



Canadian Japanese Mennonite Scholarship

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From the Mennonite Central Committee
https://www.linkedin.com/posts/mccpeace_mccpeace-activity-6583030086642085888-g--P/

Meet Michelle Lam, the 2019 recipient of the Canadian Japanese Mennonite Scholarship. She's a student at the University of Manitoba whose research examines the role of host communities with current newcomer immigration in third-tier Canadian prairie cities. This work will help promote an inclusive society honouring the rights of newcomers. The \$2,000 scholarship is a symbol of cooperation between Canadian Japanese and Canadian Mennonites. For more info go to mcccanada.ca/scholarships.

#mccpeace



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NAJC President's Message



By Lorene Oikawa

Travel is a great form of education especially when you attend a COPANI convention with 250 participants from Hawaii, Mainland US, Mexico, Dominican Republic, Chile,

Colombia, Brazil, Paraguay, Argentina, Peru, Germany, France, Japan, and including 40 from Canada. COPANI is an international convention bringing together Japanese descendants from primarily North and South America. NAJC attended COPANI XX last month in San Francisco. It's been 18 years since a COPANI was held in the United States. In 2021 it will be in Paraguay.

COPANI XX was an opportunity to connect with Nikkei from other countries, learn about each other's histories and current work, and also hear many great speakers. We were inspired by keynote speaker Norman Y. Mineta, a Japanese American who served as the Secretary of Commerce under President Bill Clinton and as the Secretary of Transportation under President George W. Bush. He urged us to own two things that no one else owns: our name and our integrity, and to protect both. He encouraged us to be at the table where decisions are being made and to get involved with the development of public policy.

More powerful stories were shared at workshop sessions which took place during the second day of the convention. Delegates split up into four concurrent sessions covering business,

Nikkei youth and young adults identity and networking, family and community, and civil rights and social justice. I was one of the presenters for the civil rights and social justice session so I wasn't able to see the other workshops. In the morning at the Civil Rights & Social Justice session, Maryka Omatsu spoke about Japanese Canadian history and BC Redress. David Inoue, Executive Director of the Japanese American Citizens League, a national Japanese American organization, shared the history of the Japanese American internment. He showed the images that the government did not want the public to see. The US government hired a photographer to show "happy" photos of incarcerated Japanese Americans which did not include barbed wire and the real conditions. Karen Korematsu shared her father's case that went to the Supreme Court to challenge the violation of his rights as an American citizen. Grace Shimizu shared the little-known stories of Japanese Latin Americans who were forcibly removed and placed in Japanese American internment camps.

All speakers shared the importance of knowing our history and the relevance to what is happening today. It was moving and a reminder that we need to speak up and stand up to what is wrong, now more than ever.

In the afternoon, NAJC got into some deep discussions about our work on anti-racism and solidarity with other groups. NAJC VP Keiko Miki spoke about our work with Indigenous peoples, GVJCCA President Judy Hanazawa spoke about poverty and homelessness, and I addressed Islamophobia. We appreciated co-presenter

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Satsuki Ina who has been a great resource for Japanese Canadians. She spoke about the Japanese American campaign, Tsuru for Solidarity, she started with some other JA leaders. It's a peaceful protest against the ongoing mass detentions in the US. They fold Japanese origami paper cranes, a symbol for transformation, healing and nonviolence, and place the cranes on the fences at the detention centres. She showed a video where they took the cranes to Fort Sill to stand up against the incarceration of 1,400 children forcibly separated from their families. Fort Sill is a former Indigenous boarding school, a Japanese American prison camp during the Second World War, and a place where war resisters were held. We folded some cranes for them while at COPANI. More information at <https://tsuruforsolidarity.org/>

Other Canadian presenters at COPANI XX included Art Miki who spoke about Japanese Canadian Redress, NAJC Chair JC Young Leaders Alex Miki who co-moderated the session for youth/young adults and spoke on a young adult panel, and Ken Teramura who presented at a business session.

The Canadian delegation enjoyed their time, learning the stories of Nikkei in other countries, sharing their own stories, connecting with other Nikkei and developing friendships and opportunities for collaborations. We have more in common than the differences in language and geography. We are looking forward to continue the conversations and connections.

The NAJC members who attended COPANI are completing a NAJC survey to share highlights of the sessions they attended and any valuable resource and best practises information. Also, their feedback will be important, because NAJC

has been asked and will be considering hosting a COPANI convention in the future.

Thank you to COPANI XX president Roji Oyama and his organizing committee for a successful COPANI 2019 convention in San Francisco. We were also fortunate to have a bit of time for a quick city tour and to visit the vibrant Japantown with very visible signs of the community including a plaza, historical markers, street signs, and banners, restaurants and shops. Apparently, it's only one of three left in the US.

BC Redress community consultations have wrapped up and the findings were presented at a members' meeting on September 28. The final paper will be released to the government and the public in October. A tremendous amount of work was completed in a short time frame by the BC Redress steering committee to fulfill their mandate. We appreciate their work and offer our thanks to co-chairs Maryka Omatsu and Art Miki, and the rest of the committee, Judy Hanazawa, Lynn Deutscher Kobayashi, Eiko Eby, Les Kojima, and Kevin Okabe who provided substantial support to the committee. Thanks also to the member organizations who assisted with hosting of in-person community consultations, our advisors, and everyone who participated. The NAJC is working on next steps with the priority to complete the paper, set up a strategy team, and there will be more to report next month.

With the increase in hate and racist acts, our collective work on human rights and anti-racism is even more important. Check out the Canadian Race Relations Foundation's 2018-2019 Annual Report at this link: <https://bit.ly/2mAGI9X>. The federal government has developed an anti-racism strategy. <https://bit.ly/31TOyLx>

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Unfortunately, the NAJC was not included in the consultations and we have some important input so we have contacted the federal government to see how we can work with them on anti-racism and human rights. The NAJC also made statements on two high profile cases involving blackface and misappropriation of a photo of Japanese Canadian internment. You can check out the statements at najc.ca

Wishing you safe travels as the weather changes, and please take a moment on November 11 to remember our Japanese Canadian veterans who fought for Canada in the First and Second World Wars to present.

September always holds strong memories for me including starting a new school year, meeting old and new friends, and new learning. This September we will be making more



BC Redress

The National Executive Board is currently finalizing the final report stemming from the consultations that have been held the last six months. We will be submitting the BC Redress Community Consultations Report to the BC Provincial Government later in October to time more closely with our own media release and formal presentation of the report. We will update you when the date is confirmed for later this month.

Maryka Omatsu's video "Swimming Upstream" was named the winner of the MADA (Making A Difference Award) at CommFest, a community film festival in Toronto. The video was a critical part of the NAJC's BC Redress Consultations

Thank you to Maryka and to the Toronto NAJC Chapter for letting us know about this!

The video can be found here:

<http://najc.ca/wp/bcredress/>



Japan’s New “Reiwa” Era
and Nikkei Society Bridging
Internationalization

60th Convention of Nikkei &
Japanese Abroad

By Sherri Kajiwra, Director | Curator
Nikkei National Museum

From October 1 – 3, 2019, over 200 persons of Japanese ancestry from around the globe convened in Tokyo for the 60th convention of Nikkei and Japanese Abroad. Having come almost directly from attending COPANI in San Francisco, I thought I was acclimatized for the 29 – 35-degree weather in Tokyo, but was not entirely prepared for the wave of 80% humidity I was hit with immediately upon disembarking at Narita. Apparently I had landed in the midst of typhoon season but luckily, my time in Japan was sandwiched auspiciously in-between two storms.

In Tokyo I met up with NNMCC’s past president Akiko Gomyo and her spouse Akira Ebisawa. They had attended this conference for the past two years, and prior to that, long-term Chairman of the NNMCC, Mits Hayashi had represented us for almost two decades. The impression I had of this conference during his tenure was that it was very Japan-centric. But last year, which took place in Oahu, Hawaii, Akiko was part of a Nikkei museum panel that began a dialogue on inter- museum collaboration and cooperation. It’s a thread that has continued into this year and I was invited to participate in a Nikkei museums panel, together with delegates from Peru, Brazil, Mexico, and

the USA, on the topic of “Collaboration among Nikkei Museums – For sharing the Nikkei legacy”.

My participation in the panel came with pre-presentation meetings. I was pleasantly surprised to find colleagues Sandy Chan, General Manager and Su Yen Chong, Heritage Manager from the JCCC in Toronto also in attendance, and although it was a little ironic that we had to be all the way across the Pacific Ocean to connect in a meaningful way, it made for productive and valuable time together.

The pre-conference day was held at the Tokyo Press Club with a small group of panelists and conference organizers, and ended with a welcome reception that would foreshadow four days of having appetizers for dinner. I’m not complaining. We were elegantly fed and it was entirely hosted, but the best part of being in Japan is the food, and whilst the appetizers were delectable, it wore thin after day two.

The conference proper began on October 1st at the Parliamentary Museum with the official opening commemorated by the new Emperor and Empress of Japan. We were given strict protocol instructions, the most crucial being, no photos of the Royals. But if you look really really really closely at the photo of Akiko, Akira, and me holding the Canadian flag, you will see Them on stage.





Part of the opening was to identify your country of participation, hence the flag holding ritual. It was no surprise that the largest contingent came from Brazil, but there were Nikkei from Holland, France, Indonesia, other parts of Japan (yes Japan has a Nikkei population – the 3rd largest in the world), and Hawaii in attendance as well. Given the global mix, simultaneous translation was provided for the entire 3 days of the conference, except during receptions, in Japanese, Portuguese, Spanish, and English.

On Day 2, participants had the option of attending 8 hours of panel presentations and discussion at JICA Ichigaya, including a one-hour break for lunch, or going on an official tour of Koedo Kawago instead, a 30min trip away from Tokyo to a “town of history retaining the culture and aroma of Edo, Koedo Kawagoe” according to the Koedo website. I was pleasantly surprised to see that more than 80% of the conference attendees stayed behind for the panels – including mine.

Day 2 opened with formal addresses by organizing executives, followed by a keynote speech by Professor Angelo Ishi of the Musashi University who is also a director on the board for the Association of Nikkei and Japanese Abroad. He spoke eloquently on the 30 years of Nikkei migrants in Japan, which are primarily, though not entirely, from Brazil. The Brazilian Nikkei first ‘went’ to Japan as dekasegi which is a term we use for early migrants from Japan to Canada who came to work to quickly make money and return home. Similarity initial dekasegi from Brazil went to Japan 30 years ago with the same intention, to return to Brazil, but have remained in Japan. The underbelly of that experience is racism, social inequality, and cultural barriers in what should be their mother-country, but the upside is a large

culturally diverse population that is bridging the employment gap and morphing into a new, more internationally-facing group that is making strides in helping Japan be more ‘open’.

A panel followed to present and comment, including Japanese government officials Yasuyuki Kitawaki, Mayor of Hamamatsu City and Hideto Nagaoka, Mayor of Izumo City – both town known for high multi-cultural immigration populations; Eriko Suzuki, Professor of Literature, Kokushikan University who also had the impressive titles of Director/Secretary General of Japan Association for Migration Policy Studies and Vice-President of Solidarity Network with Migrants Japan; and Rosa Mercedes Ochante Muray, lecturer Faculty of Education, St. Andrews University Japan.

After a short morning break, there was a survey report presenting “On actual situation of Nikkei Communities in Japan” by Satoru Sato of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and current Ambassador for Latin American-Japanese social collaboration, and Alberto Matsumoto, a multi-talented executive/academic/interpreter /journalist/educator. Given that COPANI was heavily South and Latin American focused, this was an interesting compare-and-contrast opportunity for me. The main difference being that the Tokyo session was much more academic and current events in Japan-based, while COPANI felt more community and grassroots in their home country-based.



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We then broke for lunch, and then it was my turn.

I was part of a panel moderated by Professor Toshio Yanagida of Keio University and advisor to the Japanese Overseas Migration Museum, Yokohama. I was given 10 minutes to present on the Nikkei National Museum's activities and programs and asked to comment therein, on my position on collaboration between Nikkei museum's around the world. I was in the company of Mitsuko Kumagai, Director General of the Japanese Overseas Migration Museum in Yokohama and JICA Director; Yoko Nishimura of Discover Nikkei from JANM Los Angeles USA; Alejandro Kasuga of the Museo de la Inmigración Japonesa a México "AKANE", CEO of Yakult Mexico, and board director of the Kasuga Foundation; Abel Fukumoto, President of the Asociación Peruano Japonesa and professional industrial engineer; and Lidia Reiko Yamashita, President of the Historic Museum of Japanese Immigration in Sao Paulo. Although not part of the formal panel, Su Yen Chong of the JCCC was invited to comment at the end, and she delivered a brilliant speech on how what we were all talking about was Cosmopolitanism, the idea of a single community of individuals in different places coming together through mutual respect and shared ideology, culture, and goals.

All panelists were asked to submit our powerpoint presentations and speaking notes in advance of arrival, and in the pre-conference meetings there was fairly intense conversation about significant outputs the moderator and JICA were looking to have us resolve. Although I was meeting all but Yoko from Discover Nikkei for the first time, we all bonded immediately. Upon hearing everyone's presentations, it was clear that we had many more similarities than

differences and an exciting discussion of inter-museum collaboration was not only viable, but next steps were put into process before the end of the convention.

A final panel of Day 2 titled "Cooperation among Nikkei Society" included Michael Toshiro Omoto, Japanese American yonsei and former VP of the executive committee of COPANI, working in tech in Tokyo who spoke about bridging cultural and gender divides in Japan; Andre Saito, Japanese Brazilian sansei from Sao Paulo who through his Generation Project is inspiring younger generations in Brazil; Francisco Noriyuki Sato, sansei from Sao Paulo who is sharing culture through manga; Dimas Pradi, yonsei Japanese Indonesian leading a tempei factory in Okinawa; Rafael Fuchigami, yonsei Brazilian who finally connected with his Japanese roots through shakuhachi and now pursuing his doctorate at the Tokyo College of Music; and Michiko Sasaki, emeritus professor at JF Oberlin University and proponent of 'mother tongue' heritage language bilingual education in Latin America.

Both the touring and attending panel groups were reunited later that evening at an official welcome reception at the Iikura Guest House of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and very fancy appetizers for dinner.



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Day 3 opened with a panel presenting on “Viewpoints of Nikkei – New Reiwa Era and Nikkei Community” including Sandy Chan, JCCC; Masafumi Honda, University of Hawaii; Hitoshi Itagaki, Vancouver entrepreneur; Sachiko Kobayashi, independent participant Hawaii; and Derek Kenji Pinillos Matsuda, Lecturer, Ochanomizu University.

The final panel presentation of the conference was titled “Presentations by Nikkeis Living in Japan” and featured youth from junior high through university. Kaiki Okuyama, 3rd yr junior high, spoke about his vision of his life after ten years which included a wife and career in law; Vinicius Hamaya, 1st year high school, predicted a successful volleyball career; Megumi Yamanouchi P. Mallari, Sophia University freshman, gave a fictionalized reality of her future self as the Consul of Philippines in ten years; and Asato Torres Luis Alberto, 1st year masters student at Tokyo University spoke of “Becoming an International Person from an Education Closely Connected to You”. All were currently in school in Japan. 3 of the 4 presenters all saw themselves living as professionals back in Brazil in a decade. All were fiercely proud of their countries of origin (Brazil, and the Philippines) All were fluent in Japanese at their commensurate level of education in Japan. For me, although I am fortunate to be bilingual, coming from a country that seems to have all but lost Japanese language beyond the nisei, the fluency level of South and Latin American Nikkei sansei through gosei is impressive.

The conference ended with – yes – a lunch of appetizers. Many new friends were made, invigorating discussions were held, and my hope is that the goals set out will be pursued.

The conference began with a declaration draft for more collaboration and communication between Nikkei institutions, and ended with a confirmed declaration that included the promise of a new museum symposium in Sao Paulo Brazil next November, and the promise of a digital platform to connect Nikkei museums at some point in the future, funded by the Kasuga Foundation. To that end Alex Kasuga is going to begin to visit Peru, Brazil, Los Angeles, Toronto, and Burnaby within the next year.



Have You Seen the News?

Update: Peoples Party of Canada Video

As identified in our last newsletter (and in various social media postings), the People's Party of Canada video that showed an image of Japanese Canadians boarding trains from Slocan BC, to be exiled to Japan under the Repatriation Bill in 1946 has now been removed. See the following link for an updated version of the story by Craig Takeuchi in the Georgia Straight

<https://www.straight.com/news/1307396/peoples-party-canada-uses-photo-japanese-canadian-internment-ad-against>

“We Have Seen This Before In BC and ignore that history at our peril”

October 2, 2019 article in canadalandshow.com by members of Landscapes of Injustice

<https://www.canadalandshow.com/vancouver-sun-revived-racist-tropes-that-paved-way-for-internment/>

Pam Mizuno Named New Windsor Police Chief

The NAJC congratulates Pam Mizuno for becoming the new police chief of Windsor, Ontario and in doing so, she becomes the first woman to hold the post in its 152-year history.

Full details about this appointment can be found here:

<https://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/windsor/pam-mizuno-windsor-police-chief-1.5308784>

Japanese Canadian recounts life in B.C. internment camp

July 26, 2019 article in the Ashcroft Cache Creek Journal on Tamotsu (Tam) Nakazawa

https://www.ashcroftcachecreekjournal.com/community/japanese-canadian-recounts-life-in-b-c-internment-camp/?fbclid=IwAR2tKhi_0Th_ejF_og8HhI-VK60gfsy4mviCVzqvbTRAg2KmaNcCiOLkUHK

Sicamous historical society requests more information at internment camps in Shuswap

July 2, 2019 article in the Salmon Arm Observer about the local historical society's interest in memorabilia and stories relating to the Japanese Canadian history of the region

https://www.saobserver.net/community/new-signs-to-mark-japanese-internment-camps-in-shuswap/?fbclid=IwAR3_RCp3U1nCL60hRMJBnpXxPGQ1DaNYZ7bOcwRMgs_nYEPXhUH2D3scE

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Events and Happenings:

HOW JAPANESE CANADIANS SHAPED THE CONSTITUTION
A lecture by **DR. ERIC M. ADAMS**
Vice Dean and Professor of Law, University of Alberta, Faculty of Law

Thursday, November 7, 2019
University of Toronto, St. George Campus
Alumni Hall 400, 121 St. Joseph Street



Presented by The Greater Toronto Chapter of the NAJC
www.torontonajc.ca

Toronto NAJC presents: HOW JAPANESE CANADIANS SHAPED THE CONSTITUTION

This past September 22nd was the 31st Anniversary of Redress. Hurrah! In this spirit we invite you to attend a lecture “How Japanese Canadians Shaped the Constitution” by Dr. Eric Adams, Professor of Law, University of Alberta on Thursday, November 7, 2019 from 6:30-8:30 p.m. Don't wait to save your seat at Alumni Hall 400, University of Toronto, 121 St. Joseph Street (corner Queen's Park) as we are already near to half of our target and will be releasing tickets to the general public.

Like the classic works on Japanese Canadian history; “The Enemy That Never as” by Ken Adachi and the “Politics of Racism” by Ann Gomer Sunahara, this lecture is a game-changer for Japanese Canadians. Whether you need to be convinced of the rationale for B.C. Redress or you would like to be better informed of JC history you will learn much about how the old boys legal and political network of British Columbia was stacked against those with the courage to assert the rights of Japanese Canadians citizens.

While Dr. Adams has lectured on Constitutional Wrongs: The Internment, Dispossession and Exile of Japanese Canadians at Oxford University, as an academic visitor, he has yet to deliver a lecture on this theme in Toronto. The recipient of several awards for his research and teaching, Professor Adams publishes in the fields of constitutional law, legal history, and human rights. He leads the legal team of the Landscapes of Injustice, research project. We are grateful for the sponsorship support of the Canadian Race Relations Foundation

We look forward to seeing you on the 7th of November.

We are grateful for the sponsorship support of the Canadian Race Relations Foundation.

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In Other News:

We have been asked to forward this information to our membership, for your information:



Vancouver Asian Film Festival 100 Stories Challenge

The 100 Stories Challenge aims to collect at least 100 stories that uncover the extraordinary lives of regular Asians in Canada. Maybe your grandparents had a unique voyage to Canada, or your auntie built the first Asian restaurant in her rural town. Or maybe your parents have an adorable story around how they met or did your uncle created a special hot sauce with unique Asian flavours. Or you could even uncover your great uncles' history as a secret war hero that saved played an integral role in WWII. We want to hear all of these stories and more!

VAFF is dedicated to creating more opportunities to share Asian Canadian stories through film and we hope that this particular challenge will encourage inter-generational dialogue and connections. We hope that by the end of this Challenge we will have collected more than 100 stories documenting the legacy of Asians in Canada.

VAFF is challenging you to explore your heritage!

Call your parents, grandparents, aunts and uncles and ask them to share their stories with you for a chance to win \$1,000!

How to Enter?

Put together a 60 second video pitch that is creative and would be attention grabbing, and upload it to YouTube, Vimeo or any other available video platform. Then submit your pitch by clicking on the button Register Now on the webpage and complete the Submission Form. You can use photos, animation or props in your video, and you can upload more documents, photos, etc. in the submission form as supporting documents if you so choose. There is no entry fee for submissions or limitations for number of submissions. We welcome all grades of submissions from no experience to seasoned film makers. You can submit by using your smart phone!

Who is Eligible?

The Competition is open to residents of Canada (excluding Quebec) who have reached the age of majority in the jurisdiction in which they reside and is Asian or part-Asian, pan-Asian. Only one entry is accepted per person or team.

When will I Find out Results and What is the prize?

The Winners will be announced on or around the date of VAFF23. Cash prize to the top three winners will be given – CAD\$1,000, CAD\$500 and CAD\$200, for first, second and third place, respectively. There is no further award or prize, but winners may have the opportunity to pitch their stories live to filmmakers to turn their pitches into film at VAFF 23 evening of November 8.

vaff.org/100storieschallenge

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Upcoming Dates and Meeting Notifications:

NAJC General Membership Meeting

Via Zoom Internet Conferencing

December 18, 2019

5:30 PM PST

6:30 PM MST

7:30 PM CST

8:30 PM EST

NAJC Special General Meeting

Bylaw and Constitutional Changes

Via Zoom Internet Conferencing

March 18, 2020

5:30 PM PST

6:30 PM MST

7:30 PM CST

8:30 PM EST

NAJC Annual General Meeting and National Conference

Edmonton, Alberta

September 2020

Enews versus Membership Newsletter

This newsletter has been created to inform the official NAJC Membership about NAJC news, notifications and activities. This is different than distributions that are occurring via enews, which may include individuals and organizations that are not members of the NAJC.

If you would like to submit an article or notification to the next NAJC Membership Update, please email your submission to ed@najc.ca. We expect to publish our next edition in November 2019.

If you are not on the NAJC Enews distribution, please feel free to add yourself by going to www.najc.ca and filling out your details in the section on the bottom of the page “Subscribe to our mailing list”

NAJC and Japanese Canadian Facebook Sites

Check out the Japanese Canadian and NAJC Facebook site to keep up to date on events, happenings, stories and photos!

<https://www.facebook.com/najc.ca/>

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/Japanese.Canadian.FG/>

(submit member request to join)