



National Association of Japanese Canadians

CRRF REPORT

By: Art Miki

The Canadian Race Relations Foundation is the creation of the Japanese Canadian Redress settlement 30 years ago. The Foundation was first proclaimed in 1996 and opened its office in Toronto in November 1997. The first Chair was Hon. Lincoln Alexander, a former MP and Lieutenant Governor of Ontario and I was elected Vice-Chair and served on the Board for 6 years.

This past year after the appointment of Dr. Lillian Ma as Executive Director, there has been significant changes on the Board membership. Today, we have a complete turnover except for the Chairperson, Albert Lo, whose term will be completed in November 2018. Therefore, much effort was devoted in orientating the new members to the history, the policies, structure and the general operation of the organization. I, as the NAJC representative to the Board, gave presentations on the history, the redress movement and the settlement and apology on a number of occasions.

The CRRF has been involved in a number of co-sponsored projects the past year:

- In recognition of Canada's 150, the CRRF co-sponsored with the Canadian Museum for Human Rights a discussion session as part of a series of 5 dialogues across Canada entitled "After the Apology: Learning from Historic Injustices" across Canada. This was held at University of British Columbia in Vancouver on September 27, 2017 which focused on Japanese Canadian apology. Prior to the dialogue, presentations by Dr. Lillian Ma and Art Miki were given. Art Miki focused on the importance of a meaningful apology.
- Co-sponsored a project with the Greater Vancouver JCCA Human Rights Committee under the leadership of Judy Hanazawa and the committee members on December 10 (Human Rights Day). The project was entitled "*Building Bridges among East Asian Canadians: How Does Racism Affect Us*" brought together speakers from the Japanese, Chinese, Filipino, Vietnamese and Korean communities to share their experiences related to racism and its effect. Erica Isomura and Art Miki spoke on behalf of the Japanese Canadian community. Prior to the presentations there was a commemoration ceremony to recognize the important court case, Cunningham vs Tomekichi 'Tomey'



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Homma regarding citizenship rights. A plaque was unveiled and will be placed in the Vancouver Law Courts Building. Grace Eiko Thomson was the main proponent for this historic project and event.

- On Sunday, May 27, 2018 co-sponsored with Asian Heritage Society of Manitoba a dialogue entitled "*Celebrating Asian Heritage with All: Our Youth, Our Tomorrow*" at the Canadian Museum for Human Rights. A group of 25 young leaders from Indigenous, Black and Asian communities engaged in a focus group setting to share their perspectives on racism and race relations in Canada. Yuhito Adachi, Alex Miki and Hayley Yamamoto represented Japanese Canadian community.
- On June 27, 2018 the CRRF in partnership with the Federation of Asian Lawyers, hosted an event "30 Years of Progress: Multiculturalism Day Celebration" at the Ontario Bar Association. This was held to celebrate the 30th anniversaries of the signing of the Japanese Canadian Redress Agreement and the *Canadian Multiculturalism Act*. The event featured speeches from the Honourable Justice Maryka Omatsu, renowned author Joy Kogawa, Indigenous elder Cat Criger and video presentations of "Swimming Upstream" and "Children of Redress" and a presentation on the progress of Joy Kogawa's interactive app "East of Rockies".
- The Awards of Excellence will be held in Winnipeg on September 27, 2018, a week after the NAJC AGM. Recognition will be awarded to organizations across Canada that demonstrate best practices in dealing with racism and promoting positive race relations. These organizations compete under various sectors as Indigenous, Community, Government, Education and Youth. The Landscape of Injustice project from University of Victoria was awarded the Award of Excellence for their work on Japanese Canadian dispossession and projects designed to educate the Canadian public. At the awards dinner local Champions were recognized that included Art Miki.

The following are the present members of the CRRF Board:

Albert Lo – BC - Chairperson. His term is over on October 22, 2018

Alice Damley – Ontario

Emilie Nicolas – Quebec

Roy Pogorzelski – Alberta

Rajesh Uttamchandani – Ontario



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Gina Valle – Ontario

Balpreet Singh Boparai – Ontario

Orlando Bowen – Ontario

Anne-Marie Pham – Alberta

Moses Gasirabake – Ontario

Cheryl May - Ontario