - Ellison Onizuka, first Asian American astronaut

## MY AMERICAN DREAM



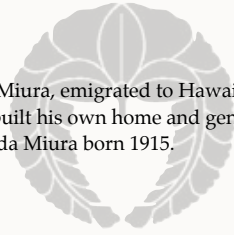
WHO AM I?

## PATERNAL HISTORY

- Late 1880's early 1890's great-grandparents eloped to Hawaii to escape the family and the poor living conditions in Japan - Yakichi and Yoshi Sekiguchi
- Both of samurai family, Yoshi was arranged to marry another, but fell in love and married Yakichi and changed name to Nakamura
- Grandfather's parents lived in Kohala on Island of Hawaii, working on the plantations as free laborers and later moved to Honolulu. First son, Ikuma died after 100 days while Yoshi was working in the fields. Second son, Shizuka born 1899.

## PATERNAL HISTORY

- Grandmother's father, Miura, emigrated to Hawaii and worked as a contractor, eventually built his own home and general store in Pearl City on the Island of Oahu. Hilda Miura born 1915.



## DR. NAPOLEON SHIZUKA NAKAMURA

- Born 1899 in Kohala, Hawaii
- Attended Iolani School on Ohau
- Undergraduate and dental school, Tulane University, graduated 1921
- Got on a street car, sat next to a "colored gentleman" and was not allowed to share a seat with a "negro"
- Two-time Southern amateur light weight wrestling champion



This Napoleon, of Japanese Blood, Proves He Is Well Named For Battle of Life

Comes Home a Dentist After Athletic Triumphs, Life on the Bounding Main and as Doctor in Insane Asylum

With a dental degree, and no job, he is employed as second cook on the steamer ship Queen Mahkoni.

Bound for Liverpool, England, they stop at Bermuda and the Azores.

After a month in England, return to America, stopping again in the Azores and Bermuda on the way back.

Encountered a storm and eventually towed to Norfolk, Virginia.

Obtained a position as a dentist in an insane asylum, eventually returning back to Hawaii in 1922

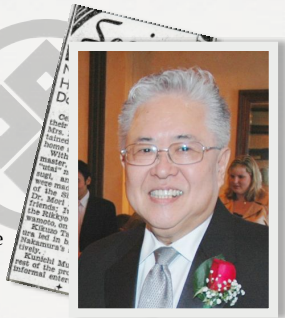
# HILDA KIKUE MIURA

- Born 1915 in Pearl City, Hawaii
- Attended McKinley High School
- Worked in parent's general store



# DR. RONALD MIZUO NAKAMURA

- Born 1939 in Honolulu, Territory of Hawaii
- Roosevelt High School
- Undergraduate, University of Pennsylvania, 1963
- Dental School, University of Pennsylvania, 1967
- Joined US Air Force, stationed at Yokota Air Force Base, Japan
- Kendo, shakuhachi, piano, clarinet



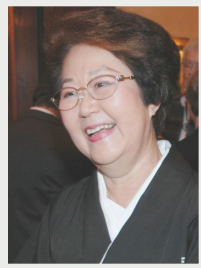
## MATERNAL HISTORY

- Descendants of samurai warrior class
- Great-uncle, Rear Admiral Michitora Tozuka, of Yokosuka Naval base during WWII



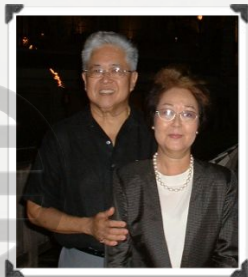
## KEIKO YAMADA

- Born 1935, Tokyo, Japan
- Attended Shirayuri College
- Attended Gakushuin University, philosophy major
- Left Tokyo during WWII to live in Hakone
- Simultaneous translator for 1964 Tokyo Olympics
- Ikebana, tea ceremony, guitar, piano
- Tutored Japanese at Yokota US Air Force base



Married in 1968

Had one son born December 27, 1968



# SCOTT SHIZUO NAKAMURA

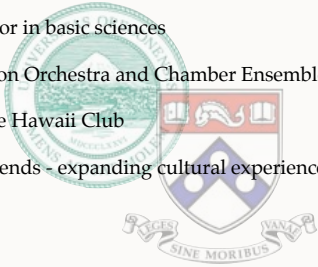
- Born 1968 in Honolulu, Hawaii
- Attended Iolani School, 1978
- Japanese Language School
- Undergraduate, University of Oregon
- Dental School, University of Pennsylvania, 1994
- Post-doctorate, University of Pennsylvania, 1997
- Piano, viola





## EXPERIENCES IN HIGHER EDUCATION

- Biology major, minor in basic sciences
- University of Oregon Orchestra and Chamber Ensemble
- Avoided joining the Hawaii Club
- Expand circle of friends - expanding cultural experiences for myself and others
- Oriental vs Asian





## HOW DO WE ACHIEVE THE AMERICAN DREAM?

- Achieving the “American Dream” is individualized and is the consequence of not only hard work and determination, but also of opportunities that life presents personally and geopolitically
- Taking charge of opportunities presented and utilizing them to our fullest potential
- Remaining focused and realizing that sometimes “the end determines the means” and often times you have to take risks
- Learning to let go

## HOW DO WE ACHIEVE THE AMERICAN DREAM?

- Know and understand your own identity, and not caring about what others may think
- Embracing who you are physically and culturally, including being able to laugh at yourself
- Not alienate others around you by helping them better understand who you are and what you represent and vice-versa
- Become engaged in the community, be an active participant and help your colleagues - giving back

*What is the American Dream? “a dream of social order in which each man and each woman shall be able to attain to the fullest stature of which they are innately capable, and be recognized by others for what they are, regardless of the fortuitous circumstances of birth or position”*

James Truslow Adams, 1931

WHAT IS YOUR AMERICAN DREAM

THANK YOU