



PROFILE | Phillip Komai, President

Phillip Komai is the 2013 President of the Board of Directors for the East San Gabriel Valley Japanese Community Center. Komai has been an active member of the ESGVJCC since 2007 and has served on the Board since 2011. Previous to becoming the President, Komai served as Vice President of Programs.

Komai is spear heading a 10-year strategic plan to address the problem of the ESGVJCC rapidly approaching its maximum capacity, hampering the growing needs of the organization and its members. It is difficult to add new programs and classes due to the limited availability of its facilities. The Board is researching new money making opportunities to help subsidize cultural programming and offer new services to members. The goal is to acquire a satellite facility or expand the existing facility.

Komai graduated from Art Center College of Design with a Bachelor of Fine Arts degree. He is the owner, since 1990 of BKD Design, a graphic design firm specializing in print and packaging design. His clients have included The Walt Disney Company, Contessa Seafood, and Yosemite Waters.

Komai also currently serves as President of the ESGVJCC Nikkei Boomer's, a social organization for active seniors. He is a member of Keepers of the Flame, a group dedicated to documenting the oral history of pre World War II Japanese American pioneers in the East San Gabriel Valley and their resettlement afterwards. He also participates in the ESGVJCC Ballroom Dance Club and is a volunteer for the ESGVJCC Senior Wellness Program.



PROFILE | Pearl Omiya, Executive Director

Pearl Omiya, the Executive Director of the East San Gabriel Valley Japanese Community Center (ESGVJCC), has been with the organization since 2005. Omiya joined the ESGVJCC as the Operations Manager before being promoted in 2006 to its first full-time employee as Executive Director.

Omiya is responsible for development, fundraising, and overall management of the organization. She sits on every board committee including Development and Leadership, Facilities, Public Relations, Programs, and Senior Needs. She is the sole grant writer for the organization as well as chair for the ESGVJCC's two largest fundraising events.

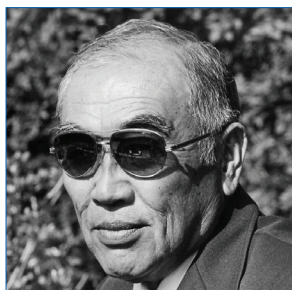
After Omiya receiving Bachelor Degrees in Economics as well as Japanese from the University of California, Los Angeles, Omiya was accepted into the Japan Exchange Teaching (JET) Programme and taught English for the Okazaki Board of Education for two years. While in Japan, Omiya co-edited the prefecture's Assistant Language Teacher (ALT)

Newsletter as well as co-founded a kindergarten English program.

Upon her return to the states, Omiya entered graduate school and obtained her teaching credential in Social Science from Cal Poly Pomona and is in pursuit of her Masters' Degree in History.

Omiya has also taught for the East San Gabriel Valley Japanese Community Center's Japanese Language School and the ESGV DISKovery Center, a computer literacy program for older adults and seniors.

Omiya's commitment to the Japanese and Japanese American community does not stop with her service to the ESGVJCC. She currently serves on the Board of Directors for the Nikkei Federation, and organization that promotes information regarding Japanese American cultural programs and services throughout the greater Southern California area. Omiya has also served as president and treasurer for the JET Alumni Association of Southern California where she currently serves on the advisory board.



LEAVING A LEGACY

PROFILE | Kimio Hatakeyama, Co-Founder [1920-2013]

The Board of Directors of the East San Gabriel Valley Japanese Community Center (ESGVJCC) and Staff, announced with great sadness the passing of Kimio Hatakeyama at age 92. Mr. Hatakeyama, was a principal founder of the ESGVJCC after the end of World War II. He along with Frank Konno and Yosh Sogioka revised the ESGVJCC into its modern form after it had been closed during the Internment Camp when all Japanese Americans in the eastern portion of the US were evacuated.

Hatakeyama's main wish, especially for his family, was to keep up the traditions and culture of his Japanese ancestry. He, along with several other founders, pledged their own homes as collateral for a loan needed to build the gymnasium, dining room/kitchen, and classrooms. Hatakeyama was elected president of the ESGVJCC in 1965, and he and his wife Mary had been active members since. Wanting to carry on his father's Buddhist beliefs and culture, they were instrumental in starting the West Covina Buddhist Temple.

Hatakeyama was active in the beginnings of

many organizations, including the ESGV Gardeners Association, the ESGVJCC Gakuen, West Covina Judo Dojo, the Sabers/Saberettes Youth Basketball Organization, the West Covina Anglers club, the ESGVJCC Leisure club, and the Mt. Baldy Bonsai Club.

The art of bonsai was his passion in his later years. When Derek Furukawa, President of the ESGV Gardeners Association, was ready to landscape the ESGVJCC's front yard, he along with Ted Hamachi and other members, came over to his house to pick out three of Hatakeyama's black pine (matsu) trees and transplanted them in the front yard, alongside the trees of the late Frank Yamashita's. Hatakeyama was so proud of his pine trees and was happy that they were being well cared for, something he was no longer able to do. He would often have his wife stop and park in the front of the ESGVJCC to look at the trees.

Kimio Hatakeyama helped to create the solid foundation on which the ESGVJCC continues to stand. He will be truly missed.



SPOTLIGHT | Legacy Courtyard

In 1936, Eijiro Machida donated one acre of his own land for use by the Japanese community in the East San Gabriel Valley. One man, one donation. The result? A thriving cultural and community center with a multitude of cultural, educational and recreational programs and services for youth and adults alike.

If it took one man and his donation to secure something as great as the ESGVJCC, imagine what an entire community could secure for future generations.

Machida had a dream and it was to lay a foundation for the future. Now there is an opportunity to be a part of building the foundation for the next generation through the Legacy Courtyard campaign.

It took many bricks to build the ESGVJCC into the place, *the bridge*, that it is today. Bridging culture family and community with this one common place. Each personalized tribute brick symbolizes the strength of a community, the security of a people, and the permanence of the ESGVJCC to be the future of a generation.

Co-founder Kim Hatakeyama once said, "We have to show the younger families how we need and how we can use this place to keep us together. To communicate this to everyone is our most important task. Like in gardening trades, it is a matter of cultivating new ideas—and more people willing to own this place as their beautiful garden."

Now you can own a place in this "beautiful garden".

The first phase of building the Legacy Courtyard was completed in January 2012 followed by the completion of the second phase in January 2013.

ESGVJCC hopes to complete phase three by the close of 2013. With each phase, the ESGVJCC and its' supporters continues to lay the foundation needed to cultivate a growing future for the ages.

Large 8 x 8 or standard 4 x 8 bricks are still available. For more information about the campaign or to purchase a tribute brick in Phase 3 of the Legacy Courtyard, contact the ESGVJCC at 626.960.2566.



THEN AND NOW

HISTORY | ESGVJCC

In 1936, Mr. Eijiro Machida donated one acre of his land so that the Japanese farming community in the San Gabriel Valley could have a place where they could teach their children Japanese language and culture. Beginning humbly with the Japanese language school and a judo dojo, the community center was also a place for group meetings and social activities.

During World War II, all persons of Japanese American descent were forced to relocate into ten different internment camps. During the war, deed holders Nobue Sera and Chiye Hashimoto Taniguchi entrusted the keys of the center to Mr. and Mrs. Ted and Hazel Roberts. A member said, "If it wasn't for [Roberts], the original building we had would have been vandalized and torn up while we were gone." Mrs. Hazel Roberts watched over the facility, leasing it to West Covina schools to help pay for the upkeep and property taxes. When the members returned in 1946, the center was just as the families remembered it.

Under the leadership of Kimio Hatakeyama, Frank Konno, and Yosh Sogioka, the doors reopened and Sera and Taniguchi turned over the deed to the three men. Activities resumed with the Japanese language school, judo classes for children, the Buddhist Church, Gardeners' Association and many other organizations.

In February 1951, the East San Gabriel Valley Japanese American Association was officially changed to the East San Gabriel Valley Japanese Community Center (ESGVJCC) and chartered as a non-profit corporation.

In 1964, the ESGVJCC faced a crisis due to the growth of the City of West Covina. The city asked the ESGVJCC to move in order to expand its' central core. A year

later, the property located on Puente Avenue was purchased for \$95,000 from the Shephard of the Valley Lutheran Church. Shortly after, Frank Yamashita donated and planted the black pine trees on the facilities' front lawn. In 1974, Yamashita celebrated his seventieth birthday by planting the seventy juniper cypress trees that border the ESGVJCC's perimeter.

In the 1950s and 1960s, the ESGVJCC was experiencing phenomenal growth with many Japanese American families moving from urban areas into the suburbs. The need for a larger facility became more apparent. It was decided to keep the original social hall and build a gym, kitchen, dining room and classrooms. Under the leadership of Henry Miyata, Building Committee Chair, Roy Iketani, Finance Committee Chair, and President Leo Hayashi, the fund drive for this enormous project began on November 13, 1971 with \$125,000. The total cost for the project was \$300,000. Thirteen families put their homes up as collateral to finance this project while all of the families at the ESGVJCC rallied together to raise the remaining \$175,000.

On May 10, 1981, the ESGVJCC held a special mortgage burning ceremony to commemorate the end of its first building project. Two years later, the ESGVJCC began the "Expanding Our Horizons" fund drive. Under the leadership of Building Fund Chair Kimio Hatakeyama, this fund drive raised over \$100,000 for a new two-story building between the Social Hall and the gym that provided additional classroom and meeting space. In 1984, Barbara Yanase-Shirota became the ESGVJCC's first woman president, served for three terms, and continues to serve on the Board of Directors as

a member-at-large.

The 2000s brought in a new generation of leadership at the ESGVJCC. In May of 2006, plans to rebuild the Social Hall were approved by the City of West Covina, but with only \$196,000 in the Building Fund and a \$75,000 federal HUD grant secured by Congresswoman Hilda Solis, the Social Hall Capital Campaign was launched in September of the same year under the leadership of Glenn Nakatani. The cost of the new Social Hall was estimated to be \$1.5 million and through the efforts of the Development Committee, headed by Robert Leong, the ESGVJCC continued forward to raise the necessary funds.

With the campaign launched, the ESGVJCC decided it was imperative to hire a full-time executive director to manage the fundraising efforts and upcoming construction. Pearl Omiya, who had been the ESGVJCC's Operations Manager, was hired by December 2006. With forty percent of the budgeted amount in hand, the ESGVJCC obtained a construction loan from Pacific Commerce Bank and demolition of the original social hall was scheduled on May 12, 2008.

In just seven months, the social hall was reopened, allowing for three classrooms for Japanese school, two new restrooms, a fully functioning library and larger space for classes and programs to practice and learn.

With a \$500,000 permanent loan, the fundraising continued to retire the loan. ESGVJCC was able to raise 76% of its \$1.5 million goal. It was through the great generosity of George, Ruri, Lisa, and Nathan Sugimoto that the ESGVJCC was able to retire the construction loan and complete this tremendous project.



BUILDING A FOUNDATION

PROFILE | The Sugimoto Family, Donor

George and Ruri Sugimoto became invested members of the ESGVJCC through participation in the Student Exchange Program which first began in 2000. Through this program they traveled to Japan with local students as well as assisted with Japanese students who, in exchange, came to the US.

Having experienced the various programs, events and activities that the ESGVJCC offers, the Sugimotos were able to see the value the ESGVJCC brings to the greater community.

In 2006 the ESGVJCC made a decision to rebuild the social hall, a necessary endeavor that resulted in a safer, larger structure that allows for greater opportunity to expand the cultural, social and recreational activities that the ESGVJCC can offer.

This endeavor, however, resulted in a considerable sized loan. When donations to pay the loan began

to stagnate, the Sugimoto family started a matching donation campaign. Charged with this goal, members and friends of the ESGVJCC raised twice the needed amount to receive the matching fund. The sacrificial generosity of a community inspired the Sugimotos to make an additional donation, on top of their pledged amount; and in January 2011 presented the ESGVJCC with a check that would cover the remaining balance of the building loan.

To honor the generosity of the George, Ruri, Lisa and Nathan Sugimoto, the newly rebuilt social hall was named "The Sugimoto Family Social Hall" in 2012.

The legacy of sacrifice and generosity that gave ESGVJCC a home over sixty years ago, lives on through the generosity of its members like the Sugimoto family whose grand donations helped to reinvigorate a community.



FACILITY RENTALS

ROOM	SQ. FT.	CAPACITY		
		THEATER	BANQUET	RECEPTION
Gym	6000	400	280	500
Social Hall	3520	250	160	300
Dining Room	730	50	30	60
Classroom (Large)	800	55	40	70
Classroom (Small)	400	27	20	35

Contact the ESGVJCC at 626.960.2566 for more information and details about rental rates, terms and availability. Facility rental application is available for download at esgvjcc.org.





HEALTH OF A COMMUNITY EVENT | Family Health Fair

The ESGVJCC partnered with State Senator Dr. Ed Hernandez to host a free family health fair in November 2012. Over 300 members of the neighboring community attended this event participating in health screenings, active living demonstrations, cooking demonstrations, and a resource fair filled with over 20 vendors. With this event focusing on preventative health care and wellness, it featured resources and information on nutrition, exercise, mental health, and other useful tools to live with vitality. The ESGVJCC martial arts programs, taiko, and yoga classes were featured to illustrate the importance of exercising in a fun way. The ESGVJCC wants to share its various culturally based recreational programs as an alternative option to maintaining physical wellness. With diet and nutrition playing a key role in overall

health, cooking demonstrations illustrated different options while still balancing nutrition and taste.

"I thank the [ESGVJCC] for bringing our community together and providing a foundation for healthy living," said Senator Hernandez. "Your leadership and dedication to nutrition and wellness is an immeasurable asset to the San Gabriel Valley."

The ESGVJCC is proud to play its role as a leader in maintaining a healthy and vibrant community. As health care evolves and new changes occur, the ESGVJCC continues to offer programs and services to help keep the community healthy.

The 2013 Annual Family Health Fair will be held on Saturday, November 2. For more information about the Health Fair or to participate or support, contact ESGVJCC at 626.960.2566.



PROGRAM | Senior Wellness

The ESGVJCC Senior Wellness Program (SWP), launched in 2010 by a group of dedicated volunteers, focuses on physical, mental, emotional, and social wellness in a relaxed and enjoyable environment.

Nearly 50 seniors participate in weekly games and group exercises. A specialized exercise program was created to keep the participants active in order to prevent falls, maintain range of motion, and increase overall mobility. Through memory games and exercises, seniors strengthen their mental and cognitive health. Additional activities, like casino games, holiday-themed crafts, and educational presentations relating to senior health and wellness are also offered to enhance social and emotional wellness.

"Seniors are encouraged to move, laugh, and challenge themselves," explained Donna Kusumoto, a volunteer coordinator. "I love watching the changes in attitude from doubt to self confidence and enjoyment."

Many of the seniors that participate in this program are the original pioneers of the ESGVJCC. This program is one way the ESGVJCC gives back to these pioneers for their dedication and sacrifices. Nearly a dozen dedicated volunteers of all ages help on a weekly basis planning activities, leading exercises and offering encouragement and support to the seniors as they participate in wellness activities.

ESGVJCC SWP welcomes age 55+, Wednesday 9am-12:30pm to celebrate life and age with vitality.





THE FACE OF A COMMUNITY

AT A GLANCE | Membership, Partners, Population

The ESGVJCC offers over twenty-five different cultural and educational classes including a K-12 Japanese language school, five different Japanese martial arts, taiko (Japanese drums) and flute, youth basketball, ballroom dancing, ikebana (flower arranging) and several social groups for youth and adults. All of the programs are open to the public.

In addition to serving the greater community with quality programming, the ESGVJCC hosts approximately a dozen events each year to preserve the mission and future growth of the center, and the Japanese American heritage.

POPULATION SERVED

Youth Membership/Enrollment

Japanese School	90
Youth Basketball	200
Martial Arts	70
Recreational Classes	50
Cultural Classes	50

Adult Membership/Enrollment

Martial Arts	70
Recreational Classes	50
Senior Citizens	100
Cultural Classes	75

Total Membership 755

PARTNERS

California Japanese American Community Leadership Council (CJALC) Est. 2010
Host Nikkei Community Internship intern for 8-weeks hands-on training.

City of West Covina/Ohtawara, Japan Sister Cities Est. 2004
Student Exchange Program that gives students the opportunity to visit Japan and learn the differences in government, culture, and lifestyle.

Keiro Senior HealthCare Est. 2007
Provide a caregivers conference, seminars and workshops.

Kizuna Est. 2012
Community Mentor Program. Post-graduate mentors provide high school students with a resource for guidance and a positive support system while giving postgraduates an opportunity to give back and reconnect with the community.

Leadership for Asian Pacifics (LEAP) Est. 2011
Hosted Leadership in Action (LIA) intern for 8-weeks hands-on training.

Little Tokyo Service Center
ESGV DISKOvery Center Est. 2009
Provide computer literacy courses to seniors and older adults. Three 5-week courses and weekly workshops are conducted through each quarter. Topics range from email basics and digital cameras to mastering the Microsoft Office Suite.

Nisei Week Foundation Est. 1981
Sponsor of queens candidate for the Nisei Week Queen's Coronation.

San Gabriel Valley Japanese American Citizens League Est. 1933
Over \$150,000 in scholarships benefiting over 300 students have been awarded.

AMENITIES

Computer Lab
English and Japanese Library
Music Laboratory

FUTURE

Increase programs and classes
Senior Day Care
Satellite Facilities



2013 PRESIDENT Phillip Komai

Board of Directors

Tim Itatani,
VP of Development
Jim Friesen,
VP of Facilities
Grace Richardson,
VP of Programs
Brandon Leong,
VP of Public Relations
Susie Kozono,
VP of Membership
Denise Akune, Secretary
Wesley Nobuta, Treasurer
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Members-At-Large

Dawn Kiko Cheng
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Christopher Hubert
Danny Iwama
Aya Kamimura
Joy Kitaura
Iso Nakasato
Kay Sakaue
Barbara Shiota
Gary Takamatsu
Donny Takemoto

Staff

Pearl Omiya,
Executive Director
Tina Asano,
Office Manager
Melissa Kozono,
Programs Associate
Arthur Gusman, Custodian



THE FACE OF A COMMUNITY

AT A GLANCE | Membership, Partners, Population

Mission Statement | The East San Gabriel Valley Japanese Community Center (ESGVJCC) is a not-for-profit organization dedicated to foster and preserve the cultural heritage unique to Japanese American ancestry; and to serve the Japanese American community through social services, artistic, recreational and educational programs.



Nisei Week Foundation
Keiro Senior HealthCare
California Japanese American
Community Leadership Council
San Gabriel Valley Chapter Japanese
American Citizens League
City of West Covina/Ohtawara
Japanese Sister Cities
Little Tokyo Service Center
State Sen. Dr. Ed Hernandez
Nikkei Federation
Kizuna
JA Living Legacy

10
classes

CULTURAL CLASSES

Visual Arts, Ikebana
(Flower Arranging), Karaoke
(Japanese Singing), Kime Komi
Ningyo (Doll Making Class), Taiko
(Japanese Drumming), Odori
(Classical Dancing)

RECREATIONAL CLASSES

Line Dancing, Ballroom Dancing,
Hula, Yoga



TOTAL MEMBERSHIP AND ENROLLMENT IN 2012.

3

EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMS

Japanese Language School
Computer Literacy Courses
Keepers of the Flame Oral History



200

Youth participating in the
Sabers/Saberettes youth
basketball program.

5

YOUTH PROGRAMS AVAILABLE

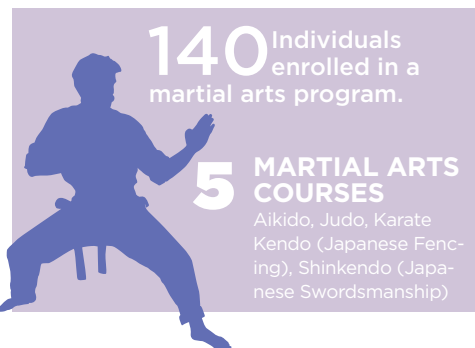
Nikkei Youth Organization
Student Exchange Program
Youth Basketball Program
Community Mentor Program
Camp Chibikko



senior wellness program

62

NUMBER OF YEARS
SERVING THE
COMMUNITY.



140 Individuals
enrolled in a
martial arts program.

5

MARTIAL ARTS COURSES

Aikido, Judo, Karate
Kendo (Japanese Fenc-
ing), Shinkendo (Japa-
nese Swordsmanship)



FULFILLING THE MISSION

SPOTLIGHT | Programs and Events

2013

Event Calendar

JANUARY

26 Installation Dinner

FEBRUARY

2 Yard Sale

MARCH

16 City of West Covina
Cherry Blossom Festival

APRIL

20 BBQ Bash

MAY

4 Gakuen Pancake Breakfast
5 Eibukan Goju-Ryu Karate
Do Tea

JUNE

1 Family Fun Day
22 Sabers/Saberettes Casino
Night
29 WCBT Obon

SEPTEMBER

8 Keiro No Hi

OCTOBER

5 Akimatsuri Fall Festival
14 Akimatsuri Golf Tournament

NOVEMBER

2 Family Health Fair
3 WCBT Kiku Craft Fair
10 JACL Veterans Day Service

ESGVJCC

Programs and Services

MARTIAL ARTS

Aikido
Judo
Karate
Kendo
Shinkendo

VISUAL/PERFORMING ARTS

Ikebana, Flower Arrangement
Japanese Classical Dance
Fujima Kansei Odori Kai
Kimi Komi Ningyo, Doll Making
Kishin Daiko, Japanese Drumming

RECREATIONAL PROGRAMS

Hula Dance
Ballroom Dance
Yoga
Sabers/Saberettes Youth Basketball

ORGANIZATIONS

ESGVJCC Ayame-Kai
ESGVJCC Karaoke Club
ESGVJCC Leisure Club
ESGVJCC Nikkei Boomers
ESGVJCC Nikkei Youth Organization
Edgewood/ESGV Gardeners
San Gabriel Chapter JACL
San Gabriel Valley Nikkei Singles
West Covina Buddhist Temple

EDUCATION

Gakuen, Japanese Language Courses
ESGV DISKovery Center
Keepers of the Flame Oral
History Project
Student Exchange Program





PASSING IT FORWARD

PROGRAM | Sabers/Saberettes Youth Basketball

Basketball holds a strong place in Japanese-American (JA) history as an activity that brings together a community. The Saber/Saberettes Youth Basketball program continues this tradition by enriching the lives of youth, not only with the fundamentals of the sport, but also a sense of values, dedication, and community.

For three former JA basketball players, the values of the program made such an impact, they returned to the program to cultivate the next generation of players.

Miki Fukusumi, Ricky Leong, and Lindsay Mark now serve as head coaches. With over 35 collective years with Sabers, they embody the skills and principles they learned as players and are now instilling those same values and virtues in the players they coach.

Fukusumi, a youth leadership coordinator at The Let It Be Foundation, is serving as the head coach for the 2001 Sabers Pythons. Fukusumi was a member of the 1990 Saberettes Sparkles team for twelve years and played varsity basketball at Diamond Bar High School.

A third year student at Cal State Fullerton, Leong is the head coach of the 2003 Sabers Panthers. Leong spent ten years on the 1992 Sabers Sharks and played varsity basketball

at Diamond Ranch High School.

A graduate from Cal State Long Beach, Mark coaches the 1997 Saberettes Slammerz and spent thirteen years with the organization as part of the Saberettes Swoosh team. Mark played varsity basketball at Diamond Bar High School.

"I love the opportunity to mentor young players and hopefully give them the same experience I was lucky to have as a Sabers player," Fukusumi said. "I hope to instill great sportsmanship, teamwork, dedication, hard work ethics, leadership, and confidence without arrogance."

"I want my boys to all be great leaders and know what it's like to set goals and how to achieve those goals," Leong said. "I advise my boys to always work hard and give 100 percent in everything they do whether it be basketball, school, or life. If you give it your best, that's all I, or anyone else, can ask for," he added.

The Sabers/Saberettes Youth Basketball Organization, a program of the ESGVJCC, is grateful for Coaches Fukusumi, Leong, and Mark, homegrown players who have returned to impart their knowledge and values in the youth.

Fukusumi, Leong and Mark. Passing it forward.





FUTURE LEADERS PROGRAM | Nikkei Youth Organization

The ESGVJCC Nikkei Youth Organization (NYO) was established in 2009 to plan social and cultural activities for the youth in the community center. Founded by youth members Sofia Chinen, Amy Friesen, Melissa Kozono, Mitchell Kozono, Ricky Leong and Lauren Woo; NYO created an organization for high school and college members to get involved in the community while learning valuable hands-on leadership skills. In its first year, NYO hosted numerous cultural workshops, sporting events, and provided numerous community service hours.

Founding President Ricky Leong described NYO as “a great opportunity for us to plan events and learn how to lead our peers.”

With several of its members being passionate about basketball, NYO conducted several clinics for elementary school students. It gave NYO members a unique opportunity to share their passion while learning event planning and coaching skills. NYO also conducted a 3-on-3 basketball tournament and dance for high school students in the community.

NYO members took part in renting facilities, soliciting sponsorships, advertising, and overall event logistics. Through this event, they raised over \$1,000 which NYO was able to use toward future cultural activities and workshops.

“This was such a huge undertaking but I learned a lot of leadership from the experience and have a greater appreciation of what goes into these kind of events,” said Brandon Kwan, 2010 NYO Athletic Coordinator and Tournament Director.

NYO also conducts several cultural events which have included taiko workshop, cooking classes, sushi making, and a tour of Little Tokyo and the Japanese American National Museum. These cultural events teaches youth about their cultural heritage as well as the importance of planning and communication.

The ESGVJCC firmly believes in the importance of developing young leaders in the community. NYO exemplifies the potential the potential impact youth can have on the entire organization.





EDUCATION FOR THE YOUTH

SPOTLIGHT | Gakuen

The ESGVJCC's Japanese language school, Gakuen, began as the Baldwin Park Japanese Language School in 1930. It relocated and became the West Covina Japanese Language School in 1936. The school closed during the World War II period because all of the Japanese Americans in the eastern end of the San Gabriel Valley were evacuated to Internment Camps. In 1959, the school was re-opened after the re-establishment of the East San Gabriel Valley Japanese Community Center by the efforts of ESGVJCC Co-founder Kimio Hatakeyama, Reverend Nitta and Mrs. Ikeda of the Higashi Honganji Buddhist Temple. At that time the school served twenty elementary school level students taught by two teachers. In 1966, Gakuen became a member of the California Japanese Language Schools Association, a movement that produced a restructuring of the curriculum and introduced forms of standardized textbooks. Since its' modest beginnings, the Japanese Language School has grown in enrollment; adding junior high and high school level classes as well as numerous events that promote the experience and education of Japanese culture and traditions including Undokai (sports day), school picnics, Gakugeikai (school play), and Mochitsuki (mochi making).

Gakuen has successfully evolved its curriculum over the years as exemplified by some of its students receiving credit toward their high school's foreign language requirements; and some have taken the AP Japanese and Japanese proficiency examinations. It has added Adult Conversation classes which meet on weekday evenings. The classes are designed to promote spoken proficiency in Japanese in adult settings.

As its curriculum has evolved over time, so too has its student population. From its exclusively Japanese American beginning in 1930, Gakuen now has an ethnically diverse student body and actively encourages and welcomes students from all cultural backgrounds. The diversity of its students is a testament to Gakuen's unflagging mission of bridging people through culture and language.

Class Schedule

Gakuen

Sat 9am-12:30pm

Beginning Adult Conversation

Mon 7pm-9pm

Intermediate Adult Conversation

Tues 7pm-9pm



PROGRAM | Camp Chibikko

Camp Chibikko launched in 2012 by the ESGVJCC Gakuen-Japanese Language School, is a week-long day camp for children ages 5 to 9 where students have an opportunity to experience Japanese culture and basic Japanese expressions. This year, with the collaborative efforts by the ESGVJCC and its Gakuen, Camp Chibikko will be a week-long day camp for children ages 6 to 12 and changes its focus to bringing cultural awareness to the younger generations through fun lessons and activities. This program is one way the ESGVJCC hopes to fulfill its mission statement which is to "foster and preserve the cultural heritage unique to Japanese American ancestry." The students will learn about Japanese culture through arts, crafts, songs, and stories. Some of the crafts include making a sushi keychain, tie-dying hachimakis

(headbands), and decorating uchiwas (Japanese fans). Students will also learn to make Japanese foods such as kappa maki (cucumber rolls), California rolls, Japanese pizza, and Okonomiyaki (Japanese pancake). In addition to the arts and crafts, students will also be able to participate in many Japanese and Japanese-American hobbies such as taiko drumming, martial arts, ondo dancing, and even a basketball clinic. Camp Chibikko hopes to replicate the success of last year which according to Camp Director Tim Mathos, "was a real success [that] could be seen by the daily smiles on the children's faces".

The 2013 Camp Chibikko will be held from June 24-28. Daily lunch will be provided. For more information or to participate, contact ESGVJCC at (626)960-2566.



PARTNER PROGRAMS

PROGRAM | Student Exchange Program

The ESGVJCC is a proud partner of sister cities Ohtawara, Japan and West Covina, California, and has coordinated its annual Student Exchange Program (SEP). For over a decade, the program has enriched the lives of over 100 students and families while bridging the relationship between the two sister cities.

Participants travel for ten days to Ohtawara, located in Tochigi prefecture. Throughout the program, students experience daily life in Japan while touring historical sites, visiting a local school, and participating in several hands-on activities, all while gaining valuable cultural awareness and understanding.

"For someone like me, who has dreamt of traveling to Japan my whole life, joining this exchange program was one of the best decisions I've ever made," 2012 SEP participant Katherine Morano said. "Not only did I get to experience living a day-to-day life as one would in Ohtawara, my host family and I knitted a bond that will last forever."

Many participants attribute the positive impact of the program to the home stay experience. Living with a host family provides an opportunity, unique from any other tour, allowing students to really

experience a Japanese lifestyle and create a relationship that has no cultural boundaries.

"I now have a whole other family across the ocean that I know I will forever stay in contact with," said 2010 SEP participant Laurie Goodman.

After the participants visit Japan in July, the second portion of the program takes place in August. A group of middle school students from Ohtawara come to California to stay with host families, giving the participants and their families the opportunity to return the hospitality. This portion of the program allows the entire family to engage in the cultural exchange and create a meaningful experience for the visiting students, as well as our own.

"We love hosting the students from Ohtawara every time they visit," said four-time host family Sherri Garcia. "They really become part of our family and I am always sad to see them leave after their short stay."

What started as a dream for founders Chef Ryo and Yoshie Sato, this program has had a tremendous impact on dozens of families spanning two different continents and continues to strengthen the relationship between two cultures, families and various communities.



PROGRAM | ESGV DISKovery Center

The ESGVJCC partnered with Little Tokyo Service Center in 2009 to create the new computer lab (DISKovery Center West Covina) which provides computer literacy courses to seniors and adults. Three 5-week courses and weekly workshops are conducted through each quarter. Topics range from email basics and digital cameras to mastering the Microsoft Office Suite.

Many seniors have been able to utilize the skills they learned through the ESGVJCC DISKovery Center to email friends, create flyers, type letters, create a family budget, manage medication, and communicate with family members.

Tom Kawakami, an 88 year old DISKovery student, began taking computer classes when the ESGVJCC first began offering courses. Prior to taking these classes, he had never used a computer. After taking a few classes,

Kawakami became comfortable using Microsoft Windows and has since purchased a new laptop. Kawakami learned how to use the internet and is now able to email his friends and family members. Kawakami is even able to Skype on a weekly basis with his children and grandchildren who live in northern California. Additionally, he uses the internet to pay bills, read news, make travel arrangements and play online games.

In addition to computer basics and internet, classes have been offered in digital photography, using Google's free features, mastering the iPad, how to use a smart phone, basic video editing, Adobe creative suite, and more.

Computer courses are offered on Tuesday and Thursday from 10am-12pm. For additional information about the ESGVJCC DISKovery Center, contact the ESGVJCC at (626) 960-2566.



WWII Veteran Jim Yamashita and Phillip Komai

PRESERVING OUR CULTURE HISTORY | Keepers of the Flame Oral History Project

They are in their 'twilight time'. The flame of their lives burns softer. It is time to gather their stories so that the light, warmth and wisdom of their lives will never be extinguished or forgotten. The personal stories of our elders is their legacy. And their legacy is our heritage.

"Keepers of the Flame" is an oral history project of the ESGVJCC, started in late 2012; and is dedicated to recording and preserving the stories and personal histories of the Pre-World War II Japanese American pioneers of the San Gabriel Valley. Bacon Sakatani, a Nisei elder of the ESGVJCC, is the inspirational founder of the group. His reunion photo history of the Pre-War San Gabriel Valley, first published in 1987 along with the aging of the Nisei provided the compelling concerns to start the project.

To date, there is no comprehensive documented history about the important pioneering role that

Japanese Americans performed in developing the San Gabriel Valley. The current plans for the collected works will be to distribute them in the following formats: digital archives accessible to the community, publications, oral performance and readings, and documentaries.

Initial interview training was provided by Susan Uyemura, CEO of the JA Living Legacy Organization, affiliated with CSU Fullerton. Additionally a grant from the Capital Group Companies Charitable Foundation provided funds to purchase video cameras, digital recorders, lighting equipment and more to help start the project.

Time is of the utmost importance. **Volunteers are needed to help with interviewing, transcribing, research, collections of family histories, writing, camera work, recording, fundraising and more.** This is an inter-generational project so all ages are welcome to join.



Keepers of the Flame Oral History volunteers



WWII Veteran Jim Yamashita and Phillip Komai



Susan Uyemura



San Gabriel Japanese School, Reunion, 1927

PHOTO | Pre-war San Gabriel Valley Reunion
Reprinted October 24, 1987 by Bacon Sakatani



A VISION FOR THE FUTURE

PLAN | Honoring our Past, Pioneering our Future

President Phillip Komai and Executive Director Pearl Omiya presented the 2012-2022 Strategic Plan at the 2013 Installation Banquet in January. The Strategic Plan was produced by the Development Committee to plan for the next 10 years and was created within the spirit of “Honoring our Past, Pioneering our Future” as the guiding vision. The ESGVJCC is rapidly approaching maximum usage capacity with its current facilities and is unable to meet the growing needs of the organization and its’ members for new programs and classes. Currently the gym and social hall are being utilized every night of the week and nearly all day on weekends; therefore, new programs and classes cannot be added. Existing programs cannot expand to meet multiple nights of the week due to the lack of

available facilities.

The Strategic Plan includes researching new moneymaking opportunities so that the ESGVJCC isn’t relying solely on membership dues, usage fees, donations and fundraisers to fund its operations. These new funding sources can help to reduce membership dues and possibly usage fees. The added income will also provide funding to subsidize cultural programming and to offer new services to members such as free afterschool tutoring, free senior lunches and free computer classes. Finally, the plan seeks to expand the ESGVJCC by acquiring satellite facilities to meet the needs of its members and to more effectively serve the community. The Strategic Plan will be the guiding force of the ESGVJCC for the next 10 years.



STRATEGIC PLAN | Summary

3 Years | Growth

- Bring new members to our existing programs and classes
- Reduce membership dues
- Create new money making opportunities
- Develop new skills and resources to better prepare our leaders for the future

5 Years | Foundation

- Generate profits from new money making opportunities
- Continue to reduce membership dues and usage fees
- Offer new services to members
- Subsidize and fund core cultural programs

10 Years | Expansion

- Includes acquiring a satellite facility or expanding the existing facility
- Allows the ESGVJCC to offer new programs, classes and to better serve the community