Currents

Asian American Pacific Islander Community Newspaper Serving Sacramento and Yolo Counties-Vol. 39, No. 1 Winter/January 2026

Local Remembrance events

February 14th, Saturday: Northern California JACL Time of Remembrance "Preserving History." 1pm at California Museum (1020 O St, Sac). Speakers: Naomi Ostwald Kawamura (Densho Executive Director), Rev Duncan Ryuken Williams (USC Professor, Ireicho project founder). Info: www.nctor.org.

February 19th, Thursday: Yolo County Day of Remembrance. Free showing of Kintsukuroi film (5pm), highlights of Maddow's Burn Order podcast (415pm). Post contest winners. Davis Veterans Memorial Theatre (203 E. 14th St, Davis). See P.13.

Currents invited the Concerned Supporters of ACC-SS and Asian Community Center-Senior Services (ACC-SS) to simultaneously submit 1000 word articles addressing the issues raised by the "Concerned Supporters" group. Both groups totally support ACC-SS continuing as a financially sound, much beloved and valued community organization serving AAPI seniors in the greater Sacramento Valley area.

Early Signs of Financial Struggle and Closures of West Coast AAPI Senior Facilities Spur Community Concerns About ACC-SS

By Concerned Supporters of ACC-SS

The first sign that Asian Community Center – Senior Services (ACC-SS) was struggling was President Jean Shiomoto's message in the 2023 Spring Newsletter stating that ACC-SS closed 2022 with a $4 million deficit. ACC-SS's 990 non-profit tax reports for 2020-2023 show losses of $13,730,000. For the Sacramento activist AAPI community this announcement sounded eerily similar to other long-standing community-based nonprofit AAPI senior facilities in Seattle and Los Angeles that ultimately led to their sale to private investors and the subsequent displacement and deaths of hundreds of vulnerable seniors.

Near the end of 2024, ACC-SS' CEO Rusynyk released a report on the difficult decisions she had to make and the challenges ahead faced by ACC. She produced the first year-end cash surpluses for ACC since 2019 by aggressively cutting costs, renegotiating

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• Currents is online at www.apsea.org under the "community engagement"

• Email Letters to the Editor, Page 4 About Currents

HAPPYNEWYEAR-HORSE YEAR, FEB 17, 2026

A Look Ahead for ACC Senior Services

By Asian Community Center-Senior Services

In 2026, the ACC Board and Leadership Team look forward to welcoming new board members and tackling a full plate of initiatives. We will continue providing quality care at our facilities and creating a sense of community through our supportive services, programs, and classes to help older adults sustain their independence and lifestyle. That vision remains our guiding principle.

For more than 50 years, ACC Senior Services has been dedicated to enriching the lives of older adults. From home and community-based services, programs, and classes to three residential options that provide independent living, assisted living, memory care, and skilled nursing, ACC promotes the quality of life and general welfare of older adults and their caregivers in the Sacramento region. In addition, Meals on Wheels Sacramento County (MoW), a wholly controlled subsidiary of ACC, helps ensure our seniors receive nutritious meals and supportive services. MoW annually provides meals to more than 4,000 older adults throughout Sacramento County.

Emerging from a number of very challenging years largely brought on by the COVID-19 pandemic, the ACC Board is now taking the time to assess its own performance and integrate the results of that assessment into a review of governance of both ACC and MoW, and develop a three-year strategic plan (2026-2028) that will carry ACC well into a future that the Board recognizes is full of new challenges.

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NON PROFIT ORGANIZATION

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Concerns About ACC-SS

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contracts, modernizing ACC's accounting system, improving collections of government reimbursements, and working to reduce exposure to lawsuits.

Seeing the CEO's report was a call to action and concern for Bill Wong and Rick Uno who applied and were both appointed to the board in December 2024. While on the board, Uno and Wong observed numerous troubling operational and governance problems, including:

Overdue and underfunded capital expenditures and maintenance for ACC's facilities. For example, balconies at Greenhaven Terrace were identified in disrepair and in need of rehabilitation and repairs were not funded for years and repairs were initiated in 2025 (source: CEO 2024 Report, page 4).

Inadequate segregation and management of donor restricted funds and endowments. A segregated account for donor restricted funds was not established until mid-2025. ACC has been unable to produce documents memorializing the terms of two of the three ACC endowed funds (source: ACC staff action memo and board minutes).

Inadequate due diligence on an affordable housing project that led to a loss of over $500,000. ACC purchased property to build affordable housing with HUD financing. HUD initially rejected the application because the property was located in a flood hazard area. The application was appealed and reinstated but rejected again. The property stayed vacant, fell into disrepair, and was inhabited by unhoused individuals. ACC spent thousands to clean the property and sold it at a significant net loss (source: board minutes).

Actions and practices that may violate ACC's bylaws and articles of incorporation. For example, MoW's (Meals on Wheels) president, Brian Chin, allowed to sit ex-officio on ACC's Executive Committee and Winston Ashizawa (immediate past ACC-SS chair) was allowed to sit ex-officio on the ACC board without authorization in ACC bylaws (source: ACC board rosters, conflict diagram). Furthermore, former board members have complained that decisions are centralized at the Executive Committee level and the full board is either not fully informed or involved in these decisions.

Actions and practices that may expose ACC and individual ACC's board members to liability. For example, the ACC board voted to approve a waiver for members of the MoW Board of Directors to consume alcohol at meetings (source: Wong resignation letter, MoW letter and board minutes.

Practices and policies that undermine the ability of the President/CEO to manage ACC. Unclear bylaws, inadequate board member training, absence of written policies and practices that specify division of authority, and board member observations (source: ACC bylaws, ACC board training materials, Rick Uno and Bill Wong resignation letters).

These issues led to both Wong and Uno resigning in protest of the board's entrenched mentality and refusal to address their concerns. Wong and Uno later found out that former Superior Court judge, Chuck Kobayashi, who was also previously a CPA and auditor emailed a private message to ACC's board expressing his concerns after reviewing the organization's publicly available 990s and the CEO's 2024 report. Uno, Wong, and Kobayashi had all tried to address their concerns internally with ACC.

Frustrated by ACC's inaction and indifference to their concerns, Uno, Wong, and Kobayashi met with other community leaders who all agreed that these issues needed to be brought to a broader group of community leaders. They organized a luncheon at Aviators with approximately 35 local leaders to review publicly available facts and measure community concern. At the meeting, Wong noted that the one commonality that followed the unexpected closure and sale of financially distressed Keiro senior facilities in Seattle and Los Angeles was that both AAPI communities asked "why didn't we know before it was too late?". He emphasized that the group's only goal was to prevent ACC from meeting the same fate that befell Keiro in Seattle and Los Angeles.

The meeting resulted in a letter from "Concerned Supporters of ACC" addressed to ACC's board signed by 27 local AAPI community leaders. The letter asked for three things: 1) an independent and comprehensive internal audit of ACC's systems, policies, and procedures, 2) engage reputable independent nonprofit counsel to recommend improvements to board training and governance, and 3) establish an independent ad hoc committee of donors, local leaders, and former ACC founders to review findings, actions, and reforms adopted by ACC in response to the letter.

When the recommendations of the letter were ignored by ACC's board, members of CSACC demanded an in-person meeting. When ACC's board pushed off dates for a meeting, CSACC convened a November 19th town hall meeting at Belle Cooledge Library that was attended by over 100 individuals including 5 members of the ACC board who were given extensive time to address community questions.

CSACC continues to be disappointed and frustrated at ACC's vague answers, lack of urgency, lack of transparency, and lack of accountability in addressing the concerns that have been brought forward and new concerns about the treatment of residents and family members at ACC's Maple Tree Village assisted living and memory care facility. Nevertheless, CSACC's goal is to work constructively to bring legitimate concerns to the attention of the community and engage in good faith efforts to preserve the programs and services provided to the community as envisioned by ACC's founders and supporters.

ACC-SS:

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In support of these efforts, ACC will welcome its new board members, who will bolster the Board's expertise in fund development, grant writing, and organizational development. ACC also enters 2026 utilizing a new integrated financial system (NetSuite) implemented in 2025, enhancing both operational efficiency and Board oversight, and a new volunteer management system (VolunteerMatters) to help better track and deploy our many volunteers

Financial Stability - Before, During, and Moving Forward

At the end of 2019, the last full year before COVID, ACC was financially strong with positive net income and healthy reserves. At the beginning of 2020, ACC opened Maple Tree Village (MTV), a brand new 102-unit assisted living and memory care facility. In March 2020, just as MTV was admitting residents, the COVID-19 pandemic hit, requiring MTV to close to new residents. The pandemic had a devastating impact on the senior care industry nationwide. While MTV was hit particularly hard because it had to close its doors with many rooms still vacant, the other two facilities operated by ACC, the Care Center (skilled nursing facility) and Greenhaven Terrace (independent living and assisted living) were also severely impacted. ACC faced new admission restrictions due to COVID-19, increased requirements for masks, gloves, etc., increased cost of testing, ever-changing rules and protocols for handling COVID-19, and challenges to finding care staff, all of which led to the unprecedented losses in each of the next four years. For residents, the social distancing requirements resulted in restrictions/prohibitions on visits from loved ones and cancellation of the many social activities, programs, and classes that residents had enjoyed. *Despite these challenges, ACC was able to keep each of its three facilities open, never closing its doors.*

While much attention was necessarily on the operations of ACC's three residential facilities, the heart of ACC – its services to the wider community through its programming – remained strong throughout the COVID-19 era. While ACC programs and classes provided from its campus had to be shut down temporarily, ACC was able to pivot quickly, reopening its programming in a virtual format, and over time in-person offerings were increased, and participation grew in number. Today, ACC's heart beats stronger as a result.

ACC pulled through financially by relying on reserves built over prior years, cost-cutting, and federal COVID-19 relief funding that ACC aggressively pursued. ACC began its fiscal turnaround in 2023 with a significant reduction in annual net loss, largely due to occupancy increases at all the facilities, and continued monitoring of expenditures. ACC returned to positive net revenue in 2024, a trend projected

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Currents

APSEA 2026 State of Belonging: Workforce Equity Symposium

May 6 and 7

The Asian Pacific State Employees Association (APSEA) proudly presents its landmark 2026 State of Belonging: Workforce Equity Symposium, celebrating 50 years of advancing opportunity and leadership across California state service. Scheduled for May 6–7, 2026, this year's theme, Fifty Years Forward: Advancing Equity, Empowering Change, reflects APSEA's enduring commitment to building a strong, inclusive, and future-ready public workforce.

This two-day symposium will feature dynamic keynote speakers, including Kim Rutledge, Director of the California Department of Rehabilitation; Mary Watanabe, Director of the Department of Managed Health Care; Stephanie Tom, Deputy State Treasurer; and Kathleen Webb, Chief Deputy Executive Director, Covered California, alongside expert-led panels and interactive workshops. Together, these leaders and practitioners will share insights and strategies shaping workforce culture, inclusive leadership, conflict resolution, and modern HR and EEO practices across state government.

Attendees will benefit from:

- Practical professional skill-building tailored to real challenges facing today's state workforce
- Direct access to statewide leaders and change-makers influencing policy, culture, and organizational transformation
- Meaningful networking opportunities that foster collaboration and shared learning across departments
- Actionable tools and insights to help employees and leaders strengthen workplace culture, accountability, and belonging

As California's workforce continues to evolve, this symposium offers a vital space for connection, learning, and forward-thinking leadership.

50 Years of Lighting the Path

Visit the APSEA Workforce Equity Symposium's LinkedIn page for more information and updates. For registration and sponsorship inquires, email apsea.eeodei.symposium@gmail.com.

For more than five decades, the Asian Pacific State Employees Association (APSEA) has been a steady beacon, guiding, empowering, and uplifting California's state workforce. Through shifting political landscapes, changing demographics, and the ebb and flow of Asian American and Pacific Islander representation, APSEA has remained a constant, a haven where state employees can find community, mentorship, and the tools needed to advance with confidence.

Across the years, our members and volunteers have stepped up not just as contributors, but as champions of possibility. They've given their evenings, weekends, and hearts to spark conversations that matter, conversations that plant the seeds of leadership, equity, and professional growth. Those seeds have grown into a harvest of representation, opportunity, and voice for future generations who now walk paths that once felt impossible.

APSEA's commitment has carried employees through the darkest days, moments of discrimination, burnout, doubt, and career roadblocks that required both resilience and community to overcome. And at every turn, APSEA has delivered leadership through training, networking, mentorship, visibility, and a platform to elevate AAPI voices in state service.

As we look forward, our mission remains crystal clear. APSEA will continue to be the light that guides current and future state employees, an inclusive, empowering space where individuals can grow, serve California with excellence, and help shape a state government we are all proud of. Our doors stay open. Our commitment remains strong. And our legacy continues with every new member who joins this movement for progress, representation, and belonging. Your membership fuels the future—join APSEA and help light the path ahead. https://apsea.org/membership/

ACC-SS:

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to continue in FY2025-26.

Moving Forward and Looking Ahead - After 50 years, ACC has evolved and grown to become a large, multi-million-dollar, non-profit organization operating three facilities and annually providing programs, services, and classes to more than 4,000 older adults in the Sacramento region. The COVID-era experience highlighted not only the importance of having reserves, but also the critical need to invest in operational infrastructure in order to monitor revenues, expenditures, and cashflow. The current environment also highlights the importance of strengthening existing revenue sources and finding new ones, pursuing financing options for capital outlay projects, as well as looking for new ways to streamline expenditures and mitigate expenditure risk. These areas will be considered in the new strategic plan that the ACC Board and the ACC Leadership Team will begin developing early in 2026 that will carry the organization through 2028. To support an effective strategic planning process, the Board will engage an outside consultant. In addition to a focus on financial stability and operational excellence, the Board anticipates a review of its bylaws, and a focus on board recruitment, long-term governance, role and clarity of relationships, quality of care at our facilities, how to enrich and support elder care, and reviewing our array of services and programs to make sure we focus in the necessary areas.

A Thank You - The ACC Board wishes to thank its many volunteers, ACC leadership, management and staff, community members, program participants, and our residents and their families. We also thank our elected officials who have supported us. As a team working together, we successfully weathered a worldwide pandemic which has made us stronger for the future. We will strive to provide more frequent communication to our community by enhancing our website and through *ACC News* and other communications. Board members will continue to be out and about in the community and appreciate hearing from you.

Currents disclosure: ACC-SS has been a regular paying contributor to Currents for decades, ...

Locke property opportunities

The Locke Management Corporation Assn (LMC-A) wants former Locke residents and descendants to know that the LMC-A has adopted an email system to notify them when Locke properties become available for sale. Those wishing to be placed on the LPRDA (Locke Prior Residents Descendants Ascendants) and Interested Parties list should **send their request by email to lockelma@gmail.com.** LMC-A is quasi-Sacramento County government non-profit responsible for the management of the town of Locke and to ensure its continued historic integrity.

The **Locke Management CC&Rs** (Covenants, Conditions and Restrictions, rules of a community that dictate what can and cannot be done with property within that community) contain this language:

Section 2.8. Right of First Refusal of Ownership Transfer. Except as provided herein, the right of first refusal for the sale, purchase or exchange of real property shall be given to the Locke Management Association (LMC-A), which it may exercise or assign upon receipt of a bona fide written offer to purchase property, or any other transfer agreement that the owner intends to accept. If and when such an offer is made, the owner shall give written notice to the Association of the offer and provide a copy of its terms to the Board of Directors. If the Association elects to act on the right of first refusal it will deliver to the owner written notice of its election to purchase the property on terms and conditions identical to those set forth in the offer. If the Association refuses or fails to act on the right of first refusal with in twenty-five (25) days after receipt of written notice of existing offer, the right of first refusal shall be deemed waived. If the Association waives its right of first refusal, the property owner may sell the real property upon the same specific terms and conditions offered to the Association. *[This means that when LMC-A is informed of a sale, LMC-A can exercise to buy the property itself first. Prior residents/descendants do not get a right to buy first.]*

Section 2.9. Notice of Intent to Sell Property. Prior to or concurrently with listing or advertising said property for sale, or entertaining an offer to purchase, a property owner is required to present a written Notice of Intention to Sell to the Board of Directors of the Association. This Notice shall include the owners name, the address of the property they intend to place on the market, whether they plan to formally list the property as for sale, and if so, when they plan to list the property.

The **LMC-A Bylaws** "Article V Officers" says:

Section 10. Locke Prior Residents, Descendants and Ascendants List. The Association, in fulfilling its purpose to preserve the Town of Locke's rich cultural heritage as a National Historic Landmark and the last remaining rural Chinese American town built and settled by Chinese immigrants in the United States, acknowledges the injustice of California's Alien Land Law of 1913 on the Chinese immigrant and Chinese American population residing in Locke prior to 1953. With the preceding understanding, the Association shall use its best efforts to:

(a) Develop, maintain, and update annually a list of:

(1) individuals who lived in Locke prior to 1953, and

(2) spouse, registered domestic partner, brothers, sisters, issue, and lineal ascendants of individuals who lived in Locke prior to 1953.

The list shall be referred to as the "Prior Residents, Descendants, and Ascendants List"

Section 11. List of Any Individual that Would Like Notice of Available Properties. The Association, in fulfilling its purpose to preserve the Town of Locke's rich cultural heritage, shall also maintain a list of any person interested in being notified when property in the Town becomes available and provide them with this notice. Any person who would like to be on this list and receive notice of properties potentially available for purchase may submit a written request to the Association, including their name and address, to that effect. Individuals on the Prior Residents, Descendants, and Ascendants List who are interested in purchasing property in Locke shall be incorporated into this list.

ABOUT CURRENTS

Currents is a free community newspaper published three times a year entirely by volunteers. Currents covers local and national issues and events affecting the AAPI communities of Sacramento and Yolo Counties. Opinions expressed do not belong to APSEA or any other organizations participating in the newspaper and are those of the author or the Editorial Board only. The Editor reserves the right to reject prospective materials or advertisements. Currents is distributed by bulk mail and through other outlets. Currents articles may be reprinted without specific permission, but "Currents" and the author should be acknowledged. Next publication date: May/Summer 2026. Deadline: April 30, 2026. Circulation: 7,200. Editor: Pattie Fong. Distribution assisted by: The Sacramento Gazette (David Fong), Hach Yasumura, UCD Asian American Studies and Oto's Market. Many graphics are by Randall Ishida (dec.) Advertising rates: 3.5" X 2" $50; 5" X 6" $80; 10" X 6" $200. Currents has no physical office but donations, ads, address changes, Letters to the Editor and other inquiries can be sent to PO Box 4163, Davis CA 95617 or to pmfong@hotmail.com

Currents' mission: Tuskegee University's Professor Charles Gomillion led the Tuskegee Civic Association, established in 1941, to win major court battles to protect voter rights. TCA's mission statement reflects its sense of civic responsibility and social justice: The study and interpretation of local and national trends and problems; the collection and dissemination of useful civic and political data; and intelligent and courageous civic action. Currents has adopted these very worthy goals.

MANY THANKS to Grace Kim, Walter Menda, Artima Lim, Gloria Imagire and a faithful Folsom reader (JC) for their donations in 2025 which defray the newspaper's printing and postage expenses.

TO LOCKEPRDA SUPPORTERS

You have been added onto the Currents newspaper mailing list to keep you informed about The Star Theater project and other LockePRDA activities.

If you want to be removed from the list, please email that request to lockeprda@gmail.com. Thanks.

Photo credit:

Jeff Kan Lee

Restoring The Star Theater

LockePRDA (Locke Prior Residents, Descendants & Ascendants), a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization, is excited to announce receiving a large donation specifically earmarked to buy The Star Theater (13939 River Road, Locke CA). LockePRDA formed in 2022 to advocate for property rights of Locke residents and descendants, to preserve Locke history by recording and sharing their stories, and to restore significant Locke buildings for future generations. In March 2025, LockePRDA with the Oral History Project (Locke Foundation) premiered its film: Voices: Chinese Women of the Delta, an oral history documentary by Min Zhou.

The vision: To bring The Star Theater back to life as a multi-purpose community center. Let your imagination take flight! Curious? Got questions about the project? Have resources or ideas to contribute? Come ZOOM with us! JANUARY 25, 2026 at 7pm. (More ZOOM dates will be arranged.) For the ZOOM meeting link, information and updates, please email lockeprda@gmail.com.

See you there! Corliss Suen Lee, Carol Lee, Pattie Fong

Ownership History of The Star Theater

By Carol Lee

Chinese found the Sacramento-San Joaquin River Delta similar to their homeland in the Pearl River region of Southern China. The **1850 Swamp Land Act** allowed states to reclaim wetlands like the Delta for agricultural use. Chinese played a vital role in building the levees, transforming the landscape from swampland to productive farmland. The **1913 Alien Land Act** made land ownership by non-citizens (Chinese and Japanese) illegal. Yet the Chinese stayed to cultivate the land, leading the Delta to become the nation's "Farm to Fork" capital.

The enclave known as Lockeport was the convergence of the bountiful agricultural produce of the Sacramento-San Joaquin River Delta, a wharf, warehouse and the Southern Pacific Railroad.

By 1912, three Chinese merchants relocated from nearby Walnut Grove and Vorden to meet the needs of Lockeport's growth. Chan Tin Sin erected the first building – a dry goods store and beer saloon. Yuen Lai Sing built a gambling hall. Owyang Wing Cheong built the Lockeport Hotel and Restaurant.

October 7, 1915, the Chinese sections of Walnut Grove burned down. Some of Walnut Grove's Chinese residents (primarily from the Toishan region of China) rebuilt. The rest of the population (from Heungshan or Zhongshan region) chose to resettle just north in nearby Lockeport.

Because the California Alien Land Law of 1913 prohibited "aliens ineligible for citizenship" to own land, the Chinese were forced to "rent" from landowner George W Locke. The New Canton Hotel and seven other buildings then comprised the little hamlet. Lockeport eventually became known as "Locke." Interestingly, "Locke", when pronounced in the local Chinese dialect as *"LOC-Kee"* translates to "happy place," a sanctuary amid challenges of the anti-Asian discrimination at the time.

The original owner of The Star Theater, a three story, 3,600 sq.ft. building built in 1918, was Kai Chan. Harold Suen's father was probably the carpenter/builder. The Star Theater started as a venue for Cantonese Chinese opera. In the end, attendance, efforts and expenses could not be sustained, leading to the showing of movies. Ultimately both business ventures succumb to the growing demand for lodging. The ground floor space on Main Street was a gambling hall. Kai Chan, with health concerns, moved back to China with his family leaving Cheung Yow, his daughter's ex-husband, in charge. In **June 1951**, after over 30 years, Kai returned to find The Star Theater had become a brothel. Gambling had become illegal and the gambling hall was shut down. At one time the ground floor was rented to Al the Wops who put in refrigeration to store the meat served in his bar and restaurant. The pool hall/soda fountain store (Hoy Kee Shoong) also used it for storage. After Kai Chan passed, Lucky Chan, Kai's youngest son assumed the property. While still in high school Lucky took over the property. Possibly unaware of the unpaid property taxes of $20 and his sister was also unaware of the debt, The Star Theater was sold at a tax auction.

July 1977 Locke Property Development Company (Clarence Chu and family) purchased the land under Locke from the George Locke estate ("Locke heirs"). Chu also bought properties that will later become Locke museums.

1990s-2000s Sacramento Housing and Redevelopment Agency (SHRA) offered $250K for The Star Theater and was confident about securing grant money to repair the building; SHRA's offer was declined. SHRA did stabilize 11 buildings and installed a fire sprinkler system on 30 buildings during this period.

2001 Clarence Chu (Chu) sold 10 acres of central Locke to SHRA so that SHRA could secure a grant to replace Locke's sewer system – the sale was contingent on subdividing the land for ownership by residents.

December 2004 SHRA sold lots to 20 home and business owners, finally ending the inequity of the Alien Land Law.

2005 State Parks hoped to purchase and restore both The Star Theater and Sam's Boarding House but with budget limitations the state could only buy and restore the Boarding House.

February 20, 2008 George Heiner purchased The Star Theater ($50,000) from Chu.

2016 Heiner died intestate (without a will). In 2019 The Star Theater is offered for sale at $75,000.

2022 Sacramento Superior Court settled Heiner's probate. The Star Theater is appraised at $72,000.

2025 The nonprofit Locke Prior Residents Descendants Ascendants (LockePRDA) receives a large donation specifically earmarked for the acquisition of The Star Theater and makes an offer to buy it from the Heiner heirs.

Currents programs to watch

Tadaima 2025 video recordings

Japanese American Memorial Pilgrimages (JAMP) has posted video recordings of their 2025 ZOOM programs on YouTube now. Summaries of each session can be found on the JAMP website at www.jamptadaima.org.

The 2025 programs include:

The History and Legacy of the Redman-Hirahara House (Watsonville landmark); A Glimpse into Nikkei Grassroots Activism & Print Media: Sei Fujii; Minidoka Survivor: Rodger Nogaki; Literary Futures (Philip Kan Gotanda, Kiku Hughes); Our Future Depends on Remembering: Uplifting Youth Voicews: Kira Sato, Marie Okuma Johnston; Community, Connection, Commitment: The New NikkeiWest newspaper; Manzanar Baseball Project; Passing Down Our stories: Yonsei Mom to Gosei Sons; National Parks and Japanese American Incarceration; Self-Healing Through Deep Listening and Music Composition; Legacies of Incarceration: The Power of Place and Memory: Kelli Nakamura, Kyle Kajihiro; Nisei Week Queen & Court Program Short Film; Evolution of the Nikkei Press: Kenji Taguma, JK Yamamoto; Topaz & Tule Lake Survivor: Michiko Mukai; Art of the Descendants: WWII Afterlives; Rock of Ages: A Town Hall on the Wakasa Public Letter; Healing Through Shared Histories: Amache/Sand Creek Massacre Youth Ambassador Program; Temporary Detention: A Guide to the Forced "Assembly Centers"; Gila River Survivor: Masaru Yoshimoto

MSNOW's Burn Order podcast

New disclosures about the WWII evacuation of 125,000 Japanese Americans to incarceration camps.

On December 1st, journalist Rachel Maddow premiered her 6 series podcast about the incarceration of Japanese Americans during World War II. It contained rarely discussed information and was very eye opening. LAccess to listen to the podcast for free at www.ms.now (formerly MSNBC) as well as Apple, Spotify and Audible. The MSNOW website also provides archival materials supporting their reporting.

Highlights of particular interest:

Episode 1 Safecracker (35.11 minutes)

- Aiko Herzig Yoshinaga, a retired office worker, spent hours at the Washington DC National Archives combing through EO9066 records. EO9066 is President Franklin D. Roosevelt's (FDR) order granting the Army the power to remove people from the West Coast during WWII. In the summer of 1982, she found the smoking gun in an early draft report authored by Army Colonel Karl Bendetsen. Bendetsen was Army General John DeWitt's right hand man and mastermind behind the forced removal of 125,000 Japanese Americans (JAs) – 2/3 were US citizens – into WWII incarceration camps. DeWitt was in charge of the Western Defense Command. The report was written to prepare government attorneys to justify EO9066 in upcoming trials. Bendetsen was ordered to rewrite his justification for the removal from JAs based on his belief that JAs were an "enemy race" to stating that it was for "military necessity" to remove all JAs quickly because there was no time to evaluate the loyalty of each JA individually.
- Navy Lieutenant Ken Ringle was fluent in Japanese and assigned to openly socialize in the JA community to assess their loyalty and identify spies working for Japan. In the spring of 1942, while another Navy intelligence officer was entertaining the Japanese military attache at the Naofficer's own home and plying him with alcohol, Ringle with a Navy intelligence technical team including a safecracker-convict temporarily released from San Quentin prison broke into the Japanese consulate in LA and copied all records of the "spy master." They did not find any intelligence identifying JA spies, but the files identified other (white) American citizens who were spying for Japan and were later arrested. They found internal Japanese files which stated that Japan's own investigation of JAs concluded that JAs were useless as potential spies for Japan, that JAs would never pledge loyalty to the Japanese emperor and JAs would never sabotage US interests. (Reference: Pearl Harbor attack, Dec 7, 1941.)

Episode 2 The Jitters (48:40 minutes)

- After the attack on Pearl Harbor, in mid-December 1941, Japanese submarines did attack commercial ships off the California coast – two ships were badly damaged, two sunk. But then it stopped. In February 1942, a Japanese submarine shelled an oil facility in Goleta (near Santa Barbara) causing about $500 worth of damage. That shelling also just stopped.
- DeWitt was in charge of the Western Defense Command covering the entire West Coast. There were concerns about his ability to command – he was "jittery," may have gone crazy, everyday after the Pearl Harbor attack he would promote false rumors about Japanese attacks which were not true, his source for these false claims was from a guy whom the FBI banned from their circles. DeWitt was suggestible, had a tendency to adopt the views of the last person he talked to, spewed wild conspiracy theories. DeWitt was also a racist, opposing Black units on the West Coast, opposed Asians enlisting in any service, especially felt that Japanese American loyalty could never be determined - "Japanese need to be wiped off the map."
- Army assigned DeWitt a new right hand man, Army Colonel Karl Bendetsen, who was smart, had his own evil agenda and found in DeWitt's Western Defense Command a power vacuum. He was the architect and fixer who drafted a plan and policy for mass removal purely based on race which the Army would control; he gave that plan to DeWitt to sign off on.
- US Dept of Justice (DOJ) attorney Edward Ennis drafted and administered the Alien Enemies Act which authorized the arrest of non-citizens from countries with which the US was at war but aprovided due process protections (right to a hearing). Germans and Italians could become naturalized citizens; but persons born in Japan could not. Immediately following Pearl Harbor, the massive arrest of Japanese community leaders was under the

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1882 Foundation Announces Community Events

The 1882 Foundation is dedicated to ensuring the history, experiences, and contributions of Chinese Americans are recognized, preserved, and integrated into the American story.

Last year in Sacramento, the Foundation celebrated the culmination of a decade of work: the successful designation of Summit Tunnel Camp at Donner Summit as a National Historic Landmark, recognizing the contributions of Chinese railroad workers who built the transcontinental railroad. Building on this momentum, the Foundation will launch community programs in Sacramento in the upcoming months.

Preserving Our Stories: A Community Film Night

Join us Friday, January 23rd, 6:00-8:30 PM at the Pocket-Greenhaven Library (7335 Gloria Dr, Sacramento) for three compelling documentaries exploring Chinese American heritage. *Chicago Cafe* depicts the closing days of the oldest Chinese-American restaurant in the US in nearby Woodland; *Rising* documents a family's history in Hanford's China Alley and their effort to rebuild the Taoist Temple Museum after arson; and *Voices — Women of the Delta* tells stories from women of historic Locke. A discussion with filmmakers and community members will follow the screenings.

Admission is free. Bring your own popcorn. Please RSVP: https://tinyurl.com/1882Movie

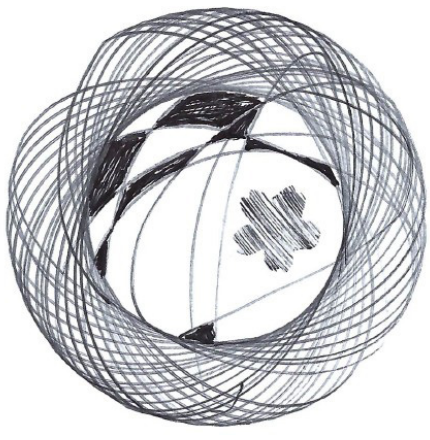
Chinese New Year Office Opening

Celebrate our new office opening in Sacramento Chinatown Square with a community event during Chinese New Year! Details TBD.

Memoir Writing Workshop

The 1882 Foundation is partnering with Capital Storytelling to offer online memoir writing classes documenting family stories and cultural heritage. Courses to take place in April-May.

For more information about these events, please email JamesXiao@1882Foundation.org or go to https://1882foundation.org



AAPI suicide survivor is using his story to help others

By Ruichen Ge

October 4, 2025

Note: This story follows safe-reporting guidelines for covering suicide. It avoids specific method details, does not reduce causes to a single factor, and includes crisis-support resources.

On a phone call with his father the other day, Vuong Tran asked a simple question: What's the right Vietnamese word for "mental health"? The answer landed like a history lesson. The term his dad knows best, Tran says, essentially points to someone who "needs to be in a hospital." Not a conversation. Not care. A place.

"When that's your starting vocabulary," Tran says, "it's hard to tell your family, I'm struggling."

Tran, a Vietnamese American based in Portland, OR, is a suicide attempt survivor who now volunteers with the American Foundation for Suicide Prevention (AFSP). His story isn't about his worst night; it's about what worked after: five days of hospital care that finally felt safe, a church community where checking in was normal, and therapy — with medication — that helped "peel back the onion."

"I'm not alone": where healing began

Looking back, Tran remembers the signs — hopelessness, feeling like a burden, a narrowing tunnel vision that left him sure there was only one way out. He didn't know resources then. What he did remember afterward was a pastor at Grace Church in San Diego describing a confidential ministry called Soul Care. "I reached out, and they brought me to the hospital," he says. "For five days, I felt seen and

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MSNOW's Burn Order podcast

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Alien Enemies Act.

Episode 3 One Drop (53:51 minutes)

- Bendetsen's plan coincides with the sentiments of politicians, farmers/growers and civil organizations who believed JAs were disloyal, dangerous, wanted to "keep California white man's paradise," proposed to ship JAs to Japan, wanted to stop Japanese immigration to California, tampered with textbooks deleting any favorable image of JAs, were fearful of the JAs birthrate, tried to get birth right citizenship for JAs overturned.

- Bendetsen could not find any DOJ lawyer who would pen a legal opinion that JAs were "an enemy race" and every JA was "a potential enemy" as justification to use race as the sole basis for incarcerating JAs. On February 14, 1942, Bendetsen found federal lawyers – Benjamin Cohen, Oscar Cox and Joseph Rauh all in another department who agreed to sign off on this legal opinion (They later denied knowing that the memo was intended to greenlight mass incarceration of JAs). On February 17, 1942, the Justice Department/Attorney General Francis Biddle, gave up fighting a constitutional solution, a plan which did only what was necessary and for due process for individuals. DOJ and the FBI knew there were no JAs spies or saboteurs, none found anywhere.

Episode 4 Like An Ordinary American (48:04)

- Colorado Governor Ralph Carr is lauded as an exemplary principled politician during this period. The son of a gold/silver miner, he went into politics and in his second term as governor told the world that Colorado would gladly receive JAs who were voluntarily evacuating from the West Coast. JAs were given a small window of time to drive east – but his constituency disagreed. "These Japanese are protected by the same Constitution that protects us. An American citizen of Japanese descent has the same rights as any other citizen. If you harm them, you must first harm me." All the other western states' governors opposed the voluntary migration of JAs, but Carr's borders were open and welcoming. In the early part of 1942, Colorado's JA population doubleds. Later that year, Carr lost his bid for a third term as governor and never held elected office again.

- Gordon Hirabayashi (Seattle) turns himself in for violating the curfew and evacuation orders; Min Yasui (Portland) asked to be arrested for his curfew violation; Fred Korematsu (Oakland) was arrested for violating the removal order; Mitsue Endo (Sacramento) was recruited by attorney James Purcell to challenge the constitutionality of incarcerating loyal JA US citizens. Kobayashi: "If I believe in the Constitution at all, I have to object to this."

Episode 5 Sheep and Goats (48:39 minutes)

- Ringle seeing that the JAs were being scapegoated, starts to write up his report that JAs have a place in the US war effort, are more than eager to help US counterintelligence, JAs are loyal and don't pose a threat to the US or the war effort, that loyalty needs to evaluated on an individual basis, forced relocation is unwarranted and unnecessary and due process was an important Constitutional right. Unfortunately Ringle was a slow writer, no one was receptive to his report, and his report got to the White House after the Army jammed down its plan claiming that it was the military's assessment that mass incarceration of JAs was a military necessity and that JAs are enemy aliens. FDR signed EO 9066 on February 19, 1942.

- Ringle's report did appear in Harper's Magazine in the spring of 1943 "The Japanese in America. The Problem and the Solution" with a byline "An Intelligence Officer." Ennis saw the article and tracked down Ringle and the Navy's intelligence source records. Ennis personally thought the forced evacuation was unconstitutional and immoral. He knew that Ringle's Navy intelligence report undercut DeWitt and Bendetsen's justification for forced incarceration as "a military necessity."

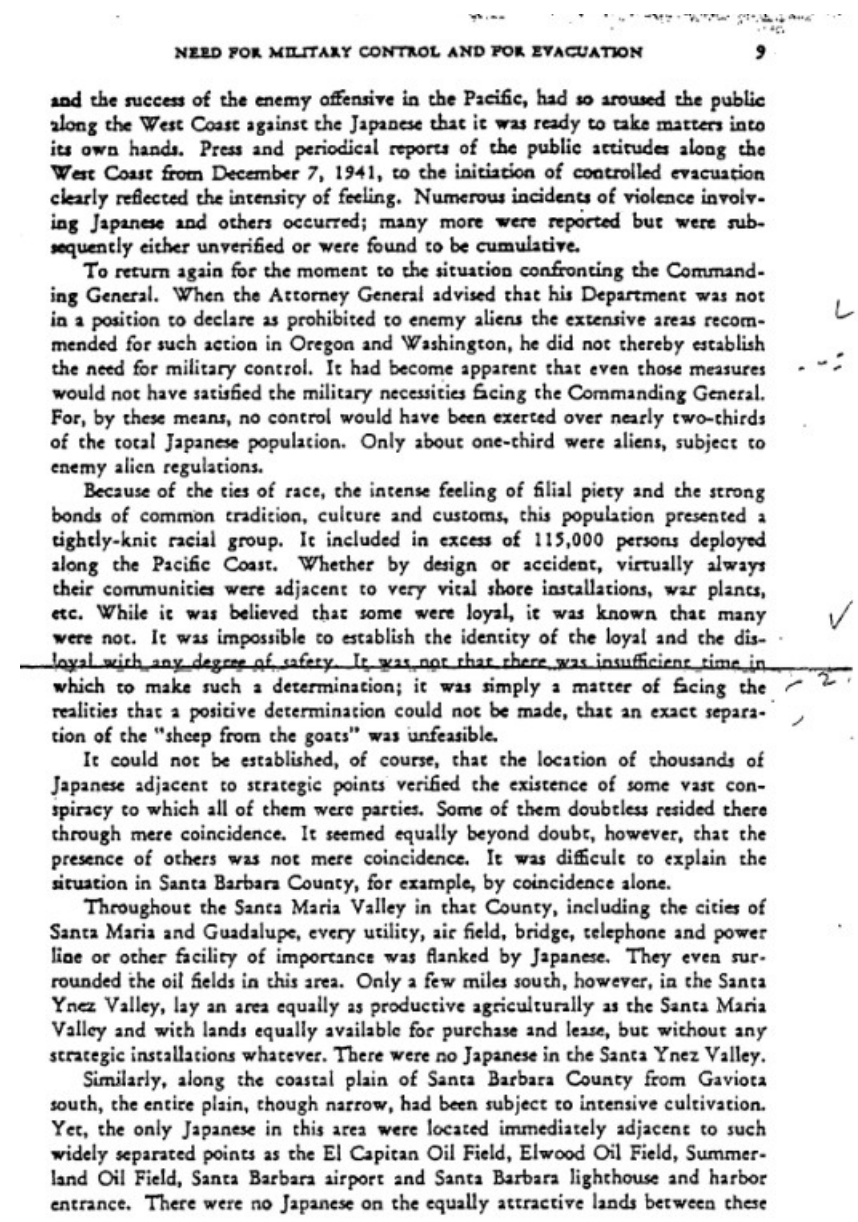
- Ennis tells Solicitor General Charles Fahy about Ringle's report and knows that this information needs to presented to the US Supreme Court. Every attorney has a legal obligation to provide all relevant information to the court.

- Ennis confirmed that the FBI investigated and concluded that DeWitt's fantastical and conspiratorial stories spread after Pearl Harbor were false. FCC even investigated and found no truth to the claims of alleged JAs sabotage - flashlight signals, burning in fields.

- In the end, the DOJ covered up and mislead the US Supreme Court by not providing Ringle's report and FBI and FCC investigations. The US Supreme Court upheld the convictions in the Hirabayashi, Yasui, and Korematsu cases.

- On December 18, 1944, the US Supreme Court ruled in favor of Endo – that it was unconstitutional to incarcerate loyal Americans. The Army issued Public Proclamation Number 21 on December 17, 1944 announcing that the incarceration camps were going to be closed.

- DOJ also failed to disclose Bendetsen's original report about the plan to incarcerate JAs. Ennis asked the Army to turn over any published material. The Army never handed over Bendetsen original report which described the camps as pastoral, happy places. That version said it was impossible to separate the sheep from the goats, that is to determine which JAs were loyal or disloyal to the US, that there are immutable racial characteristics of the Japanese and as a race they could never be trusted, they are an "enemy race"; Bendetsen's report was clearly racist. Bendetsen had printed 10 copies bound like a book. Assistant Secretary of War John McCloy flipped out seeing the Bendetsen report – the printing, binding, distribution which hadn't been authorized and that Bendetsen to admit in print that the Army's whole justification had been outrageous lies and racist. McCloy orders Bendetsen to clean this mess up, remove overtly racist statements and rewrite it to say that the mass removal was driven



NEED FOR MILITARY CONTROL AND FOR EVACUATION 9

and the success of the enemy offensive in the Pacific, had so aroused the public along the West Coast against the Japanese that it was ready to take matters into its own hands. Press and periodical reports of the public attitudes along the West Coast from December 7, 1941, to the initiation of controlled evacuation clearly reflected the intensity of feeling. Numerous incidents of violence involving Japanese and others occurred; many more were reported but were subsequently either unverified or were found to be cumulative.

To return again for the moment to the situation confronting the Commanding General. When the Attorney General advised that his Department was not in a position to declare as prohibited to enemy aliens the extensive areas recommended for such action in Oregon and Washington, he did not thereby establish the need for military control. It had become apparent that even those measures would not have satisfied the military necessities facing the Commanding General. For, by these means, no control would have been exerted over nearly two-thirds of the total Japanese population. Only about one-third were aliens, subject to enemy alien regulations.

Because of the ties of race, the intense feeling of filial piety and the strong bonds of common tradition, culture and customs, this population presented a tightly-knit racial group. It included in excess of 115,000 persons deployed along the Pacific Coast. Whether by design or accident, virtually always their communities were adjacent to very vital shore installations, war plants, etc. While it was believed that some were loyal, it was known that many were not. It was impossible to establish the identity of the loyal and the disloyal with any degree of safety. It was not that there was insufficient time in which to make such a determination; it was simply a matter of facing the realities that a positive determination could not be made, that an exact separation of the "sheep from the goats" was unfeasible.

It could not be established, of course, that the location of thousands of Japanese adjacent to strategic points verified the existence of some vast conspiracy to which all of them were parties. Some of them doubtless resided there through mere coincidence. It seemed equally beyond doubt, however, that the presence of others was not mere coincidence. It was difficult to explain the situation in Santa Barbara County, for example, by coincidence alone.

Throughout the Santa Maria Valley in that County, including the cities of Santa Maria and Guadalupe, every utility, air field, bridge, telephone and power line or other facility of importance was flanked by Japanese. They even surrounded the oil fields in this area. Only a few miles south, however, in the Santa Ynez Valley, lay an area equally as productive agriculturally as the Santa Maria Valley and with lands equally available for purchase and lease, but without any strategic installations whatever. There were no Japanese in the Santa Ynez Valley.

Similarly, along the coastal plain of Santa Barbara County from Gaviota south, the entire plain, though narrow, had been subject to intensive cultivation. Yet, the only Japanese in this area were located immediately adjacent to such widely separated points as the El Capitan Oil Field, Elwood Oil Field, Summerland Oil Field, Santa Barbara airport and Santa Barbara lighthouse and harbor entrance. There were no Japanese on the equally attractive lands between these

The DOJ failed to inform or provide copies to the US Supreme Court of Bendetsen's original unedited report (above), that the FBI and FCC investigated and found DeWitt/Bendetsen's sabotage claims false, Ringle's Navy intelligence report, Japan's intelligence reports that Japanese Americans were loyal to the US and evidence of the Burn Order for the original 10 copies of Bendetsen's report.

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The Fear Comes at 4 a.m.

By Andy Monheit

They once called them Okies.
Now they call them illegals.
Different word, same wound—
a nation still learning how to speak human.

Once, the dust came for their farms.
Now, the fear comes at 4 a.m.
Black vans without license plates,
lights off like conscience,
bodies taken in silence
so the neighbors won't see
what democracy does while it's still half-asleep.

Children clutching backpacks as if fabric were salvation,
mothers praying in two languages,
hoping God is bilingual.
Fathers lined up in chains,
not because they harmed us—
but because they hoped in our direction.

They are flown not to freedom,
but to facilities so far from our gaze
that we can pretend they do not exist—
out of sight, out of rights.
Some call these places "detention centers."
Let us call them what they are:
camps of forgetting.

And somewhere, a writer sits awake,
pen shaking like a candle in a storm,
wondering if truth still has a passport.
If language can still open a gate.
If poetry can still reach across the fences
we've wrapped around our empathy.

To bear witness is not a pastime—
it is a form of citizenship.
It is saying:
I will not let your existence be edited out.
I will not let bureaucracy bury your name.
I will not let history pretend
it did not see what happened here.

For dignity is not something we grant;
it is something we recognize.
It lives even in handcuffs.
It breathes even in concrete rooms
where the air tastes like waiting.
It survives even when a government
tries to deport hope itself.

So let us be the lanterns now,
lit in the long corridors of indifference.

Let us be the witnesses
who refuse to look away.

Because we are not the people of complacency.
We are the people who say:
No human is illegal.
No dream is a crime.
And no story of hope
Should ever end in chains.

Andy Monheit is a local poet aspires to write ___ which resonate with others. His first book of poetry can be purchased on Amazon.

MSNOW's Burn Order podcast

Continued from Page 8

by the lack of time to determine loyalty. Bendetsen recalled all 10 copies and ordered they be burned. The original report was officially never given to the DOJ or shown to the court, Ringle's report was provided to court, the FBI and FCC investigations debunking sabotage conspiracy theories was kept from the court.

- Bendetsen's original is the document that Aiko Herzig-Yoshinaga found with handwritten notations "delete" "scratch" "change to" "move to page so and so". She had also found communications between McCloy's office and the Western Defense Command stressing about the missing 10th copy.

Episode 6: A Reckoning (1:18:53)

- Peter Irons, a convicted draft resister sentenced to 3 years and Harvard trained lawyer, met Herzig-Yoshinaga at the National Archives in Washington DC. She was then working for the Commisison on Wartime Relocation and Internment of Civilians. Irons requested the DOJ's original litigation files which has been misfiled 40 years earlier with Commerce Department files in Maryland.

- Irons: So I undid them, opened it up, and the first file folder – literally! — the first file folder was a memorandum from a Justice Department lawyer, Edward J. Ennis, saying to the Solicitor General of the United States, Charles Fahy: "You are preparing to argue before the Supreme Court that the War Department had grounds to believe that Japanese Americans constituted a danger of sabotage and espionage and that justified their internment. And that is not true."

- Irons and Herzig-Yoshinaga found: Bendetsen's 10th copy of the original report, Ennis memo about not disclosing Ringle's report to the Supreme Court; and documentation of the order to burn Bendetsen's original report.

- Irons realizes that this newly discovered evidence could overturn the Korematsu, Hirabayashi and Yasui convictions. He contacts each of them. Then Irons contacts attorney Dale Minami and his Minami's firm signs up to represent them on a Writ of Coram Nobis – this writ is used when all appeals have exhausted but subsequently there has been discovery of evidence withheld or falsely presented. All three convictions were overturned based on this new evidence.

- In December 1982, then reporter Ken Ringle (son of Kenneth Ringle) interviewed Bendetsen who denied being the architect of the mass incarceration program - it was not his idea, not his fault, he was only following DeWitt's orders. Bendetsen denied the incarceration camps had barbed wire, armed guards, and claimed that the Japanese were free to leave the camps at any time. Bendetsen died in 1989.

- Ringle died in 1963 and when his wife returned from the funeral to their Palos Verdes home, there were stacks of flowers on the stoop, "From your Japanese American friends in Palos Verdes."

- John McCloy denied having anything to do with the incarceration policy, but was "following orders." In 1981 testimony before a congressional committee, McCloy blurted that the prison camps were retribution for Pearl Harbor.

- Solicitor General Charles Rahy died in 1979. In 2011 President Obama's acting Solicitor General issued a formal "Confession of Error" for suppressing evidence from the Court.

- Earl Warren was California's Attorney General, then became Chief Justice of the US Supreme Court, "a liberal lion of the Court, a champion of civil rights." In his memoir: "I have … deeply regretted the removal order, and my own testimony advocating it, because it was not in keeping with our American concept of freedom and the rights of citizens. Whenever I thought of the innocent little children who were torn from home, school, friends … I was conscience-stricken. It was wrong."

- Attorney General Biddle later said: "If I had urged the Secretary [of War] to resist the pressure … the result might have been different." He also said: "In tense times such as these, a strange psychology grips us … we are likely to vent our dammed-up energy on a scapegoat … someone who speaks with a foreign accent." Biddle said, "That sort of psychology is the very essence of totalitarianism."

- DOJ attorneys Ennis and Rowe say that they did not even consider resigning in protest. Ennis later took a job with the ACLU; in 1942 ACLU's board and national committee voted to not challenge JA incarceration and the ACLU chair actually wrote a congratulatory note to DeWitt.

- Before he died in 1984, Rowe said: It was really hysteria and somewhat shared hysteria by everybody. We've done it several times. We've done it to the Indians, we've done it to the Japanese. It's in our blood somewhere, but then after we do it, we get damned ashamed of ourselves."

Film director Jon M. Chu

(His films include: Crazy Rich Asians, In the Heights, Wicked, Wicked: For Good). KQED Radio, Airdate: December 29, 2025 (52 minutes)

Reporter Mina Kim interviewed Jon M. Chu for a KQED Live event on December 3, 2025 when Chu reflected on his Bay Area roots, his rise through Hollywood and the beauty of reimaging stories that feel larger than life.

EXCERPT:

Kim: Do you remember actually when you saw the musical Wicked onstage for the first time?

Chu: Yeah. I was going to USC at the time, and my mom, the year before, had been going through chemotherapy, so she used to take us to the theater all the time here in the city, because I'm a Bay Area kid. ... And so we used to go to the San Jose or San Francisco, spend a lot of time here, and it was either ballet season, opera season, or musical season. And we hadn't done that for a while, and I was maybe a junior or sophomore at USC Film School. And I was there, and she called me up.

She said, hey, Stephen Schwartz has a new musical, and it's playing at the Curran Theater. And it's not even on Broadway yet. Yes. Right, for you, Broadway. Stephen Schwartz is a genius. And I was like, yeah, of course, I want to see this. So we got this really special time together, and we went to the Curran Theater. And I remember just being so blown away by this story that took the American fairy tale. There were very few American classic fairy tales, but that's one that stuck around, and something that my parents, who came from Taiwan and China and started a restaurant in Los Altos, been there for 56 years, still there. It's called Chef Chu's. I have to plug it, because my parents would get mad at me if I didn't. Comfort food at comfortable prices, as I like to say.

And so we got to go to this, and they used to tell me the story of The Wizard of Oz all the time. We used to watch the movie on TV. And so for me to reexamine that great American fairy tale was so fascinating to see through the perspective of the Wicked Witch.

Chu believes he is living the American dream, which also includes his memories of:

- The looks of others when his mother took the family with five kids to shows

- Be directed to the delivery entrance on his first day on the lot (that's my backpack, not food)

- Pursuing a career directing American musicals without no connections

- His father reacting to a nasty restaurant diner – That's okay because we may be the only Asians they will ever meet and besides we are taking their money

- Another student's film featuring a woman closing her door at all sorts of strange suitors, and finally also shutting the door in the face of a regular looking Asian male

Remembering China Camp

Fire erases chance for family to connect to Chinese American roots

By Randall Yip, AsAmNews, Oct 3, 2025

Valerie Hang watched the devastating fire at the historic town of Chinese Camp last month in Central California with a sense of both regret and sadness. [This Chinese Camp is in Tuolumne County, 20 miles northeast of Modesto in Central California. A September 2025 wildfire burned down a significant part of the community. This is not the China Camp State Park in Marin County.]

Regret that she never visited the gold mining town where her grandfather was born. Sadness that so much of the town is now gone due to a lightning-sparked wildfire.

"I was really kind of upset about it," she told AsAmNews during a recent interview. "I feel that I really had a connection there. I don't really know a lot of Chinese, Chinese Americans, had families tat came in the mid to late 1800s."

Her great grandfather, Ah Hang, came to California in 1860 looking fo gold, but without success. He eventually grew vegetables to sell to miners and believes he later became a sharecropper.

In sworn testimony signed by GB Neighbor in 1903, she writes "I have known Ah Hang, the father of Jim Hang, since 1864. He worked for me in Tuolumne County, about that time. He was married about 1868 or 1866 by the Justice of the Peace at Chinese Camp. I also know his wife when they resided on the J.W. Haines Ranch in Merced County up to the time of his death which occurred sometime about Feb 1, 1888."

Jim Hang is the grandfather of Valerie.

According to David Lei of the Chinese Historical Society of America, Chinese populated Chinese Camp at the end of 1849, 1850.

"Some people say as many as 5,000 Chinese lived there at one time, although those numbers are not reliable because no one really did a census (in California) at that time," Lei told AsAmNews.

He said 300 Chinese met at Canton Restaurant in Chinese Camp on Jackson Street to meet with a White attorney, Salem Woodworth, to arrange the purchase of land likely with the intention of mining for gold.

"Chinese could not make a claim. They were not allowed to make a claim. They can buy a claim from a White person, but they thought they can hire a White lawyer, this guy named Salem Woodworth to help them do it. So, we know they most likely bought some land, went there to start mining, but were driven out. They were at a place called Salvador, I believe, near Chinese camp. They were driven out and ended up at Chinese Camp and they started to mine there. And so there were a lot of Chinese. They have a post office by 1854."

Today there is little evidence left that the Chinese once resided at Chinese Camp. Lei said just a stone wall as high as five feet that was used to fence in cattle and an elementary school with a Chinese pagoda roof remained even before the fire.

Both, he said, survived the fire. To the best of his knowledge, no Chinese currently reside in Chinese Camp.

Still, Valerie Hang regrets not visiting prior to the fire. Her father, James Hang Jr, told her many stories about the town.

"My husband and I, we were actually planning to go this fall, when it was cooler. Now I'm really sad that I never went.

James Hang Sr, a Chinese Camp CA descendant, is second from the right. Courtesy: Valerie Hang. "What I like about this photo is he appears to be on equal footing with the White employees," said Valerie Hang, James Hang Sr's granddaughter.

Currents contributes to this story:

The California Gold Rush brought thousands of Chinese miners to the United States, where they faced anti-immigrant sentiments and persecution that included an exorbitant Foreign Miners Tax designed to drive them away from mining. Chinese miners settled in the town in 1849, after being driven out of another nearby mining camp, according to Visit Tuolumne County. Chinese Camp began as a distribution center to move supplies out to nearby mining camps, namely from San Francisco to Stockton and then to the camp, according to the Tuolumne Historical Society. By 1856, nearly 600 Chinese people lived in the town, and its population eventually grew to 5,000 with saloons, temples, stables and homes. By the 1920s, Chinese Camp became a ranching community. Originally called Camp Washington, it was renamed Chinese Camp reflecting its more recent residents. Chinese Camp was added to the California Historical Landmarks list in 1949.

AsAmNews (AsianAmerican Media Inc.) is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit online news outlet. The Library of Congress recently honored AsAmNews by selecting the "paper" to be archive which means that AsAmNews will always be available to the public, researchers and others for years to come.

Currents Faces, New Places

Lisa Lu is the oldest person to receive a star on the Hollywood Walk of Fame. Lu was honored in May at age 98 for her decades long career including appearing in The Joy Luck Club and Crazy Rich Asians. This is a milestone for AAPI represention in the Hollywood film industry.

Seongmin Yoo, a Davis artist, created the "Welcome to Davis" mural (45' X 25") at the Richards Blvd and I-80 interchange. The large block letters of D-A V-I-S are filled with scenes and landmarks of Davis, including agriculture and farmworkers, the Arneson Egghead sculptures, bikes, sunflowers and the Varsity Theater. The mural was funded by the Davis Farmers Market, the Downtown Davis Business Assn and Davis Sunrise Rotary with a city grant. The cost of $3500, amounts according to Yoo to about $10/hour. Yoo's other Davis mural include a mosaic Gunrock sculpture, a landscape at Café Bernardo, a hotel mural, and a community mural at 140 B St, Davis.

Currents Faces, New Places

Susie Ibarra, 54, won a Pulitzer Prize for Music in May for her composition "Sky Islands" which celebrates the Earth's biodiversity on Luzon Island and calls attention to climate change. Ibarra's 8-piece music ensemble first performed the piece in New York, July 2024, for the Asia Society. She incorporates Philippine Northern-style bamboo, gong, and flute music. The Pulitzer comes with a $15,000 prize. Ibarra has recorded over 40 albums, played at Carnegie Hall and MoMA, and her experimental sound blends traditional music, tech, field recordings (melting glaciers, typhoons) and immersive installations.

Santa Ono was a finalist to lead University of Florida in June. Chosen unanimously by the Board of Trustees, his appointment was rejected by the UF Board of Governors by a 10-6 vote the following week. His presentation to the Board – "I support fully the decision to end DEI. I'm here to ensure DEI never returns to the University of Florida. Science will lead, not ideology. I want to come to Florida, not to slow reform, but to accelerate it. Public universities exist to educate, not indoctrinate." Ono was the former president of University of Michigan, University of Cincinnati and University of British Columbia. He had been criticized for supporting DEI programs in the past, but in 2024 shut down Michigan's program. Trustee Christopher F. Rufo commented after the vote to not hire Ono: "We conducted an investigation, generated a strong media narrative, and made the case that Ono was a captured left-wing ideologue who would jeopardize Florida's reputation as the place 'where woke goes to die.' Our efforts succeeded."

Michigan State Representative Mai Xiong rebutted House Speaker Matt Hall's insults calling her "a very low IQ representative" and "probably one of the dumbest ones in the Legislature." The interchange happened after Xiong criticized Hall for cancelling a legislative session to attend a Trump rally. Xiong, a refugee, mother of four, first Hmong elected to the House of Representatives, criticized Hall for, in violation of the Michigan Constitution, failing to transmit (stalling) nine bipartisan bills. A Court of Claims judge found Hall's acts unconstitutional, but failed to enforce it. Xiong says "I want my children and others to know that standing up to bullies is always the right thing to do."

Adele McClure, Virginia state Delegate (elected 2023) and a Filipino-Black woman was honored as the 12th Gabrielle Giffords Rising Star Award by EMILY's List. Her mother was an early childhood care provider and her father was a Filipino immigrant who served in the US army and whom she met for the first time at age 28. "We absolutely need all hands-on deck to make sure that we are standing up against and fighting back against what is happening in DC, because right now, a lot of the rights are being attacked, and they're disappearing at the federal level. And so, we're really, really looking to the states to make sure that they're protecting people."

Amelia "Bindi" Ray, a fifth grader from Baltimore was just 11 years old when she competed in the Scripps National spelling Bee in May 2025. She didn't win, but was the youngest to ever compete in the national spelling bee and is a South Asian American.

UCD Prof. Joanna Chiu was elected as fellow of the Entomological Society of America. Chiu is chair of UCD Dept of Entomology and Nematology and recognized for her research on the molecular and cellular mechanisms that regulate circadian and seasonal biology and on invasive species genomics

Intel CEO Lip-Bu Tan was called out by Trump on August 7, 2025 to resign describing Tan as "highly conflicted" and that he "must resign immediately." After Trump's August 7, 2025 post criticizing Intel, Intel stock fell 3.1%. On August 6, 2025 US Senator Tom Cotton had written to the Intel chairman about his concerns that Tan had ties to Chinese companies which have relationships with the Chinese Communist Party and People's Liberation Army. Tan replaced Pat Gelsinger as Intel's CEO in March 2025. Tan had been CEO of Candace (2008-2021) and founder Walden International in the 1980s (a venture capital firm), one of the first US firms to invest in China. In July Intel pled guilty and paid a $140M fine for selling products to a Chinese military university which reportedly simulate nuclear explosions. Tan, who has called the US home for more than 40 years, accepted an invitation to meet with Trump at the White House a week later to discuss strengthening US technology and manufacturing leadership. On August 11, 2025 Trump posted praise for Tan for meeting and Intel's share value rose 2%.

Lao Family Community Development is working with CARE Community Center to help homeless Sacramento's youth (18-24). Are you a young person experiencing homelessness or housing instability? The Lift Up Youth Program serves youth and their families who are affected by homelessness by helping them find safe housing and providing health and wellness workshops, job assistance and career connections, mental health workshops and peer support groups. Info: Sara Pickett (916) 301-7384, spickett@lfcd.org

PACT has set up a Beth Hall Anti-Racist Adoption fund to celebrate executive director Beth Hall's stepping down into a fundraiser capacity after founding and leading the adoption support network for 34 years. The fund will continue PACT's groundbreaking work on race and adoptions. Info: www.pactadopt.org

Natalie Nakase, 45, was named in September the WNBA coach of the year. Nakase is the head coach of the Golden State Valkyries which made it to the playoffs in their inaugural season. Nakase grew up in Orange County.

Jaron-Keawe Sagapolutele is a freshman at UC Berkeley, a 6-3 Hawaii native (James Campbell High School, Ewa Beach, Hawaii), and the Golden Bears' star starting left-handed quarterback. He is the first true freshman to start since 2013. He is impressed with the Cal fanbase, the new brand CALOHA and "The Calgorithm" (the overarching term defining Cal's irreverent community of fans whose self-deprecating brand of interneting has generated fresh enthusiasm about the Cal football program.) His brother John is a sophomore quarterback for Portland state.

V.C. an AAPI senior management analyst joined other Manhattan Beach employees suing the city for allowing a hostile work environment which discriminates against employees of color, women and older employees. The lead plaintiff, Erika King, a Latina, allege that the public works and human resources directors and city engineer punish those reporting government corruption or mismanagement, i.e. whistle blowers. On August 1, 2025, Judge Holly Fujie granted V.C.'s request to remain anonymous in the lawsuit in which she says she was discriminate against and harassed based on her race, gender, depression disability and harassed by subordinates. Her work environment was so intolerable that she resigned. V.C. told the judge that if her claims were public, that disclosure would threaten her mental wellbeing and future employment prospects and that if she could not use a pseudonym, she would not join the lawsuit. The judge ruled that V.C.'s need for anonymity outweighs any prejudice to the city as well as to the public's interest in knowing her identity.

Davis' Arts and Cultural Affairs program allocated its California Arts Council's California Creative Corps grant to artist-led activities building belonging and fostering dialog, inclusion and community connection in Davis - PowerUp! Summer Program (for marginalized 4th-6th graders), Building Belonging Listening Sessions (for Davis neighborhood conversations), "It's Your Voice" Podcast (featuring community leaders discussing social justice and fostering belonging), and an "As We Recall" Reading (original play about the Woodland school board recall.)

NY Assemblyman Zohran Mamdani (33) will be sworn in as mayor of New York on January 1st. In the course of his campaigning, racism and political bickering arose - Jeremy Fistel (44, Plano, Texas) was arraigned September 18, 2025 on a 22-count indictment for making death and Islamophobic threats by voicemail and written messages to Mamdani earlier this year. Trump called Mamdani a communist. His opponents – former Governor Andrew Cuomo and incumbent Mayor Eric Adadms and Curtis Sliwa – all cast themselves as moderate alternatives to Mamdani. Mamdani identifies himself as a democratic socialist and wants government to reduce economic disparity and offer free bus service, universal child care and a freeze on rent increases for rent-regulated apartments.

Suni Lee, the 2021 Tokyo Olympics all around gold medalist in gymnastics was honored with a statue installed in a lakefront site in Phalen Regional Park in St. Paul, Minnesota, Lee's hometown. It was stolen on July 30, 2025, the base was later

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YOLO COUNTY DAY OF REMEMBRANCE

THURSDAY FEBRUARY 19, 2026 - FREE

•Highlights of Rachel Maddow's Burn Order Podcast (4:15pm)

•K-12 Poster Contest - Theme: Save Our Constitution/No Kings 4:15-5pm ($50 prize, all categories). Bring it on Feb. 19 by 4:15pm to the Theatre!

•Kintsukuroi movie (5pm)

Davis Veterans Memorial Theatre - 203 E. 14th St, Davis

It took 40 years to find proof of the US Army's lies about "military necessity" which justified the incarcerating 125,000 Japanese Americans during WWII (2/3 were US citizens). Today we are facing the same government agenda - to demonize immigrants and refugees based on the government's fabricated falsehoods and the belief that America is only for white people.

Rachel Maddow's podcast Burn Order highlights actual WWII evidence of the government's lies

Kintsukori, directed by SF filmmaker Kerwin Berk, depicts about the incarceration of a Japanese American family from San Francisco with an all volunteer cast and crew (many UCD alumni) with outstanding visuals. It is a 2 hour 10 minute film, so be on time! Awarded 2024 Sweden Film Award-Best Feature Film; WRPN.TV Gold Award for Screenplays; Silicon Valley Asian American Pacific Filmfest 2025-Best Feature Film.

Poster contest - We encourage our youth to find their voice in this madness.

AAPI suicide survivor is using his story to help others

Continued from Page 7

understood. People listened without judgment. I left thinking, there is support out there, and people who
Continued from Page 7

care."

Community turned out to be a powerful medicine. He joined a men's group, a young-professionals group, even a hiking group. "These weren't surface-level friendships," he says. "People wanted to know the good, the bad, and the hard — and they followed up."

What helped, day to day?

Therapy gave Tran one-on-one space. Medication helped steady him enough to do the work.

At church, the routine was practical: check-ins, confidential sharing, prayer, and accountability. "We'd ask if anyone needed support, pray, and check back next time," he says. "It made it easier not to isolate."

Language, family, and the AAPI context

In Tran's immigrant household, survival crowded out feelings. "It wasn't, 'How are you feeling?' It was 'What did you eat?'" he says. The result: little vocabulary for distress, and a lot of hiding.

That's why language choices matter, especially in media. He prefers "died by suicide" and "suicide attempt" over "committed suicide," which frames a health crisis as a crime. He also argues for using the actual word suicide (rather than euphemisms) to normalize help-seeking.

"If the words we have equal shame or crime, people won't talk," Tran says.

He's seen slow change: more friends embracing therapy; more conversations about intergenerational trauma in families shaped by war, migration, and long hours. Some gaps remain. He checks in with his sister often now; with his parents, mental-health talk is still hard. "When the only term your elders know implies hospitalization," he says, "you can see why."

If you or someone you know is struggling, call 988 or text HOME to 741741 for free, confidential support 24/7.

First line: "Thanks for telling me. I'm here. Can we talk about how long this has felt this way and what's been hardest?"

Why it works: You gather information and help them feel seen and heard — often the first time they've said it out loud.

Walk with them: If they're open, call 988 together or text HOME to 741741. Follow up: "How did that go? If it wasn't helpful, let's try something else."

Don'ts: Don't minimize ("you'll be fine"), don't interrogate for graphic details, and don't disappear after the first conversation.

Volunteering, visibility, and what still surprises him

Through AFSP, Tran helps bring Talk Saves Lives presentations and resource tables to community events. The surprise? "Many people still don't know 988 exists," he says. Even volunteers ask: What do I say if someone opens up to me?

"That's why language and basic steps matter," he says. "It gives people a way to start." He also names a gendered silence: "Men are half the population but represent a large share of suicide deaths. For AAPI men, talking about feelings can feel like going against the grain. It's hard at first; but it gets easier, and it can change your life."

"You don't have to do life alone," Tran says. "Talking with a safe person might feel unnatural at first — but it's a first step toward healing for you, and for your family."

Currents passings

K.W. Lee died on March 8th at age 96 in Sacramento. Lee stood for truth and challenged injustices throughout his career as a journalist at the Sacramento Union, The Korea Times English Edition, the Koreatown Weekly in LA, The Charleston Gazette (W. Virginia) and Kingsport Times-News (Virginia). Known for his 120 articles on Chol Soo Lee, the Korean American convicted of a 1973 SF Chinatown murder but released in 1983 when the conviction, based on false identification and stereotyping, was overturned. Referred to as the "Godfather of Asian American Journalism" he was enshrined in the Newseum (Washington DC) Newspaper Hall of Fame. Having a rare spirit and cantankerous personality with colorful descriptive language, K.W. Lee will be missed and was a great fan of Currents!

Dr. Lisa Moon, a founder of Community Asian Theatre of the Sierra (CATS) passed unexpectedly in June 2024 on the CATS fieldtrip to Manzanar. A Grass Valley optometrist, Moon was a theatre enthusiast extraordinaire and with Jeannie Wood, founded CATS 30 years ago. CATS most recent productions included Snow Falling on Cedars (2024) and Where the Mountain Meets the Moon (2025). The box office at the Nevada Theater (Nevada City) has been renamed in her honor.

CAPITAL says farewell. With the passing of its founder Dr. Sonney Chong DDS, the Council of Asian Pacific Islanders Together for Advocacy and Leadership decided to dissolve using remaining funds to award five dentistry student scholarships. At CAPITAL's last event on June 7, 2025, a full panel of Sacramento law enforcement agencies told the group that AAPI victims need to continue report hate incidents and crimes because the information could either lead to perpetrators being arrested and charged, or help solve and strengthen cases of similar crimes by the same perpetrator(s).

Lich Vu, 72, died in October 2025 from receiving significant injuries from an Oklahoma City police officer responding to the October 27, 2024 car accident in Oklahoma City; Vu also had cancer. There was an argument between Vu and other driver before the police arrived. Officer Joseph Gibson responded to the scene and argued with Vu about signing a ticket - Vu hit the officer's vest and gestured to the officer to stop talking; Gibson took Vy to the ground and Vy suffered a traumatic brain bleed and had been bedridden since the incident. Gibson was charged with assault and battery which was dropped December 2024 when Attorney General Gentner Drummond intervened. A petition demanding that Drummond return the prosecutorial decision to the local District Attorney, all investigation files be released to the public (including body cam footage and internal affairs findings), and supporting legislation to limit the Attorney General's authority to dismiss police use-of-force cases gathered more than 4,500 signatures. A federal civil rights case is pending.

Esparto fireworks explosion

On July 1, 2025, at 5:52 pm, the Devastating Pyrotechnics fireworks explosion killed seven people, destroyed the storage warehouse at CR 86A and CR 23 in Esparto and started the 80 acre Oakdale Fire. The blasts were felt as far away as Vacaville and Woodland. The Esparto farm is zoned only for agricultural use, but public records show that Yolo County knew as of 2021 that pyrotechnic storage operations were there.

On July 8, 2025, the Yolo County Board of Supervisors declared a Local Emergency. Cal Fire, Cal OSHA and Yolo County District Attorney's Office are investigating the incident. The California Attorney General's office declined to take the investigation stating that the local agencies, despite conflicts of interest, have the capacity to do the review.

July 2025, a week after the blast, a San Francisco home at 477 Second Avenue in the Inner Richmond neighborhood was searched, the home of Jack Lee an employee of Devastating Pyrotechnics was searched. It has not been disclosed if anything was taken during that search.

On August 11, 2025, the Yolo County Public Health Officer declared a health emergency to facilitate review whether properties impacted by the explosion may pose health risks - the surrounding environment (soil, water, air and vegetation) is to be tested and decisions made for any mitigation and remediation needed (e.g. soil removal, water filtration, or targeted cleanup.)

Devastating Pyrotechnics principals include Kenneth Chee (owner, SF), Jack Lee (SF), Neil Justin Li (general manager, SF) and And Gary Chan Jr. Those who died include: Li (41, SF), Angel Mathew Voller (18, Stockton), Carlos Javier Rodriguez-Mora (43, San Andreas), Joel Jeremias Melendez (28, Sacramento), Christopher Goltiao Bocog (45, SF), Jesus Manaces Ramos (18, San Pablo) and Jhony Ernesto Ramos (22, San Pablo.) The other company using the facility was BlackStar Fireworks (owner Craig Cutright).

October 27, 2025 - The local investigation led to an October 27th search of an East LA home of Louis Acosta. The law enforcement search prompted causing an evacuation of the neighborhood (including a high school) and confiscation of "a large cache of fireworks" and other explosive materials.

Even before the July 1, 2025 explosion, Cal Fire had an eye on these principals – On May 2, Cal Fire Arson and Bomb Inspector Nick Schroeder on an anonymous tip inspected a City of Commerce warehouse and found fireworks belonging to C. On May 21, 2025, 100,000 pounds of illegal fireworks were seized from that warehouse.

Litigation filed so far:

- Etta James Farming company is suing the fireworks company Devastating Pyrotechnics, BlackStar Fireworks, their owners and the Esparto property owners Yolo County Sheriff's Office (YCSO) Lt. Sam Machado and Tammy Matsumura Machado. Local conflicts of interests include Machado being a lieutenant with YCSO, Cutright being a volunteer firefighter for Esparto Fire Protection District, Esparto Fire Chief Curtis Lawrence (who signed off on permits for the companies which had arranged free fireworks shows for the community in recent years), and Yolo County Sheriff Tom Lopez having been fire chief of the neighboring Madison Fire Protection District.

- December 1, 2025 - Devastating Pyrotechnics LLC/Chee was fined $221,000 by the CA Dept of Industrial Relations' Occupational Safety and Health Division (Cal/OSHA) for 15 violations (3 directly related to the explosion - failure to provide an emergency action plan to employees, train employees what to do in an emergency, apprise employee of fire hazards at the site and when handling and storing pyrotechnic materials.) The citation noted that Chee did not cooperate with the Cal/OSHA investigation.

- December 17, 2025 - Del Norte County Sheriff Office executed a search warrant on December 12th at a Crescent City residence which resulted in the arrest of Ronald Botelho III, 29, for felony possession of destructive devices near/ in a residential area and child endangerment and multiple related misdemeanors. His bail was set at $500,000. More than 100 pounds of illegal fireworks were seized.

- December 23, 2025 – Yolo County received a dozen multimillion dollar administrative claims some alleging a "county cover-up." The claims filed by victims' families and property owners, if not settled within 45 days, allows parties to file civil lawsuits. The claims also identify the Esparto Fire Protection District, Cal Fire-Office of the State Fire Marshall, property owners Sam Machado, Tammy Matsumura Machado, and Reiko Matsumura, Yolo County Sheriff Tom Lopez, Yolo Co chief building official Scott Doolittle and a county hazmat specialist Moushumi Hasan as possibly sharing responsibility for the damages.

The Esparto property includes four parcels of 20 acres held in a revocable family trust; the Matsumuras are fourth generation Esparto residents.

Preliminary findings showed that the companies were licensed with the state but did not have permits to store or manufacture fireworks at the Esparto property. Tammy and her sister Reiko inherited the 63 acre property from their father Jerry Matsumura, a third-generation Esparto farmer who was also a local fire commissioner and member of

Currents Faces, Places

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found in Lake Phalen, but the 50 lb brass statue is still missing. Installed on July 30, 2023, the statue was designed by Seexeng Lee, a Hmong American from Minneapolis. Information leading to the recovery should be forwarded to sppd-eastinvestigations@stpaul.gov

Jasmine Ikeda , 32, Orcas Island WA/Hawaii born, was with the Global Sumud Flotilla, a coalition of 40 boats attempting to break Israel's blockade on Gaza. The Flotilla intended to create a humanitarian corridor for delivery of aid directly to Gaza's shores when on October 1st the Flotilla was intercepted by Israeli naval forces. The flotilla members – 460 from 4+ countries - were transported from the Port of Ashdod to Ketziot Detention Center (30km from the Egyptian border). Ikeda was detained with 22 other Americans. Ikeda was released after 5 days in the Israeli prison.

Hung Cao, a former US Senatorial candidate (Virginia race against Tim Kaine) was nominated by Trump in February to be Under Secretary of the Navy, second in command. Cao's appointment was confirmed by the US Senate (vote 52-45) on October 1, 2025. Cao is a retired special operations veteran, graduated from the US Naval Academy in 1996 and specialized in explosive ordinance disposal and diving. retired from the Navy as a captain.

Currents crime blotter

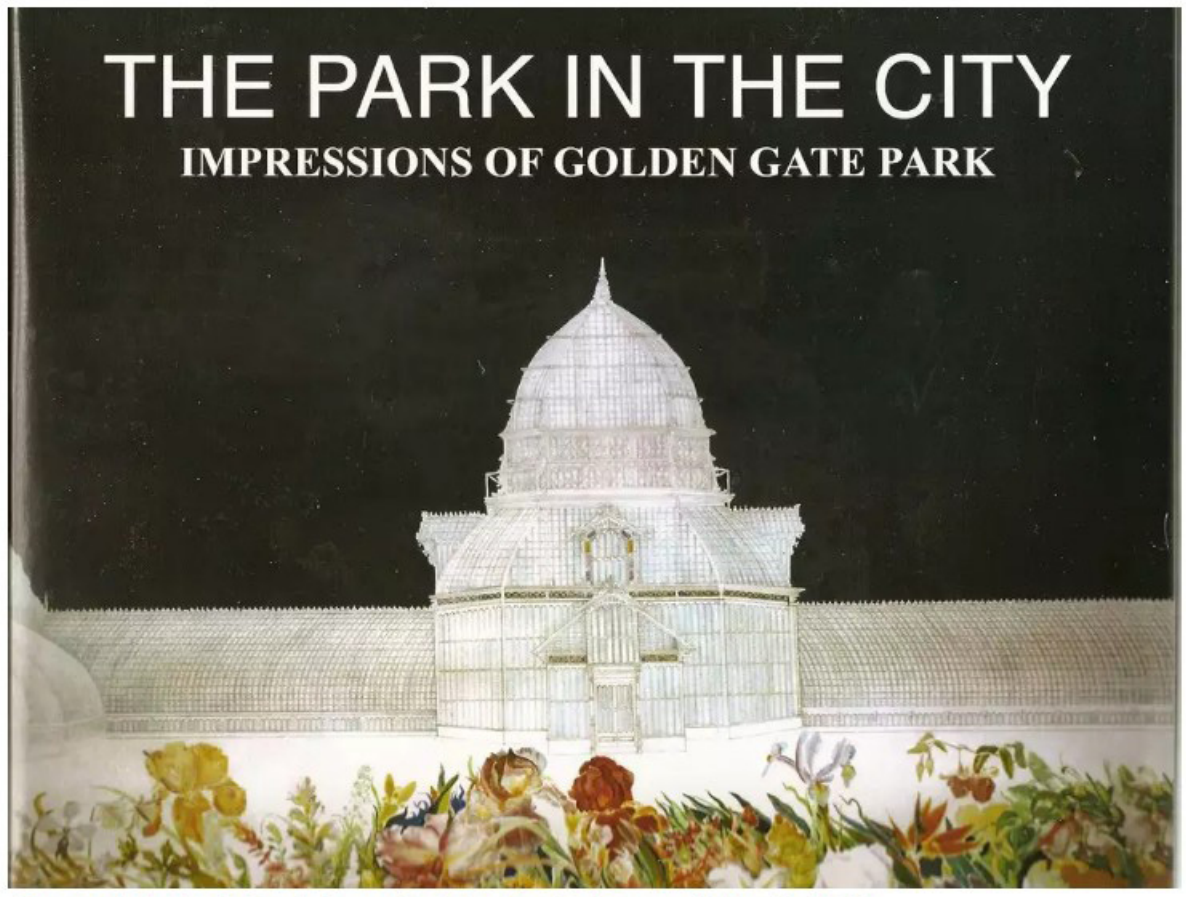
Somboun Sayasane, 75, was found murdered on April 17th off Old Toll Road in Placerville. A Laotian painter known for his California landscapes and SF monuments went on to teach at the de Young museum and publish his work in 2005 – The Park in the City: Impressions of Golden Gate Park. Sayasane had disappeared from his South Sacramento home on December 26, 2024. His roommate Benjamin Dougherty, 31, was arrested for Sayasane's death and Dougherty's father Robert, 74, for helping to conceal the body. Benjamin Dougherty has a preliminary hearing scheduled for March 3, 2026 in Sacramento County Superior Court (25FE007056); Charges against Robert are not on the court website.

Kai-Ji Adam Lo, 30, was arrested April 26, 2025 and charged with eight counts of second-degree murder – Vancouver, British Columbia prosecutors say he rammed his Audi Q7 SUV into the Filipino Lapu Lapu Festival crowd and killed eleven with many more injured. Bystanders held him at the crime scene until the police arrived to arrest him. Lo is undergoing mental fitness hearing to determine if he is fit to stand trial. Prior to the attack, he had requested to reduce his antipsychotic medication.

Mahendra Patel was arrested in Marietta GA, accused of trying to snatch a toddler from a shopping cart. After six weeks in custody, in May, he was allowed to post a $10,000 bond and was released with charges pending. Indian American activists are asking the district attorney to dismiss the charges because the Walmart surveillance video shows nothing other than Patel preventing a little girl from falling from her mother's motorized shopping scooter. The mother called 9-1-1 30 minutes later and accused Patel of a crime. Local advocates believe this incident is a "Karen" response; "Karen" is a pejorative slang term referring to a middle-class woman perceived as entitled or excessively demanding, using her white and class privilege to demand their own way. It was popularized in the Central Park birdwatching incident (2020) in which a black birdwatcher/photographer male was accused of being threatening to a white woman who allowed her dog to run unleased in Central Park. Patel's case was dismissed in August.

Daniel Park (32, Kent, Washington) was charged with supplying 270 pounds of ammonium nitrate, explosives used in the May 17, 2025 bombing of the Palm Springs American Reproductive Center (fertility clinic.) His alleged co-defendant Guy Edward Bartkus (25, Twenty-Nine Palms, CA) died in the car bomb explosion; four others (not clinic staff or patients) were injured by the 250-yard debris field. Park was found dead on June 24th in his LA Metropolitan Detention Center jail cell where he had been held since June 13; his attorney says it was an apparent suicide. Park had been arrested in and deported by Poland and returned to the US for prosecution. Authorities believe Park and Bartkus shared extreme anti-natalist ideology (limit/reduce world population), pro-mortalism (one's own death will ease world suffering) and anti-abortion ideology.

Amadeo Quindara, 73 and Filipino American, was attacked on May 30, 2023 by his neighbor Christian Lentz while sitting in his Las Vegas garage. The day before Lentz hold Quindara to learn English; Quindara and his friends were conversing in Tagalog. Quindara suffered a brain bleed, memory loss and permanent injuries. Lentz pled guilty but while mentally ill to hate crime charges. He apologized to Quindara on July 21th and on August 4th was sentenced to 90 days jail with 5 years of probation, 3 years of treatment and an order to pay $7000 in restitution to the Quindara family. If he violates probation, he faces 12-30 years in prison.



Sayasane's book of 57 paintings of Golden Gate Park was published in 2005.
Somboun Sayasane

NYPD Detective Dedarul Islam (36) – On July 28, 2025, Islam was shot in a Manhattan office building at 345 Park Avenue. The building houses the NFL headquarters and the Blackstone investment firm. The gunman had a AR-15, but used a short-barreled rifle with a stabilizing brace. Detective Islam, Wesley LePatner, Alande Etienne and Julia Hyman were killed and a fifth person (NFL employee) was wounded. The shooter Shane Devon Tamura, 27 was born in Hawaii, grew up in Santa Clarita and Granada Hills, then worked security in Las Vegas) of Las Vegas, drove his BMW with his weapons (also including a revolver with ammunition and magazines) from Nevada and wearing body armor killed in the lobby and 33rd floor of the 44-story building. Islam was Bangladeshi American with four years of NYPD service, and was working security in the building at the time. Trump recently weakened laws around stabilizing braces, short barreled rifles, deregulated silences and has offered to sign national law to allow permit-less concealed carry. Tamura took his own life on the 33rd floor. He had psychiatric holds in Nevada in 2022 and 2024 and claimed that he suffered from chronic traumatic encephalopathy (CTE), a neurodegenerative disease resulting from contact sports. The NY medical examiner confirmed Tamura's CTE

Parampreet Singh, 59 of Davis, pled guilty in September to federal drug conspiracy charges (cocaine, heroin, opium, ketamine) in Toronto Canada. His Davis home was raided in April 2021, his Chevron Extra Mile gas station (Harbor Blvd, WS) was surveilled; Singh was charged with being the leader of the conspiracy. Scheduled to be sentenced on January 27, 2026, he faces a maximum term of life in prison, $10M in fines and already agreed to forfeit $2M. His codefendants include Amadeep Multani (37, Roseville) and Ranvir Singh (42, Sacramento). Their sales volume was in the hundreds of kilograms at a time and their business had connections to Mexico, India, Pakistan, Afghanistan, Germany, US and Canada.

China Initiative-type bill in Congress

On September 10, 2025 the House Appropriations Committee passed by a 34-28 vote a new version of the China Initiative. During Trump 1.0, the China Initiative ran from 2018 to 2022 when Biden terminated the program. The investigations racially profiled Chinese academics as Chinese spies and led to unsuccessful prosecutions of mostly Chinese academics and scientists. "Let us be clear: Congress has a responsibility to protect our national security interests, but the China Initiative did not achieve this goal. Instead, it led to the racial profiling of Asian American and Asian immigrant scientists, perpetuated racist tropes of dual loyalty, and fueled division," a statement from the Congressional Asian Pacific American Caucus opposing the current legislation.

The house bill proposes to: (1) prohibit NASA from hosting any official Chinese visitors to its facilities; (2) requires the Department of Commerce, NASA, and National Science Foundation to report any official travel to China by its employees; (3) Bans universities from using any federal funds in partnership with universities controlled by the Chinese Community Party or People's Republic of China.

The earlier China Initiative-era investigations caused some tragic outcomes:

Jane Wu, Northwestern University (Chicago) had her lab shut down without explanation and the National Institutes of Health (NIH) never accused her of anything. Wu has been researching tumor development and metastasis and neurodegenerative diseases. The university nonetheless continued to punish and isolate her, restricted her funding, assigned her grants to white male colleagues, had her physically removed from her lab and had her forcibly admitted to a psychiatric hospital. She died of suicide two weeks after being released from the hospital.

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Letters to the editor

Hi Currents! Thank you for continuing to cover Kansha History! You are an amazing community resource! Amanda Kim (www.kanshahistory.org)

Hello Currents. I have a change of address. … I've missed reading Currents and forgot to notify you of my address change. Thanks. Howard Iwata

It was wonderful being able to put a face to a name when I met you the other day at ACC! Reminded me to send in a donation to Currents. Your publication has gotten better and I applaud you for your efforts. Keep it up! Sincerely, Gloria Imagire

I networked with Peter Leong when he taught Chinese Studies at UCD and we worked to preserve Chinese American gold rush history. I still have his book "1 Day 1 Dollar about Locke CA."

So, I am a long-time recipient of Currents newspaper and enjoy receiving it for decades here in Folsom. Currents has been the sole AAPI voice of Chinese America and Japanese America for decades. Bless it's continuance.

It is my express wish that when America is officially 250 years on July 4th, 2026 you can reach back to do a centerfold piece in your newspaper recalling some news articles that Peter and few other wrote who are now retired from the Sacramento Bee and other newspapers. Example: Remember Vincent Chin? The Chinese Exclusion Acts and other federal discriminatory acts which President F.D.R officially eliminated after WWII. When Chinese Lunar New Year was recognized as an official holiday and employees could take the holiday off in 2023? [AB 2596 introduced in 2022 was authored/coauthored by 29 assemblymembers andsenators and signed into law by Governor Gavin Newsom. The bill designated Lunar New Year as a state holiday which state employees can elect to take off in exchange for personal holiday credit, vacation, annual leave or compensatory time off.)

How about a brief synopsis of APSEA's 50 years as organization – when it began to form and its legacy history. A brief history of Sacramento Chinese Community Chinatown and when it was torn down for redevelopment and the failure of it. Mention the Chinese Confucius Temple becoming the community hub for banquet dinners events. The Sun Yat Sen library building - the reason why it was built and the purpose served. People like Tom Chin, Dr. Herbert Yee DDS, Jimmie Yee, Roger Fong (retired Sacramento county assessor), Chung Mei Veterans of Foreign Wars Post 9358, Yick Chong Wong's family store and their restaurant Hong Kong Lum, Frank Fat and his restaurant and relationship as waiter to Hong Kong Lum. The various Sacramento family benevolent associations – past and present – where they were located and which are still existing. Include CACS, CAPITAL (Sonney Chong), Chinese Sports Association and others still here like OCA (Eng).

Mention Riverside Buddhist Annual Bazaar an once a year tradition and the other smaller Japanese Buddhist Churches in Sacramento County's unincorporated areas. Mention Elk Grove, Courtland, Folsom. Chinese American gold rush towns. Include how when Japanese/Japanese Americans returned to Sacramento County after internment camp that Sacramento's Japantown was still existing. Mention Japanese restaurants, grocery and other stores that still exist today. Chinese American and Japanese are scattered to Elk Grove, Folsom and other local areas like Davis, Woodland, Yolo to Placer County, El Dorado County today. Just give mini blurbs, news articles and general reports. Like a collective memory editorial.

How many years Currents Community newspaper survived is a testament to you all for keeping us in today's AAPI community informed. Thank you. It makes me feel less of a lone orphan these days. I appreciate you all and what you do to keep Currents existence, networking, liaising and teamworking out to Sacramento, Yolo counties and beyond to be volume 38!!! Wow congrats to you all.

We cannot let US President D. J Thump eradicate the various American communities out of existence by silencing all our voices and decide "who get to be an American?" And then try to erase us. We need to preserve and acknowledge historic places, monuments, legacies, not "… sanitize history's real images." … Trump wants to create this country "into" his own conceived images. King Trump the dictator and tyrant cannot defeat people in all 50 states plus territories! We out number him, his faux Cabinet and family including Elon Musk (ugh). That includes Trump and the "anti-semitism policies. He should not let our tax dollars pay for his birthday party that ruin Washington DC public streets. Washington DC had to use city tax money to fix them! The White House not a club house for his offsprings or to be used as he sees fit!

President Donald J Trump should not be using his human puppets to shut down or deactivate minority program funding, federal agencies that serve to support many programs to assist minorities such as Blacks and Indigenous American natives. To eliminate the 50 US state Departments of Education. Our Country was founded on free education for everyone in the US! Shame on President D.T. Trump who has no morality, no ethics and possesses only a wealthy warped, naïve and negative distorted limited view of everything. He never had any experience being part of the fabric of life in America. He's corrupt, tainted, spoiled and an intimidating corporate mogul failure as human. He does anything he wants and treats our government like a hostile takeover leaving misery and pain in whatever he undertakes. From a poor down and out millionaire. He's now a billionaire? How did that happen? I am now probably on his "hit" list to be erased as a female protecting American born ethnic minorities from a small California city just by speaking my mind in writing.

President Donald J. Trump is no leader of Americans. He's leading the USA to hell and purgatory every second he alienates USA allies and countries vulnerable to our enemies like Russia, Communist China and Middle East who despite America.

Even first lady … insulted England's United Kingdon's King Charles III and the Queen Consort at the September 2025 state dinner. The Royal Couple with Prince William (heir to the throne) and Princes Catherine were insulted by Melania Trump and Tiffiany Trump Boulos by showing too much "flesh, skin and over sexy formal evening gowns" – are American designers so ignorant of dress protocols and dressing respectfully in a host foreign country, and ally too! President Trump's jacket sleeves showed his shirt cuffs. Poor shoddy demonstration of Trumps boorish rude manner in a foreign country as his first lady wife did. Being called a "banana by the British press media? She paid about $7,700 for the designer yellow gown worn with a pink or lilac design belt was a total flop and was so low cut to the top of her breasts! The first lady is age 55 years old not age twenty. Her look was embarrassing to America. It was a formal government state business dinner visit! Not a backyard Barbeque Casual event! Melania Trump showed no sensitivity in a conservative and subdue dinner for foreign guests. A definite no show of common sense of protocol and respect while visiting. A folly faux pas to vomit at! What did President DJ Trump and First Lady M. Trump do with the White House protocol advisors? Tiffany Trump Boulos has a clothes design business that's failing! She showed skin of shoulder and did not wear even the elbow formal white gloves! At least she never carried any in her hand.

America is in a decline fashion wise. The First Lady and the Trump adult offsprings only go for sleaze and cheap frill sexual fashions. What a shame! It's no excuse for ignorant obnoxious fashion sloppy, shoddy no taste fashion wearing and mismatching colors worn for fleshy flashing. Sincerely J.C.

Editor: Thank you J.C. for writing that centerfold article that you suggested!

"Last Poll: American Jews overwhelmingly reject Trump" article was an accurate depiction of the American Jewish community. Thanks. N. Rosen

We can fight hate and build community

October 7, 2025 Southern Poverty Law Center

When hate crimes or hate incidents occur, everyone has a stake in ensuring an effective response. Individuals and communities must be prepared. The most recent FBI hate crime report documented near-record-high levels of hate violence in the U.S.

But how should you and your community respond? With October designated by the Southern Poverty Law Center as Hate Crimes Awareness Month, now is the perfect time to consider that question.

Speak up against hate and discrimination

Don't be a bystander to hate. Whether it's in the halls of Congress, your state legislature or city council, a school board meeting, in school, or a casual conversation, bigotry and hateful rhetoric cannot be tolerated. Your voice matters. Hate thrives and is normalized when no one speaks against it.

Support those harmed by hateful language and actions

Hate crimes and hate incidents can instill fear, ignite tensions and divide communities. When developing a response, the voices of those who have been targeted or harmed should be centered. Ensure that psychological and physical safety are being restored in ways that align with their preferences and needs. Together, we must send this message: We condemn the hate, we see the targets of hate, and support all victims.

Pressure leaders — use your power

Elected officials and other community leaders can be important allies. Educate community leaders about the causes and effects of hate. Demand that leaders name the problem and firmly denounce it.

Come together— strengthen your local community

Volunteer, attend local events, and support organizations that bring people together across differences. Support local organizations that are delivering culturally informed direct services to those who have been targeted or harmed. Create diverse coalitions — reach out to allies from places of worship, schools, clubs and other civic groups. Targeted communities must know they are not alone. Extremism thrives in isolation; connection is the antidote.

Report the crime — seek support

If you feel comfortable doing so, report hate crimes to the police. It's understandable that some marginalized or targeted community members — including immigrants, people with disabilities, LGBTQ+ community members, Muslims, Arabs, Middle Easterners, South Asians, and people with limited English-language proficiency — do not feel safe reporting. If you do not feel comfortable speaking directly to police about a potential hate crime incident, seek support and assistance from other local officials, family members and community groups.

Promote prevention

The law is a blunt instrument to confront hate and extremism. Enforcement of federal and state hate crime laws is critical, but insufficient. To mitigate the harm, we must fund, develop and test initiatives designed to combat the root causes of extremism and hate violence. This includes local programs that promote democracy, civics education, comprehensive sexual health education, and digital, media and information literacy initiatives.

Support inclusive education

Demand accurate, honest curricula in your local schools. Community leaders, lawmakers and private businesses must reject efforts to eliminate diversity and equal opportunity programs and efforts to restrict the teaching of accurate history or ban books in schools and libraries. Initiatives such as these tacitly endorse discrimination and hate against Black and Brown communities while allowing manipulative disinformation to flourish.

Educate yourself

Hate speech, discrimination and bigotry can take many forms, including jokes. An informed awareness campaign can effectively unmask hate groups and thwart their outreach. Commit to disrupting hate and intolerance at home, at school, in the workplace and in faith communities. The SPLC's Year in Hate & Extremism 2024 report and other resources on extremism can help expose these groups and their bigotry — and provides policy recommendations to help address their impact.

Reject online hate and know the signs of radicalization

When you see hateful rhetoric forming in any online circles or chats, speak against it and leave. Help young people develop the awareness to identify hateful manipulation and resist it. Use tools designed for parents and caregivers to help understand vulnerabilities, recognize warning signs and develop intervention strategies with young people who may show signs of being pulled into hate-based propaganda and prejudice. Networks of trusted adults can help prevent radicalization.

Still Under Fire: Relentless Racism against AAPI in a Heated Election Year

Stop AAPI Hate's new report: **"Still Under Fire: Relentless Racism against Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders in a Heated Election Year."** The report features findings from Stop AAPI Hate's latest state of anti-AA/PI hate national survey conducted by NORC at the University of Chicago in January 2025. It provides an in-depth look at hate act experiences in 2024, the impacts of hate, needs for support after hate, barriers to reporting hate, and how AA/PI communities are pushing back against hate. The full report is available at www.stopaapihate.org where executive summaries in Chinese (traditional and simplified), Korean, Samoan, and Vietnamese will be available. Stop AAPI Hate is a US based coalition dedicadted to ending racism and discrimination against AAPI people, co-founded in March 2020 during the COVID-19 pandemic by AAPI Equity Alliance, Chinese for Affirmative Action, and SFSU Asian American Studies Department.

The report's key findings:

About half (53%) of AA/PI adults surveyed experienced a hate act in 2024 due to their race, ethnicity, or nationality, similar to the 49% who experienced a hate act in 2023.

Those who faced hate had worse mental health, with 70% of AA/PI adults who experienced hate reporting frequent stress, compared to 49% of those who did not.

Of the AA/PI adults who experienced hate, over three-quarters did not formally report the hate act despite many experiencing a potential hate crime or civil rights violation.

Two-thirds of AA/PI adults participated in activities to reduce or resist racism in 2024.

AAPI adults' activation against hate remains high. 83% of AA/PI adults are concerned about the racial climate; 82% are optimistic about AA/PI power to end racism, and 67% are motivated to get involved in justice and equity efforts.

Recommendations for what policymakers include:

1. Condemn anti-immigrant hate
2. Defendant immigrant communities through policymaking
3. Strengthn state and local civilrights protections
4. Fund AAPI organizations to provide culturally informed care and support

Recommendations for community members:

1. Speak up and report hate acts
2. Prioritize mental health and heaing after hate acts
3. Combat misinformation in the fight against hate
4. Know your rights and stay informed
5. Participate in civic engagement and advocacy

47% of Pacific Islanders have recently experienced

December 17, 2025

Stop AAPI Hate's latest report illustrates impact of widespread racism and discrimination against Pacific Islander people as PI communities continue to face critical systemic inequities

NATIONWIDE — Today, Stop AAPI Hate released a new report, "Unsettled Waters: Anti-Pacific Islander Hate Amid Ongoing Injustice," that shows Pacific Islander (PI) communities in the U.S. are facing widespread racism and discrimination. The report also examines the impact of race-based hate against the backdrop of colonialism, militarization, and forcednturies of colonialism, militarization, forced displacement, and government neglect."

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47% of Pacific Islanders have recently experienced an act of hate

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A number of stories submitted to Stop AAPI Hate's reporting center further illustrate how Pacific Islander people experience acts of hate today. In some instances, PI people report being mistaken for Asian, underscoring how PI communities are too often wrongly conflated with Asian communities:

"I made a random comment on a [social media] post [related to the release of dolphins to the wild] […] Some guy posted that I should be locked up in concrete and do tricks […] This person then proceed[ed] to post that they are reporting me to ICE (I'm a citizen), and I should get my papers ready. Is this 1930s Germany? I fear for my safety with the current ICE raids." – Man, multiracial Pacific Islander (2025)

"A woman attempted to stop me in my tracks and screamed in my face. She said, 'You're wearing a mask? What goes around comes around. Go back to f***ing China.'" –Man, multiracial Pacific Islander (2023)

"I was walking […] when a man walked up to me while I was masked […] He got up close to me and yelled at me, 'Why are you even wearing a mask, your people brought it here,' referring to COVID. I identify as Pacific Islander but this man saw me as Chinese." –Man, CHamoru (2022)

"I was sharing about my home, Guam, and how we are a U.S. territory. A woman stated that my culture is insignificant, I'm a foreigner, and an ingrate." –Woman, CHamoru (2021)

"They called me a Samoan sea n-gg-r outlaw."– Undisclosed gender identity, Polynesian (2021)

The report also highlights systemic inequalities that leave Pacific Islander communities more susceptible to long-term health issues and other harms. For example, a disproportionate number of PI people are recruited to the military or athletic programs, which leave them more susceptible to traumatic brain injuries, chronic pain, PTSD, and other long-term health problems.

"While Pacific Islander communities share commonalities with Asian communities, we are and should be considered distinct for may reasons. Even among PI communities, there are countless differences in cultures, histories, languages, and experiences," said API Advocates Executive Director Isa Kelawili Whalen, who is on Stop AAPI Hate's PI Advisory Council. "Leadership, media, and society at large need to make a stronger effort to evaluate and address the specific challenges and harms Pacific Islander people face. Only then can our communities begin to heal from generations of colonization, militarization, and displacement – and stop acts of hate against us from reoccurring."

Eight Ways to Support Your Employees in Uncertain Times

Uncertainty can be distressing. If you're a manager or leader, here's how you can help your people navigate it.

By Shanna B. Tiayon

Greater Good Magazine, August 7, 2025

Employees who usually get along well are blowing up at each other. Managers are reporting that employees are having emotional outbursts in meetings and they're not sure how to respond.

That was the start of my call with a chief human resources officer (CHRO) at a reputable nonprofit recently. They reached out looking for resources to support what seemed like a rapidly declining workplace culture. Teams weren't working together as well as they used to, employees weren't performing at their usual level, and managers were at a loss about what to do. Something was off.

I reminded the CHRO that they've been here before. The culprit? Uncertainty.

When there's uncertainty, distress tends to follow. Our brains are hardwired for certainty. Evolutionarily speaking, predictability was what kept us alive, and our amygdala can perceive uncertainty as a threat, which kicks off the stress response. That was what the CHRO was describing to me.

This nonprofit's experience is not unique. In my work as an employee well-being consultant at Yes Wellbeing Works, I field numerous calls, emails, and inquiries like this, especially during times of heightened uncertainty. A few years ago, it was the pandemic. At other times, it's been related to financial crises within organizations. More recently, it's been the shifting political climate, resulting in unpredictability, financial uncertainty, job loss, and anti-immigration rhetoric. These forces don't just affect businesses—they're potentially felt by employees on professional and personal levels.

If you're a manager or organizational leader, you may be feeling similar to this CHRO. You might not be really sure what to do or what is within your locus of control. And while, yes, much of what is happening now may not be fully within your control, from our work and research at Yes Wellbeing Works, we know that the relationship employees have with their manager is one of the strongest factors affecting their overall well-being in the workplace.

That's why I'm pulling from my seven years of consulting and training to offer some guidance on how to respond to employee distress related to uncertainty—both reactively, in the moment, and proactively, over the long run.

What is employee distress?

What do I mean when I say "distress"? I'm talking about responses in our body and mind to experiences of chronic stress. Because the neurological stress response fills our body with hormones, impacting not only our brain but other biological functions, its presence can materialize in both physical and psychological ways.

External signs might include lethargy, lack of focus, withdrawal, irritability, jitteriness, problems remembering, frequent self-criticism, avoidance, impatience, indecisiveness, and more. If you as a manager are seeing these kinds of shifts in normal behavior, that may be an indication of distress.

Yes, employee mental distress can hurt performance. It's true, there's no denying it—and it's not too much different from physical distress (e.g., a cold, broken leg, stomachache, etc.), which can of course also influence performance.

The challenge, especially in high-performance workplace cultures, is that managers tend to only see the performance implications of the distress and attempt to resolve it with traditional performance management tools: disciplinary action, rewards and recognition, and sometimes even separation. Unfortunately, none of that addresses the root cause of the problem in situations of uncertainty.

That's why, when presented with potential signs of distress, you have to be willing to ask: "Could there be something else going on?" Asking that question invites a pause and allows you to choose a different course of action other than performance management. Instead, you're employing a mental health perspective. To be clear, the goal of both perspectives is the same: to get the employee back on track. The process is just different, and it's a question of choosing the right tools.

Tools for reactive responding

What might this look like in practice, in the face of an immediate challenge?

Let's say you have an employee, Elizabeth, who you've worked with for the past three years. Federal funding cuts have hit your organization hard, but so far communication to employees about how that will affect them and their work has been sparse. You also know that Elizabeth's partner is a federal employee.

Typically, Elizabeth does great work: proactively collaborates with colleagues, takes the lead on key projects, and for the past year has been the chairperson of the organization's social committee, planning after-work activities for employees.

But over the past week, Elizabeth has been logging on late to meetings, and when she does arrive, she frequently yawns throughout the meeting (lethargy). She's missing deadlines

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Uncertain Times

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(trouble focusing, problems remembering), and she didn't show up to the last social event she planned (lack of motivation, withdrawal). During a meeting, a colleague questioned her about a report that she hadn't turned in yet, and she snapped at them (irritability).

Clearly, there's been a shift in Elizabeth's behavior. So, what should you do? Here are a few immediate steps to consider taking:

1. Check in with yourself. While the focus of this article is about providing support to employees, I want to recognize the emotional needs of managers, as well. Prior to offering support, check in with yourself, assess if you have the psycho-emotional bandwidth to offer support to your employee. Here's a one-minute video I did during the pandemic walking you through a brief checking-in exercise:

If you don't have it in you, it's OK; identify another resource in the organization who can carry forward the below steps (e.g., HR, a dotted line manager, team lead, etc.).

2. Initiate a conversation of support while reducing reputational risks. Contrary to traditional performance management tools, often rooted in discipline, starting with support is a potentially more helpful alternative, in this case. If you notice signs of distress in employees, you want to initiate a conversation of support while at the same time reducing reputational risks for them.

One of the main reasons employees do not talk about mental health challenges in the workplace is stigma and the erroneous association between mental distress and incompetence. Nobody wants to be perceived as though they can't do their job, so making sure you address perceptions about reputational risks is important.

You first want to make sure the employee has the bandwidth for the conversation, so I suggest setting up some time on their calendar for a one-on-one; if you're in the office together, going for coffee can be a nice alternative. Once in the allotted time for the conversation, your opener should have three parts: the objective facts, plus reduction of reputational risks, plus statement of concern. So you might say something like this:

Elizabeth, I noticed a shift in how you're showing up in the workplace lately, you missed a few deadlines, you seem more tired—and yesterday you snapped at Paul in the meeting. I know this is not like you, and I want to check in.

3. Create space for the employee to respond. Once you finish your conversation opener, now it's time to pause and listen. When listening, you are doing so for several reasons: to see if the employee is willing to engage with you, to potentially understand the root cause of the observed behavior, and as a form of support.

During times of uncertainty, listening to better understand the root cause of the observed behavior can not only help you to support Elizabeth, but also to aggregate sentiments you're hearing across your employees, as a potential indicator that a broader sweeping form of support may be necessary (more on that below, under tools for responding proactively). Listening can also serve as a form of support by reducing feelings of isolation and demonstrating care through active listening.

Please note that it's not uncommon for employees to refuse to engage, for various reasons. Your goal is not to force them to open up to you, but to express your support of them and give them the opportunity to discuss what's going on if they choose to do so. If they do refuse to engage this time, you can always try to initiate a conversation in the future if the signs of distress persist.

4. Offer active support. Let's say Elizabeth is open to engaging with you, and she says something like this: "I've been feeling really nervous about the fate of our organization. I can't stop worrying about my job security. Also my family has been really impacted by all of the uncertainty. It's been a really stressful time for me lately."

In this situation, empathic support is great; you can and should say: "I'm sorry to hear that." However, while you may not be able to solve the uncertainty problem, as a manager you are uniquely positioned to offer real, tangible support that could have a meaningful impact on reducing the employee's current stress load.

An often-overlooked form of active support that also allows the employee to maintain their agency is to first ask, "How can I best support you during this period?" Oftentimes employees know what might make a difference to help them through a challenging time.

A few other forms of active support include:

Reprioritizing their workload: removing deliverables that are neither urgent nor important.

Providing resources: allocating additional human, monetary, or tool-based resources to complete a project.

Compensatory time off: most full-time–exempt employees work more than 40 hours a week. Some organizational structures have norms that allow for occasionally providing employees with compensatory time off.

Sharing resources: sharing your organization's behavioral health resources (e.g., Employee Assistance Program, Headspace mental health app, Calm app, etc.) or other resources you know of that can be helpful.

It's important to note that if ever during the conversation you become uncomfortable or hear something that goes beyond simple distress toward, for example, suicidal feelings, then you should consider escalating to your Human Resources professional, especially if it's a matter of safety for the employee or others.

Tools for responding proactively

You don't have to wait until you see signs of employee distress to offer support. Times of uncertainty are great opportunities for managers to practice proactive management skills that can limit distress. By acknowledging that uncertainty can lead to distress, you can try to manage in a way that reduces uncertainty:

1. Over-communicate. Keep communication with your employees frequent and fact-based. Even if there is nothing new to report, you can share that "I don't have an update on XYZ." Why? Because in an absence of information, employees may create their own narratives about what's going on, and typically their narrative is far more sensational or catastrophizing than the reality. Get in front of that with regular communication and information-sharing. Think: snackable bits of information at regular intervals.

2. Address common shared experiences. This brings us back to listening to Elizabeth above. Hopefully, as a manager, you're having regular engagement with all of your employees. During times of uncertainty, you want to listen for patterns of shared experiences that paint the truth of the current workplace dynamic and its impact on employees. When you hear that, call an all-hands for your team and acknowledge it. And if you're willing to be vulnerable, share how the current climate is impacting you. This kind of step helps employees to not feel so isolated, and it communicates, "It's OK to be honest about our experiences."

3. Strengthen psychological safety. At Yes Wellbeing Works, we define psychological safety as "the capacity to show up authentically, make mistakes, push back, and seek support without fear of negative consequences." When psychological safety is high on teams, honesty, help-seeking, and positive group dynamics tend to be higher, too, all of which can buffer employees from distress as they navigate uncertainty.

4. Build self-awareness and self-management. These are foundational emotional intelligence skills. Managers can and do also experience distress. A great way to support your employees during times of uncertainty is to take care of yourself. Specifically by being aware when you may be experiencing distress and then self-managing by seeking support or taking a break, perhaps turning to your own boss. Doing so can model vulnerability and reduce the likelihood that your distress is directed toward employees.

Uncertainty can lead to employee distress, but with the right tools it doesn't have to. And while managers may not be able to resolve the uncertainty, it will only exacerbate the situation in the absence of support, communication, psychological safety, and self-awareness.

Calendar

Jan 10 Sat **2026 Florin JACL-Sacramento Valley 90th Anniversary Luncheon "Strength Through Unity".** 11am-2pm at CSUS Harper Alumni Center (College Town Dr X Stadium Dr, Sac). Honoring Elk Grove USD Board, Julie Thomas, Titus Toyama, Gregory Wada. $50/person. Sponsorships and program ads available. Send check payable to "Florin JACL" to 2530 J St Suite 320, Sac 95816. Info: www.florinjacl.com

Jan 19 Mon **Martin Luther King Day –** 365 event in Sacramento; Davis event at Davis Vet Memorial Theater (10am).

Jan 21 Wed **PACT: Talking with Children about Adoption: Part One.** [Part Two is a free webinar on 2/11.] 11am-1230pm. Register: www.pactaopt.org/events

Jan 22 Thu **My Sister's House 25th Anniversary Gala – Rooted in Strength, Rising in Hope.** Honoring: Sacramento Police Chief Kathy Lester, Molina Healthcare, Derek Ledda, Maharlika Lions Club. 530pm at Greek Orthodox Church (616 Alhambra Blvd, Sac). $200/person. Sponsorships available. Info: www.mysistershouse.net

Jan 23 Fri **1882 Foundation's Community Film Night**. Free (bring your own popcorn.) 6-830pm at Pocket-Greenhaven Library (Robbie Waters branch, 7335 Gloria Dr, Sac). Films: Chicago Café (closing days of the oldest Chinese American restaurant in the US, located in Woodland), Rising (Hanford's China Alley, Taoist Temple Museum after the arson), Voices-Women of the Delta (stories of women of Locke and the Delta). Register: https://tinyurl.com/1882Movie.

Jan 24 Sat **Asian American News's Common Ground Conference and Award Dinner.** Conference topics: deportations, visa restrictions, DEI and housing affordability. 9am-5pm with lunch at the Chinese Culture Center (750 Kearny St 3/F, SF). 5pm/6pm Awards dinner at Great Eastern Restaurant (649 Jackson St SF). Honorees: Don Tamaki (civil rights attorney), Deb Liu (Ember AI founder, former ancestry.com CEO), Dion Lim (journalist) and East West Newspaper former staff. Info: www.asamnews.com

Jan 24 Sat **"Rockin" the Boat: flashbacks of the 1970s Asian Movement** – author and photographer Mary Uyematsu Kao in conversation with Shoshana Arai. Free. 1-2pm at J-Sei (1285 66th St, Emeryville) RSVP t.ly/UtlfE.

Jan 25 Sun **American River Conservancy: Capturing Wakamatsu: A Poetry Walk & Workshop**. 2pm at Wakamatsu Tea and Silk Farm Colony (348 Highway 49, Coloma/Gold Hill/Placerville). Explore the farmhouse, barn and scenic landscapes with poets Taylor Graham and Katy Brown, then write a poem inspired by what you discover. Info: Julie Allen, 530/622-1224.

Jan 30 Fri **Fred Korematsu Day.** Korematsu (his birthday), Min Yasuo, and Gordon Hayabayashi were all convicted of WWII crimes; their convictions were overturned when it was discovered that the federal government and military deliberately withheld information from the US Supreme Court.

Feb 7 Sat **Chinese New Year Culture Assn 2026 The Year of the Horse, Chinese New Year Celebration.** 10am-5pm at Luther Burbank High School (3500 Florin Rd, Sac). $15/adults, $5/children under 12. Free parking. Tickets at www.cnyca.net

Feb 14 Sat **Northern California JACL Time of Remembrance "Preserving History."** 1pm at California Museum (1020 O St, Sac). Speakers: Naomi Ostwald Kawamura (Densho Executive Director), Rev Duncan Ryuken Williams (USC Professor, Ireicho project founder). Info: www.nctor.org. "When communities unite to protect memory, it cannot be erased." Naomi Kawamura

Feb 14 Sat **Chinese New Year Celebration in Locke**. Noon-4pm in Locke (13916 Main St, Locke). Free admission. Free parking. Info: www.locke-foundation.org

Feb 17, 2026 Tuesday – LUNAR NEW YEAR, YEAR OF THE HORSE

Feb 19 Thu **EO 9066 was signed by President Roosevelt** authorizing the Army to clear 125,000 Japanese Americans from the West Coast for the duration of WWII.

Feb 19 Thu **Yolo County Day of Remembrance.** Showing of Kintsukuoi and poster contest winners. Free, Davis Veterans Memorial Theatre (203 East 14th St, Davis) [See Page 13]

Feb 20-22 **I Am An American – Nisei Soldier Experience Traveling Exhibit – National Opening Weekend.** This exhibit is on a 5 year journey to 11 cities to educate the public about the extraordinary heroism of Japanese American WWII Nisei soldiers. The loyalty and patriotism of 33,000 men and women who served in the US Army will be presented from the perspective of the Nisei Soldiers. Exhibit opens Feb 20-22, MIS Historic Learning Center at Presidio SF; Hospitality venue - Feb 20-22 at Hyatt Kabuki Hotel; Program – "Salute to Service : The Nisei Soldier Tribute" 530pm at Palace of Fine Arts Theater SF (Gen. Erick Shinseki, David Ono, Tammy Call, Christine Sato-Yamazaki, Faith Ako); Panels: Feb 21 10am "Japanese Americans and Baseball"; Feb 22 10am "Journey of the I Am American: The Nisei Soldier Experience Traveling Exhibit" and 2pm "Family Perspective: Personal Stories and Objects in the Nisei Soldier Exhibit." Register: nvnvets.org/exhibit

Mar 16, 2021 Atlanta Spa Massacre Robert Long shot and killed 8 people, 6 of whom were AAPI women, at 3 Asian-owned spas in Atlanta. The attack exposed the intersection of racism, misogyny and xenophobia. The attacked occurred during the uptick of anti AAPI hate during the COVID-19 pandemic. Long was sentenced to life in prison without parole plus an additional 35 years.

April 29, 1992 Sa-I-Gu (Korean 4-29) – After 4 white police officers were found not guilty of charges for beating Rodney King at that car stop, the riot in South LA resulted in Korean Americans suffering about half of the $850 million in property damages.

May 3, 1982 Thong Hy Huynh stabbed to death on the Davis High School campus. Jay Pierman, then 16, was convicted in criminal court of voluntary manslaughter as an adult and sentenced to 6 years in the California Youth Authority. On the day of Huynh's funeral, a "White Student Union" leaflet was found on the school campus blaming immigrants for taking jobs away from white people.

May 6-7 **APSEA: 2026 State of Belonging: Workforce Equity Symposium - Fifty Years Forward: Advancing Equity, Empowering Change.** Be part of a movement that uplifts diverse voices and cultivates leaders who drive systemic change across state service. Engage with thought leaders, building meaningful connections, empower your growth. May Lee Building (651 Bannon St, Sac). Info: apsea.eeodei.symposium@gmail.com

May 17 Sun **Asian Pacific Culture Fest** by Creative Space and Sacramento Asian Pacific Cultural Village. Location: District 56 (8230 Civic Center Dr, Elk Grove). Info: @asianpacificculturefest

June 19, 1982 Vincent Chin was beated with baseball bats in a McDonald parking lot in Detroit MI. The two white men Ronald Ebens and Michael Nitz, unemployed auto workers, believed Chin was Japanese and used anti-AAPI racial slurs as they attacked Chin who died 4 days later. Eben and Nitz accepted plea bargains reducing charges from second degree murder to manslaughter and Judge Chales Kaufman sentenced both to 3 years probation, $3000 fines, but no jail time claiming that he was making the punishment fit the criminal, not the crime. The Ebens' first federal civil rights conviction was overturned; the second trial resulted in acquittal of all charges. After a civil lawsuit Nitz was ordered to pay $50,000, Ebens to pay $1.5M but he stopped making payments

June 30-July 5 **PACT Camp 2025 in Concord NC.** The PACT Family Camp provides a safe, honest, child-centered, anti-racist space where adopted children and youth of color can connect with peers and mentors who share their identities and experiences and where their parents can dig deeply into not only the joys but also the challenges of adoption, race and family. Because camp is in high demand, there is a lottery system. 30% of the slots are for new families, 30% for families led by adoptive parents of color. Info: www.pact.org

China Initiative-type bill in Congress

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Dr. Feng "Franklin" Tao's life and career was ruined by the China Initiative. The government originally charged him with ten counts of wire fraud and making false statements - the government dropped two counts, the jury acquitted (not guilty) on four counts, and the judge acquitted him on three wire fraud counts. In the end, he was convicted on the remaining count of making a false statement and given the lightest possible sentence (no jail, no fine, two years of probation) and that conviction was later overturned. The Kansas University refused to re-hire him even when he had tenure before the conviction. With four years of unemployment, his legal fees exceeded $2.3 million of which he still has $1.05 million of debt. Tao is asking supporters to contribute to his Go Fund Me account to pay off his legal fees.

During the 2018-2022 China Initiative, 250 Chinese American academics and scientists lost their jobs. Many of the cases were dropped or dismissed. The Department of Justice prosecuted at least 150 defendants in 77 cases. About 75% of the cases did not result in any convictions. Initially DOJ focused on alleged stolen trade secrets cases; when they didn't find much, they focused on violations of disclosure rules, which often were "paperwork" errors or failures to disclose affiliations.