

# ESGVJCC

## newsette

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NEXT ISSUE: MARCH 2026

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ESGVJCC

## SAVE THE DATE FOR OUR 75TH ANNIVERSARY PARTY!



CELEBRATE 75 YEARS OF THE ESGVJCC WITH US!

ESGVJCC  
75 七十五  
1951-2026  
YEARS

EAST SAN GABRIEL VALLEY  
JAPANESE COMMUNITY CENTER

**75TH ANNIVERSARY PARTY**

A fun evening of food/drinks, performances, and reflecting on 75 meaningful years of bridging culture, family, & community!

**Saturday, June 20**  
3pm-7pm in the ESGVJCC Gym

**RSVP by May 15**  
\$75 per person or \$500 for table of 10  
**RSVP link coming soon!**

Questions? Contact Events/Programs Coordinator Katrina Que at [katrinaq@esgvjcc.org](mailto:katrinaq@esgvjcc.org) or (626) 960-2566.



*Submitted by Mary Nagakawa, Marketing Coordinator*

Save the date for our 75<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Party on June 20, 2026!

The celebration will take place from 3pm-7pm in the ESGVJCC Gymnasium. This special evening will feature a relaxed, festive atmosphere filled with fun, reflection, and gratitude as we celebrate 75 meaningful years of the ESGVJCC bridging culture, family, and community.

Join us for food and drinks, live performances, and a stroll down memory lane as we look back on decades of history and remarkable growth—from our beginnings as a single acre of farmland generously donated by Eijiro Machida to the vibrant community center we are today.

From our humble beginnings to becoming an established nonprofit offering more than 40 programs and serving over 1,000 members, we are deeply thankful to everyone who has been part of our journey.

The ESGVJCC is 75 years strong thanks to our founders, members, community partners, and, of course, the dedicated staff and board members who have supported our mission throughout the years. We truly hope you'll join us for this milestone celebration and share in the pride of being part of this incredible moment in our history.

More details and a registration link will be available soon. For now, please save the date—June 20, 2026! ■

# 2026 ESGVJCC

## BOARD OF DIRECTORS

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Tim Itatani

### Co-Vice President

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### Co-Vice President

Grace Richardson

### Co-Vice President

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Denise Akune

### Treasurer

AJ Kamimura

### Parliamentarian

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Kim Nakashima

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Barbara Shirota

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### Executive Director

Pearl Omiya

### Executive Assistant

Tina Asano

### Program Director

Melissa Kozono

### Marketing Coordinator

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### Office Manager

Scott Kawachi

### Events/Programs Coordinator

Katrina Que

### Events/Programs Coordinator

Bryce Middo

## MESSAGE FROM THE ESGVJCC

TIM ITATANI, 2025 ESGVJCC PRESIDENT

Happy New Year, ESGVJCC Members!

Akemashite omedetō and Happy New Year to all our members, families, programs, sponsors, and the West Covina community. I'm sure you enjoyed plenty of oshōgatsu (the traditional Japanese New Year's) feast, and I hope each and every one of you had a safe, healthy, and enjoyable holiday season and are looking forward to what 2026 has in store.



The year 2026 is a very special one for ESGVJCC, as it marks the 75<sup>th</sup> anniversary of our incorporation as a nonprofit organization. However, our roots in the community go back even further, well before 1951. To share a brief history, our story truly began in 1936, when Eijiro Machida generously donated one acre of his farmland to the community for Japanese social activities, a Japanese language school, and a judo dojo. This land was located at the corner of Sunset and West Covina Parkway, near the site of today's West Covina City Hall.

During World War II, the Center was closed when Japanese Americans were forced into internment camps. At that time, we entrusted the keys and deed to Ted and Hazel Roberts, who protected the facility and leased it to local schools to cover expenses. We will always be indebted to Ted and Hazel Roberts for their dedication and stewardship. After the war, the Center was revived by founders such as Yosh Sogioka, Kimio Hatakeyama, and Frank Konno, and our doors reopened in 1946.

In 1951, ESGVJCC was officially incorporated as a nonprofit organization. In the 1960s, we moved to our current location at 1203 W Puente Avenue, West Covina.

We have so much to be thankful for. If our founders could see how their vision has grown—our 40 programs, over 1,000 members, two businesses serving childcare and senior daycare needs, and our dedicated full-time staff supporting the needs of our members and programs—I hope and believe this far exceeds what they originally envisioned for ESGVJCC. Most importantly, they would know that ESGVJCC is in great hands for the next 75 years.

Happy New Year,

Tim T. Itatani  
President, ESGVJCC Board of Directors

## ESGVJCC EVENTS

# 2026 CALENDAR OF EVENTS

Submitted by Mary Nagakawa, Marketing Coordinator

Mark your calendars with these important dates and stay up-to-date with everything happening throughout the new year! You can always find our full event calendar on Page 4 of the Newsette or online at [esgvjcc.org/calendar-of-events](http://esgvjcc.org/calendar-of-events). ■

## EVENTS IN 2026



**7**  
Feb  
**Installation Banquet**



**21**  
Mar  
**Health Fair**



**25**  
Apr  
**Cherry Blossom Festival**



**20**  
Jun  
**75th Anniversary**



**13**  
Sep  
**Keiro no Hi**



**3**  
Oct  
**Akimatsuri Fall Festival**

## ESGVJCC PROGRAMS

# UPDATED BALLROOM CLASS SCHEDULE IN JANUARY



Submitted by Lee Ezaki, Ballroom Dance Class

There has been a small change to the Ballroom Class schedule in January 2026! Beginning January 2, 2026, we will be learning the Tango at 7pm and West Coast Swing at 8pm.

The classes will be taught by Taya Hughes, a very experienced ballroom instructor. A dance partner is not necessary and new dancers are welcome. The fee is \$10 for one class and \$15 to take both classes. For more information, you may contact Lee Ezaki at (626) 533-8359. ■

## ESGVJCC PROGRAMS

# LEARN KENDO AT THE ESGVJCC



Submitted by Philip Okamoto, Covina Kendo Dojo

Covina Kendo is currently taking new members for the new year. Everyone is welcome to train with us. Youth through Adults (ages 6 and up) Our practices are on Tuesdays and Thursdays 7:30pm to 9pm. Tuesday evenings are located in the Social Hall and Thursdays are in the gym.

For more information, please go to [www.covinakendo.org](http://www.covinakendo.org). Please email us if you would like to come watch a practice session. ■

# 2026 EVENTS

## FEBRUARY 7

### INSTALLATION BANQUET

Celebrate all of our accomplishments of 2025 and as we install the 2026 Board of Directors.

## MARCH 21

### HEALTH FAIR

A free, public health fair for the community at Plaza West Covina—screenings, resource fair, and more.

## APRIL 12

### SPRING CLEAN-UP

Join us for painting, cleaning our facilities, and other various maintenance around the ESGVJCC!

## APRIL 25

### CHERRY BLOSSOM FESTIVAL

ESGVJCC showcases and promotes the Japanese culture with cultural performances at Plaza West Covina.

## JUNE 1-6

### MEMBER APPRECIATION WEEK

A week to recognize and celebrate ESGVJCC Members.

## SEPTEMBER 13

### KEIRO NO HI

A celebratory day for our seniors who continue to be the foundation of the ESGVJCC.

## OCTOBER 3

### AKIMATSURI FESTIVAL

ESGVJCC showcases its organizations with vivid exhibits, exciting performances, and delicious food!

## OCTOBER TBD

### AKIMATSURI GOLF TOURNAMENT

Fundraiser event: Golfers! Come support the ESGVJCC!

## OCTOBER 16

### TRUNK OR TREAT/BOOK FAIR

Family fun event with trick or treating, crafts, games, and food!

## NOVEMBER 8

### VETERANS DAY SERVICE

A day where we honor and pay tribute to the veterans who protect our country and freedom.



## SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA EDISON SUPPORTS ESGVJCC

The ESGVJCC was awarded \$5,000 to distribute information to our membership on wildfire safety. Throughout the year, you will see SCE articles, social media posts, and various information distributed at events. ■



## FASTER GRID PROTECTION SETTINGS IN HIGH FIRE RISK AREAS

Utilities use protection settings on protective devices across the entire electric system to maintain the reliability of power and prevent damage to equipment caused by an electrical disruption or fault, such as a tree branch falling on a power line. This is done by detecting the fault and then isolating the impacted area so that the remaining system operates normally and fewer customers are impacted by an outage. Examples of protective devices include relay and circuit breakers at substations and remote-controlled automatic reclosers and fuses on distribution lines.



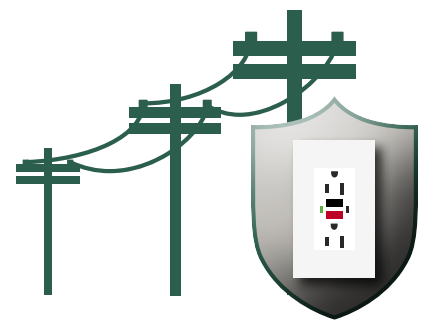
### WHAT ARE FASTER GRID PROTECTION SETTINGS?

Faster grid protection settings reduce the response time of protective devices when an issue is detected.

Protective devices can act like ground fault circuit interrupter (GFCI) outlets found in home wiring systems. GFCI outlets in the home detect and automatically turn off power when they detect a hazard, such as a malfunctioning kitchen appliance or hair dryer.

Similarly, faster grid protection settings in Southern California Edison's high fire risk areas act more quickly during hazardous scenarios like tree branches or windblown debris that can get into power lines and reduces the risk of an ignition.

*Protection settings are similar to ground fault circuit interrupter (GFCI) outlets in high-risk areas at home, such as kitchens and bathrooms*



Updated: 11/21/2022

## AUTOMATIC MEMBERSHIP RENEWAL

If you would like to have your ESGVJCC Membership automatically renewed, please contact Pearl Omiya at [pomiya@esgvjcc.org](mailto:pomiya@esgvjcc.org) or visit [esgvjcc.org](http://esgvjcc.org) and fill out the Recurring Credit Card Payment Authorization form.

## ESGVJCC YOUTH PROGRAMS

## 2025 WINTER CAMP CHIBIKKO RECAP

Submitted by Mary Nagakawa, Marketing Coordinator



Winter Camp Chibikko was filled with laughter, creativity, and cultural discovery as our campers celebrated Oshōgatsu (Japanese New Year) together. The days flew by, and each moment was jam-packed with meaningful activities and delicious food that made winter break truly special.

On the first day of camp, campers dove into Oshōgatsu traditions by creating their own New Year decorations. They crafted hanging decorations, wrote their wishes for 2026 on personalized ema, and even made their own kendama, a traditional New Year's toy. These hands-on activities gave campers a fun and memorable way to learn about Japanese culture and New Year customs.

Food was another highlight of the day. Campers prepared their own bento lunches filled with classic osechi ryōri, including chashu, salmon, tempura shrimp, chicken teriyaki, kamaboko, carrots, and green beans. For a special treat, everyone enjoyed warm ozōni (mochi soup), traditionally eaten for good luck in the New Year.

The celebration continued on the following day as campers welcomed the Year of the Horse with even more creative projects and activities. They made origami daruma, crafted their own shimekazari (New Year wreaths), and designed colorful fuku uchiwa (lucky fans). Campers fueled up with a morning snack of chashu fried rice and enjoyed a hearty lunch of sukiyaki and rice.

In between cultural activities, campers stayed active by playing basketball and sharing laughs with friends. They also enjoyed slurping up toshikoshi soba, a traditional noodle dish symbolizing a fresh start for the New Year, before wrapping up the day with a visit to the Camp Chibikko yen store—a favorite among many!

Thank you so much for having your child spend their winter break with us at Winter Camp Chibikko. We had an amazing time learning about Oshōgatsu, celebrating Japanese traditions, and making wonderful memories together. Highlights from camp are always shared on our Instagram @esgvjcc, and all photos have been posted on our Facebook page—be sure to follow along!

We hope to see your campers again this summer in July! ■

ESGVJCC

# HAPPY NEW YEAR FROM THE ESGVJCC STAFF!

Submitted by ESGVJCC Staff



## Pearl Omiya

Executive Director

Akemashite omedetou gozaimasu. Kotoshi mo yoroshiku onegaishimasu. Happy New Year everyone! Every year I'm so shocked that it's the end of the year already! As I enter my 21st year here at the ESGVJCC, I always look forward to both the new opportunities and the challenges that this year may bring. I am so grateful that I can continue to grow and learn in this position and I thank everyone for their continued support for not only me, but also for our fantastic staff and our committed Board of Directors.

A little family update from us—Daisuke, who is a 14 year old teenager, is now a freshman in high school. He played varsity water polo in the fall and is on the freshman basketball team. He got to experience his first CIF game, the first time the water polo team has made it in 3 years. The whole team cut off their hair in commemoration and in camaraderie of this momentous event. Daisuke is keeping busy with not only a busy sports practice schedule but also taking challenging classes full of honors and AP classes. It's a whole new world for us but he is doing well and we are very thankful for the support of his counselor, teachers and coaches. Taiki, who is now 12 years old and is now a 7th grader and is at his own school by himself for the first time. He has always had his older brother or little sister with him until this year. He made the middle school basketball team and is still playing the flute with the school band. He is performing at community events and will perform at Disneyland next year. All three of our kids are still participating in club swimming at Brea Aquatics and thankfully still improving at each monthly swim meet. At last year's winter elite championship meet, Taiki only qualified for 2 events. This year, he qualified for 7 events and is now looking to reach the time standards for the next age group for 13-14 years old! Ayumi, who is 9 years old now, joined a co-ed travel basketball team for 2 seasons and just recently joined a new all girls club basketball team for the second season. She loves the challenge of playing up with 4th and 5th graders and is learning a lot from this new set of coaches. Her first season with them they got to play in the championship game.

The kids remain active at the ESGVJCC, of course, Ayumi and Taiki are still in Japanese classical dance with Daisuke joining them this year. Maybe you'll see all three of them perform at the Cherry Blossom Festival! Unfortunately due to schedule conflicts, Daisuke had to stop training with karate. All three of them are in Sabers basketball and still really love playing the game with their teams. This past summer, Daisuke took on the role of Camp Chibikko counselor, a program he has been a camper for since he was 5 years old. He also volunteered as a coach for our basketball clinics and camp. Camp Chibikko still remains my kids' most favorite program at the ESGVJCC.

Having my children involved in so many programs at the Center has really given them not only a greater appreciation of their Japanese culture but also a deeper sense of community. I hope this runs true with all of the children who enter through our gates. Our goal in 2026 is to continue to provide more opportunities for youth to develop their skills and learn about Japanese culture. Wishing all of you the very best in 2026!! ■

## Melissa Kozono

Program Director

あけましておめでとうございます。 Akemashite Omedetou Gozaimasu! Happy New Year, everyone! I hope you all had a wonderful holiday season—this year truly flew by!

The biggest change of 2025 was welcoming our daughter, Emika, in early January. She has completely turned our world upside down in the best possible way. My husband and I are beyond grateful that she gets to come to work with me each day and spend her days at Kokoro no Sato Infant Center. It has truly been a full-circle moment for me—from taking Early Childhood Education classes with Pearl back in 2014, to navigating licensing, opening the center, teaching in the classroom, serving as Assistant Director, and now experiencing it all as a parent.

I honestly can't put into words how thankful I am to the ESGVJCC for giving our family the peace of mind that Emika is

not only well cared for, but deeply loved not just by the staff but also by the many ESGVJCC members who see her throughout the week and cheer her on as she grows.

We ended the year with a big family trip to Japan to visit relatives and take advantage of Paid Family Leave for my husband (a rare December break for someone who works at UPS!). It sure was a trip we'll never forget.

Becoming a parent has changed everything—in the best way. My priorities are clearer, my time is more intentional, and I've learned just how powerful true balance can be. I'm endlessly grateful for the support that makes it all possible.

As I head into 2026 after surviving my very first year of parenthood, I'm so excited to continue serving a community I truly love. Being able to share Japanese culture, heritage, and community with Emika and with future generations means more to me than I can express. Wishing our entire ESGVJCC family a year filled with health, happiness, and many beautiful memories ahead! ことしもよろしくおねがいします。Kotoshi mo yoroshiku onegaishimasu! ■

## Tina Asano

Executive Assistant

Each year at the ESGVJCC brings both excitement and challenges, and last year was no different. When I first started working at the Center 14 years ago, the environment was relaxed, but as the ESGVJCC grew—especially with the opening of Kokoro no Sato Infant Care—the pace began to accelerate. Today, in addition to child care, we have ClubGenkki for seniors, where I enjoy engaging in conversations about their rich histories. It's truly fulfilling to see the Center continue to grow, welcoming new members and gaining momentum along the way. I am deeply grateful for the friendships I've formed, the programs that consistently support the ESGVJCC, and the wonderful members whose commitment and dedication make all of this possible. Thank you to our ESGVJCC team for your relentless pursuit of excellence. Wishing everyone a very Happy New Year! ■

## Mary Nagakawa

Marketing Coordinator

I hope everyone had a lovely holiday season and entered 2026 with a sense of peace, clarity, and hope for the year ahead!

July 2025 marked my third year working at the ESGVJCC, though at times it feels as though I've been here longer. Over these three years as part of the Center and its community, I've learned so much about what it means to work in a nonprofit, the importance of showing up for the people we are committed to serving, and I've developed a deeper connection to my Japanese roots. I've also grown tremendously, both personally and professionally, during my time here.

I owe this growth to the many experiences I've had inside and outside of work, as well as to the incredible people I have the privilege of working closely with and calling my friends every day. The ESGVJCC team, along with our Members, never ceases to inspire me and consistently leaves me feeling touched by their generosity, kindness, and genuine care.

Sometimes a job can feel like just a job, but I feel incredibly fortunate to say that mine also offers a true sense of community and a profound source of love and support in my life. Happy New Year, and I look forward to celebrating 75 years of the ESGVJCC with all of you! ■

## Scott Kawachi

Office Manager

Happy New Year! I hope everyone had a wonderful holiday season! Since joining ESGVJCC in mid-October of 2024, it has been such a rewarding experience, and I already feel like part of the ESGVJCC Ohana, Kazoku or Family. I want to sincerely thank each and every one of you for the warm welcomes and kindness you've shown me these past few months. Looking ahead to 2026, I'm excited for the continued growth of our community, and I can't wait to see what the future holds! Wishing you all a prosperous and fulfilling New Year! ■

## Bryce Middo

Events/Programs Coordinator

Happy new year everyone! It has been an honor to serve this community since joining in August 2025. The dedication from the staff, board of directors, members and all have taught me to appreciate the community effort even more as we go into 2026. This place has welcomed me with open arms and I could not be more grateful to call this my work. Thank you for all the laughs, support, and delicious food! ■

## Katrina Que

Events/Programs Coordinator

あけましておめでとうございます! A very Happy New Year to you all! I hope everyone had a chance to spend some time with their loved ones over the holidays! Joining the ESGVJCC team back in late August, I was a little scared as I was in a new community and city, but many of you have welcomed me with so much warmth, kindness, and encouragement, there are not enough words to express how grateful I am to all of you.

As we look ahead to the new year—and especially as we celebrate the Center's 75<sup>th</sup> Anniversary—we remain committed to supporting one another and helping our community thrive. We hope you'll join us at upcoming events, whether by visiting, volunteering, participating, or simply being part of the festivities. Your presence truly makes a difference, and we look forward to celebrating together! ■



# PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS

## 2026 ESGVJCC Queens Program



Annual | ESGVJCC

The ESGVJCC Queens Program application deadline has been extended until January 30! If you are passionate about representing the Japanese American community and eager to grow personally and professionally, we encourage you to apply by emailing Program Director Melissa Kozono at [mkozono@esgvjcc.org](mailto:mkozono@esgvjcc.org).

## 2026 Nikkei Youth Scholarships



Annual | ESGVJCC

Attention all high school seniors and college undergraduate and graduate students! The applications for the 2026 Nikkei Youth Scholarship Program are now LIVE! Scholarships ranging between \$500-\$2,000 are available. Apply by Monday, April 13 at 5pm! Application links can be found on [esgvjcc.org/youth-programs](http://esgvjcc.org/youth-programs).

## Kokoro Summer Fun Club



Annual | ESGVJCC

Kokoro Summer Fun Club throughout will take place during the month of June, the last week of July, and first week of August. Registration link to come soon! To learn more, please email Program Director Melissa Kozono at [mkozono@esgvjcc.org](mailto:mkozono@esgvjcc.org).

## KONDO WEALTH ADVISORS

# FINANCIAL CHECK LIST FOR THE NEW YEAR

*Submitted by Akemi Dalvi, CPA/PFS, CFP*

The start of a new year brings great feelings of opportunity, optimism, and a fresh new start to everything we put off last year. Many people buy gym memberships, using the new year's momentum to attend diligently through January. Taking care of your health is a priority, but don't forget to channel some of that ambition towards your finances also. You might be able to start some new financial habits and put them on auto-pilot, so you don't lose steam half-way through the year.

Here are some financial checklist items you can start or refresh in 2026.

### 1. Pay Yourself First

My father gave me this advice when I got my first real job. "When you get your paycheck, pay yourself first," he said. In other words, before you pay the mortgage, the cable bill, your auto loan, the credit card bill, pay yourself first by allocating a set amount you earn into savings such as a 401k or employer sponsored plan. If you pay everyone else first and yourself last, there might not be anything left after all your generosity.

### 2. Make Your Money Work for You

Often good savers end up accidentally accumulating too much cash at the bank earning 0.01%. CDs may seem like an easy solution, but CDs also lead to the task of keeping a log for when each CD matures, and then the cycle of shopping around for a replacement every 6-12 months. For short-term expenses, consider a money market fund which provides the flexibility of liquidity at any time (no locked-in term like a CD) for short-term savings or emergency funds. Most custodians (Fidelity, Schwab, etc.) offer a money market option. You can also consider online banks like Capital One or your local credit union for a higher yield savings option which will fulfill the same function as a money market fund. For excess cash you won't need in the next year, consider repositioning into your investment portfolio for market rates of return.

### 3. Build a Budget

Many count calories, but counting your dollars or budgeting is equally important. Reviewing your budget might reveal that you are unknowingly overspending in some places (streaming subscriptions?) and could reallocate those dollars to budget reduction, or better yet, investment building. Some credit card companies will even offer a year end summary of your spending by category to give you a good head start when reviewing your expenses.

### 4. Financial Check-Up

Just like you see the doctor once a year for an annual check-up, you should touch base with your financial planner once a year to make sure your finances are in good order. In 2025, H.R.1, or the One Big Beautiful Bill Act (OBBBA), was passed and the tax law changes may have affected you. You should also check your asset allocation or mix of stocks, bonds, cash, and alternatives in your investment portfolio to ensure your investment portfolio properly aligns with your risk tolerance and investment timeline.

Finally, check-in to update your goals, which are the true driver of your investment portfolio. Maybe you've planned a big family vacation this year and you'll need a larger distribution. Maybe you've decided to downsize and will sell your primary residence, realizing a lot of capital gains. Your financial advisor might be able to utilize your investment portfolio to minimize capital gains taxes or put together an efficient distribution strategy.

Happy New Year and best wishes to you for a healthy, joyous, and prosperous 2026. Please reach out to your Certified Financial Planner™ or CPA Personal Financial Specialist to explore cash flow management, charitable gifting strategies, prepare for retirement, or navigate new tax policy. We're here to help you make sense of it all.

*The opinions expressed above are solely those of Kondo Wealth Advisors, Inc., (626-449-7783 [info@kondowealthadvisors.com](mailto:info@kondowealthadvisors.com)) a Registered Investment Advisor in the state of California. Neither Kondo Wealth Advisors, Inc. nor its representatives provide legal, tax or accounting advice.*

## ESGVJCC PROGRAMS

# THE WEST COVINA BUDDHIST TEMPLE PRESENTS A FREE PUBLIC WORKSHOP ON JANUARY 25 AFTER SUNDAY SERVICE

WEST COVINA  
BUDDHIST TEMPLE  
2026 WORKSHOP  
*THE POWER OF CONNECTION:  
EVERY FAMILY HAS A STORY  
AND THEIR STORY IS OURS*



Date: Sunday, January 25, 2026

Time: 11:15 AM – 2:00 PM

Location: West Covina Buddhist Temple, 1203 W. Puente Ave., West Covina, CA 91790, or via Zoom

About the Workshop: The purpose of the workshop is to enhance mutual understanding and friendship in this challenging time by learning from each other's culture and history through our personal family stories. Three panelists will share a short talk about their family experiences as immigrants.

Speakers: Dr. Rosa Alcade Delgado: Rosa is a dedicated educator both in New York and California. She is considered an expert in English as a Second Language (ESL) and English Language Development (ELD).

Nazia Islam: Nazia is a librarian, artist and poet in the LA area. She is of Bengali heritage born in Bangladesh and raised in New Jersey.

Barbara Shiota: Barbara is a Japanese American educator born in Merced, California. Her family spent WWII in the Heart Mountain, WY internment camp.



Dr. Rosa Delgado



Nazia Islam



Barbara Shiota

## PROGRAM IMMEDIATELY FOLLOWS SUNDAY SERVICE

11:15 AM – 12:30 PM

Workshop

12:30 PM – 1:15 PM

Light Lunch

1:15 PM – 2:00 PM

Q & A

OPEN TO THE PUBLIC – NO REGISTRATION FEE  
Pre-register by Google Form

[Click here](#) or scan the QR code



More info: [revnobuko@gmail.com](mailto:revnobuko@gmail.com) (Rev. Miyoshi) or [pishsato@gmail.com](mailto:pishsato@gmail.com) (Pat Sato)

*Submitted by Mary Nagakawa, Marketing Coordinator*

The West Covina Buddhist Temple will be hosting a free workshop on Sunday, January 25 from 11:15am to 2pm, immediately following Sunday Service at the ESGVJCC.

The workshop theme is "The Power of Connection: Every Family Has a Story and Their Story Is Ours" and will feature guest speakers Dr. Rosa Delgado, Nazia Islam, and Barbara Shiota. These three amazing panelists will share a short talk about their family experiences as immigrants.

This workshop is free and open to the public. Participants may attend in person at the ESGVJCC after Sunday Service or join virtually via Zoom.

If attending the workshop in-person, the workshop will take start at 11:15am and end at 12:30pm for a light lunch break until 1:15pm. The event will then conclude with a Q&A session until 2pm.

To receive the Google Form or additional information, please email Reverend Miyoshi at [revnobuko@gmail.com](mailto:revnobuko@gmail.com) or Pat Sato at [pishsato@gmail.com](mailto:pishsato@gmail.com).

To learn more about the West Covina Buddhist Temple and their Sunday Services, study classes, and future events, visit their website at [livingdharma.org](http://livingdharma.org)! ■

## ESGVJCC

# WATER DISPENSER DEDICATION TO SHERYL SAURA



*Submitted by Pearl Omiya, Executive Director*

On October 21, 2025, Art Abrantes donated a new water dispenser for the gymnasium. This donation was made in honor of his wife Sheryl Saura's birthday in December. She has always wanted a water dispenser for the gymnasium and Art fulfilled her wish. On December 4, Art unveiled the surprise to Sheryl who was completely shocked and elated. At the Sabers December 7th board meeting, the entire board thanked the Abrantes Family for their generous donation and support.

Art and Sheryl are both very active in the Sabers Youth Basketball Organization. Art began coaching the Light Sabers (now 9th grade boys) in 2015 when the boys were only 4-5 years old. Art doesn't have a son on the team but my oldest son is on the team and he volunteered as his coach as a favor to me and my husband.

When his oldest daughter was old enough, he also became the head coach of her team, the Shooting Stars (8th grade girls) and assistant coaching his youngest daughter's team, the Sparks (5th grade girls). Sheryl also got involved right away, becoming team rep of the Shooting Stars. Coaching three Sabers teams has not been easy but Art has made time for all the teams, giving much of himself to all the kids. Art and Sheryl's generosity also carries over to sponsoring dinners for all the team reps as well as generous donations towards the Sabers FUNraiser as well as the East San Gabriel Valley Japanese Community Center.

We have been friends with the Abrantes family for many many years. Art and my husband Alex would carpool together from San Diego to the San Gabriel Valley while Alex was in college at UCSD and Art was in the Navy. I met Art soon after Alex and I started dating. Art was a groomsman in our wedding which is when Art and I became close too. We are blessed to have them in our lives and are even more blessed that we are able to be part of this ESGVJCC and Sabers community together.

Thank you again to Art and Sheryl for your generous donation and your unwavering support for our community. ■

# HOW CAN YOU SUPPORT THE ESGVJCC?

**Any and every donation is greatly appreciated. There are a variety of ways to continue supporting the ESGVJCC:**

## CELLPHONES

The ESGVJCC is part of a national program designed to remove used cell phones from the country's environment while directly benefiting our organization. So now you can donate your old cell phones and the ESGVJCC will receive \$\$.

## OLD CAR

Your car doesn't even have to run! The towing company will come to you; plus, it can be a great tax-incentive for you. Call the ESGVJCC for more information.

## WHILE YOU WORK

If your company is affiliated with United Way, you can choose to designate your donation to go to the ESGVJCC. The ESGVJCC's United Way Account # is 1745959. Don't forget to check with your company about matching donations - Some companies like Johnson & Johnson Family of Companies donate 2 to 1!

## WHILE YOU USE EBAY

If you sell many items on eBay, you can choose to donate anywhere from 10% to 100% of your final sale to the ESGVJCC! Look for "eBay Giving Works" in the Sell Your Item form "Select a new nonprofit" type "East San Gabriel Valley Japanese Community Center" in the "Nonprofit Name or Keyword" field Then select the percentage 10% - 100%!

## VENMO

You can make donations to the ESGVJCC via the VenmoApp. Just search for the East San Gabriel Valley Japanese C in the app! Download the Venmo app in the Apple App Store or Google Play. Set up your account, add your payment method and you are all ready to go!

## UNITED WAY

If your company is affiliated with United Way, you can choose to designate your donation to go to the East San Gabriel Valley Japanese Community Center. Our United Way Account # is 1745959.

## WISH LIST

By donating items from our Wish List, you help us reduce our expenses. This allows us to provide more much needed funding for our Programs! To see what office, maintenance, and other supplies you can donate, please visit [esgvjcc.org/donate](http://esgvjcc.org/donate).

## DONATIONS OPERATING FUND

Denise Akune	\$50
Anonymous	\$5,000
Susan Aarii	\$500
Tina Asano	\$50
Nancy Ayers	\$10
Darlene Bay	\$50
Cheryl Iwashita Chang	\$100
Naomi Chang	\$100
Frances Ching	\$50
Kathi Duncan	\$100
Sylvia Ena	\$100
Leroy & Karen Ezaki	\$50
FIA Insurance Services, Inc.	\$100
Regina Furumoto	\$250
Roy & Cecilia Hamamoto	\$2,000
Kathleen & Gene Hashiguchi	\$100
Mary Hatae	\$300
Harue Hayashi	\$100
George & Ruth Hiyane	\$100
Fumiko & Huey Hong	\$50
Setsuko & Randall Houston	\$100
Daryl & Cynthia Itatani	\$5,000
Mitsuo Danny Iwama	\$100
Shoye Iwo	\$200
Kay Kanayama	\$500
Janet Kanemoto	\$200
Glenn & Yukiko Kasai	\$25
Elaine Kimura	\$500
Nancy Kodama	\$100
Mickey Komai	\$250
Ralph Komai	\$100
Nancy Kudo-Hombo	\$200
June Kuramoto	\$500
Jennifer Lee	\$100
Ray & Mariko (Machida) Motoyama	\$500
Susan Mita	\$100
Ken Mitsunaga	\$500
Hatsue Miyashiro	\$100
Neil & June Murakami	\$100
Dawn Mori	\$50
Robert & Kathie Nishida	\$200

Koharu Nakamura	\$300
Myrtle & Charles Nakamura	\$200
Ujinobu Niwa	\$200
Wesley Nobuta	\$250
Laraine H Oda	\$200
Beverly Oki	\$200
Nora Oshima	\$50
Juily Phun	\$100
John Puchalski	\$25
David Schildt & Lynn Moyers	\$20
Kathy Shibata	\$100
Bruce & Diane Shimano	\$200
Erika Shinzato	\$50
Barbara Shiota	\$500
Nathan & Christine Sugimoto	\$4,000
Bert & Ailene Tanaka	\$100
Masaru Tanaka	\$1,500
Michael & Linda Tanaka	\$1,000
Curt & Rebecca Tsujimoto	\$50
Thomas Umemoto	\$1,000
Eileen Uyehara	\$100
Glenn & Rosemary Waki	\$300
Emiko Wexler	\$200
Kazumi Williams	\$100
Jane Yamamoto	\$100
David & Melinda Yamashita	\$2,000
Jack & Elaine Yanabu	\$200
Eiko Yasutake	\$50
Conway & Krystal Yeo	\$100

2026

**KIBOU LEGACY CIRCLE**
**Tim & Sandy Itatani****Daryl & Cynthia Itatani****Mae & Ken Kimura****Phillip Komai****Glenn & Jean Nakatani****Grace Richardson****Barbara Shiota**

The Kibou Legacy Circle includes donors who give \$5,000 or more annually. These donors give back to help ensure that the Japanese American culture and traditions continue through the various ESGVJCC programs and classes offered here. ■



## COOKING

### MARCH 6, 2026

### ESGVJCC

Enhance your Japanese culinary skills with Keiro's expert-led miso and koji workshop.

For more information or to register for the workshop, scan the QR code or go to [keiro.org/glw](https://keiro.org/glw).



Registration Closes: **Friday, February 20, 2026**  
(or when capacity is reached)

Keiro

## 2026 ESGVJCC NIKKEI YOUTH SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM

Scholarships ranging from \$500 to \$2,000!

Scholarships are available for high school seniors & college undergraduates/graduates!

#### Eligibility

- Must be current ESGVJCC Members for the calendar year
- Each applicant can apply for up to 3 scholarships
- See applications for specific requirements

#### High School Application

[tinyurl.com/2026highschoolapp](https://tinyurl.com/2026highschoolapp)

#### College Application

[tinyurl.com/2026collegeapp](https://tinyurl.com/2026collegeapp)

#### Important Dates

- February 11 & March 18 at 7pm - Zoom Workshops
- March 31 - Early Review Period Deadline
- April 13 - Applications Due
- May 17 at 1pm - Scholarship Luncheon

Contact Program Director, Melissa Kozono at [mkozono@esgvjcc.org](mailto:mkozono@esgvjcc.org) for any questions.



EAST SAN GABRIEL VALLEY  
JAPANESE COMMUNITY CENTER **ESGVJCC**

1203 West Puente Avenue | West Covina, CA 91790  
PO Box 282 | West Covina, CA 91793-0282

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DATED MATERIAL

## BRIDGING CULTURE, FAMILY, & COMMUNITY

# ESGVJCC

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

### ESGVJCC Office

P 626 960 2566  
F 626 960 0866  
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E [info@esgvjcc.org](mailto:info@esgvjcc.org)  
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