

Summer 2024



GARDENA VALLEY

# JCI QUARTERLY

Newsletter of the Gardena Valley Japanese Cultural Institute

## GVJCI MATSURI FUNDRAISER THANK YOU'S

Cathy Lee, Director of Development and Marketing

Hello everyone!

This year's **2024 GVJCI Matsuri Fundraiser** was held on Saturday, June 29th under beautiful, sunny Southern California skies.

Our theme was **Celebrating Community Traditions!** And we are so thankful for our community who came together to make this year's event a success! This Matsuri would not exist without the support, hard work, and dedication from our Member Organizations, Volunteers, GVJCI Board, Staff and their families, before, during, and after the Matsuri. We are so thankful for the many committed Matsuri supporters including the corporate sponsors, local businesses, nurseries, and individuals who generously donated their time, financial support and products and all who came out to support and enjoy our event.



Thank you to our **GVJCI Member Organizations:** **South Bay FOR** for grilling & assembling the tasty teriyaki chicken, running our game booths, prepping, taking and filling food orders, **JCI Kendo** for making their delicious fresh yakisoba, **GEO** for making all of the rice, **Gardena Judo Club** for making the hot dogs, tamales & chili, **Gardena Kendo** for making cold and hot udon & helping with setup, **Nikkei Social Dance Club** and **Yuujuu Taiko** for making andagi, **Kyudo Renmei** for making the shave ice, **Nisei VFW** for making somen salad, **Yonsei Basketball & Sansei Baseball League** as bingo runners! **LA Men's Glee Club** who cheerfully greeted attendees, **Boy Scout Troops 683 & 719** ran our Holding Booth, trash pick up and helped with set up and tear down. **Naginata** for running our Drinks Booth, **Happy Qi Gong** for cooking spam, **Gardena Nisei Dance & Manzanar Committee** for making sure there were enough utensils on hand, and **Na Pua O Kapo** for bussing our eating area. **South Bay Singers & Chris Mori Line Dance Class** for cooking corn. **Ikebana Class** for the Sangetsu Ikebana display and Ikebana Demonstration.



Every year our senior volunteers, **Tomo No Kai**, work tirelessly behind the scenes before and during our matsuri. They clean and prep ingredients, cut all of the fresh produce, make tons of super tasty spam musubi, volunteer in our White Elephant, Crafts and Volunteer Hospitality Areas, and **TNK Watercolor and Oil Painting Class** for the art display - we are so thankful for all you do for us! Thank you to the **Tomo No Kai Classes:** **Bingo, Chair Yin Yoga, Friday Craft Class, Gentle Yoga, Line Dance, Oil Painting, Qi Gong for Healthy Back, Tomo Cafe, Water Color Painting, White Elephant Committee.** Thank you **Friday Craft Class** for donating all of the wonderful handmade crafts for our Craft Booth.

**ABC Nursery** and **Dai Ichi Bonsai Kai** were instrumental in helping us with our very popular plant sale! They were on hand throughout the day to answer any questions as our plant experts. We had so many beautiful plants donated by local nurseries that were enjoyed by all!

Thank you Member Organizations for selling Matsuri Pre Sale Coupons and for all who performed at our matsuri! We really appreciate all that you do for us!!



Thank you **Area Volunteer Managers** for all of your hard work meeting with us months before the matsuri, helping us plan, execute and secure & manage your supervisor teams at this year's matsuri.

Thank you **Matsuri Supervisors** for working with our AVMs to help ensure each area of matsuri was running smoothly.

Thank you to our many new committee's who were instrumental in planning and executing our matsuri this year! Our committees worked so hard, some for many months prior to the matsuri.

Thank you **IT Committee** for planning, improving and installing internet connectivity/wifi & cable throughout our facility.



Thank you, **Setup/Teardown/Equipment Committee**, for ensuring our matsuri was ready to go for Saturday (including the giant netting over the stage area), that we had all of the equipment needed in working condition and planning a smooth teardown. We were excited to see the matsuri come to life as it was set up and amazed at the number of volunteers who

helped tear down and how efficiently they worked.

Thank you **Food Service Committee** for ensuring our food ordering & pickup system ran smoothly. Our menu grew a little this year with the addition of inari, the quantities of food that was made and some layout changes and people were able to enjoy the food, desserts & drinks due to your hard working efforts.

Thank you **Plant Booth Committee** for managing all of the behind the scenes logistics including working with our local nurseries to put together the beautiful plant selections in our plant booth.

Thank you **Entertainment/AV Committee** for all of the details in managing the exciting entertainment lineup both outside with our various member organizations and the inside martial arts demonstrations. For the first time, we had sound throughout the matsuri, so all

could enjoy the entertainment, bingo, and the sounds of matsuri.

Thank you **Raffle Committee**, who solicited the many spectacular raffle & bingo prizes from local businesses in the community and for running the hourly raffle at the matsuri.

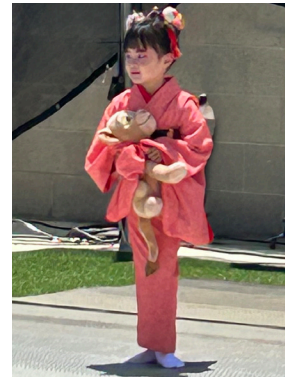
Thank you **Sign Committee** for the many signs throughout the matsuri this year. Attendees were able to know the matsuri schedule, menu, directional signs where activities were located and so much more adding to their overall matsuri experience.

Thank you, **Cashier volunteers** for helping make the payment process effortless throughout our matsuri.

Thank you **Interns**, for your willingness to jump in and help in any way you could, from prep, printing & laminating hundreds of signs, promoting our matsuri on social media, helping in the volunteer check in and so much more!

Thank you to our Member Organizations who provided the spectacular entertainment!

**Yuujuu Taiko**  
**Na Pua' O Kapo - 'Ukulele**  
**TNK Hula Class - Harriet Nagata**  
**GVJCI Line Dance Class**  
**Bando Hidesomi - Japanese Traditional Dance**  
**Move & Groove - Tim Toyama**  
**LA Men's Glee Club**  
**Japanese Flute & Drums Performance (Ken Yanai & Paul Tavenner)**



Thank you to our Member Organizations who provided the fabulous martial arts demonstrations!

**JLS Koto Player (Avaya McCoy)**  
**Southern California Kyudo Renmei**  
**Southern California Naginata Federation**  
**Gardena Kendo**  
**Gardena Judo Club**

Thank you to the **Gardena Buddhist Church** for making delicious chirashi and inari, running bingo, and making it so fun for all!

Thank you, **Nisei Week Court**, for helping sell our Mega Matsuri Raffle tickets and helping out with the Mega Matsuri Raffle drawings.

We also thank all of the many **Prep Volunteers** who planned & executed the huge setup weeks before matsuri, oversaw, prepped, cooked, assembled and distributed our super oishii matsuri fare! It was a lot of

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GARDENA VALLEY

# JCI Gardena Valley JCI News

## CONGRATULATIONS TO THE GVJCI SCHOLARSHIP RECIPIENTS!

This year we were able to award scholarships to four high school graduates and one undergraduate scholar. The recipients not only highly achieved academically, but they also dedicated many volunteer hours to the community. Many of them worked directly with GVJCI staff on projects and internships making lasting contributions. We are very proud of all of the recipients and wish them success in their continued education and future goals, and hope for a long lasting engagement with the GVJCI! The following are messages from the recipients.

### GARY HORI MEMORIAL SCHOLARSHIP

**Brady Tamanaha, North High School graduate, will be attending Chapman University**

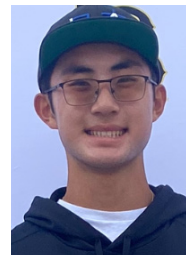


“The GVJCI scholarship will help aid me in my college career and be a reminder of the history and community that is always behind me!”

grandfather, Kunima Tamura, was a past president of the Gardeners Association. The Gardeners Association was a big part of his life. Connection to the Japanese American community was important to him, so he would be so happy to hear that I am receiving their legacy scholarship. I am so grateful to the JCI for this scholarship and for providing Japanese American youth in the South Bay with so many ways to connect with their Japanese heritage. As a youth, I began playing Sansei League Softball at the age of 6 and played until I aged out at the end of 8th grade. I have great memories of the JCI, helping out at the Matsuri game booths through the years. I also helped my brothers at their annual Troop 719 Pancake Breakfasts, held at the JCI. This scholarship will help me with my college expenses for my Criminal Justice degree, which I hope will help me give back to my community.”

### GVJCI SCHOLARSHIP

**Justin Yong, West Torrance High School graduate, will be attending California State University, Long Beach**



“My name is Justin Yong. I will be attending as a first-time and first-year freshman at California State University of Long Beach, majoring in Cinematic Arts. Receiving a scholarship from the Gardena Valley Japanese Community Institute (GVJCI) is truly a privilege and means the world to me. For the past 10 years, I’ve been actively involved in Kendo and volunteering at the Matsuri festivals, which has not only helped me stay connected to my Japanese heritage and give back to my community but has also sparked personal growth. This scholarship supports my future goals and recognizes the dedication and passion I’ve put into my cultural and community activities. It encourages me to continue embracing my culture and contributing to the community that has shaped who I am. Thank you, GVJCI, for this incredible honor and for believing in me.”

### GARDENA VALLEY JAACL SCHOLARSHIP

**Leila Tani Butler, Redondo High School graduate, will be attending California Polytechnic State University**



“I am honored and so grateful to receive the GVJACL scholarship. JCI has been a great part of my childhood, and has connected me to the Japanese American community. I cannot wait for future trips to Japan, and using the skills learned at JCI as I move forward to college.”

### GARDENA VALLEY GARDENERS ASSOCIATION LEGACY SCHOLARSHIP

**Paige Tamura, Torrance High School graduate, will be attending California State University, Fullerton**



“Hello, my name is Paige Tamura and I’m a Class of 2024 graduate from Torrance High School. I will be attending Cal State Fullerton in the fall, majoring in Criminal Justice. I want to thank the Gardena Valley JCI Scholarship Committee for awarding me the Gardena Valley Gardeners Association Legacy Scholarship. My

## BRIAN TAKEO MITSUNAGA MEMORIAL SCHOLARSHIP

Darren Kawazoe, El Camino College Honors Transfer Program Graduate, will be attending University of California, Irvine



"I am truly honored to be this year's recipient of the Gardena Valley Japanese Cultural Institute scholarship. With the privilege of this scholarship, it will be the perfect stepping stone for me to establish successful cultural and language exchange programs globally and foster a deeper understanding and appreciation for the Japanese heritage."

*To make a donation to the GVJCI Scholarship Fund or for more information, please contact the GVJCI Office or visit our website at [jci-gardena.org](http://jci-gardena.org). The GVJCI awards annual scholarships to high school seniors, and GVJCI Japanese Language School graduates. Applicants must have been directly involved with the GVJCI or its member organizations that hold regular activity at the GVJCI. Emphasis is placed upon GVJCI and other community involvement, volunteerism and future goals. High school students must have a minimum of a 2.5 GPA and have post-secondary educational plans.*



**2024 GVJCI Matsuri Scholarship Presentation -** Pictured l-r: Alison Kochiyama - GVJCI Executive Director, Darren Kawazoe, Leila Tani Butler, Brady Tamanaha, Raymond Shibata - GVJCI Scholarship Committee Member. Not present: Paige Tamura, Justin Yong) (Photo courtesy of Gary Kohatsu, Gardena Valley News)

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## GVJCI JAPANESE LANGUAGE SCHOOL PRINCIPAL'S MESSAGE

The Gardena Valley Japanese Cultural Institute Japanese Language School concluded its first in-person instructional classes on June 22, 2024 since the COVID epidemic shutdown. Due to the sincere efforts of all our Sensei and with the support of the GVJCI, we are able to return to full in-person instruction for our Children's Class, conduct our Online Adult Beginner and Intermediate Class, and create a new Online Children's Conversation Class. Asaka Morita Sensei was able to recruit students in Japan to volunteer to help and share their experiences with the students of the new Online Children's Conversation Class.

On July 13, we began conducting our 4-week long Children's Summer Session and Online Adult Japanese Speaking Class. A large number of students have enrolled, and we hope that they will continue in the upcoming 2024-2025 School Year. We also began our Online Summer Session Children's Conversation Class on July 12.

Our New School Year will begin on Friday, September 6, 2024 with our Online Children's Conversation Class, and on Saturday, September 7, 2024, with our In-Person Children's Classes and Online Adult Classes. Our Children's In-Person Class teaching staff will be Masumi Sasaki Sensei (Vice Principal), Naoko Tran Sensei, Noboru Mishima Sensei, Mayumi Fuchino Sensei, and Chiaki Suzuki Sensei. Asaka Morita Sensei will be teaching our Online Children's Conversation Class. Aki Izumi Sensei will be teaching our Online Adult Beginner and Intermediate Class.

I am extremely grateful and fortunate to be allowed to serve as Principal of the GVJCI Japanese Language School. I also express my gratitude to our wonderful teaching staff, students, GVJCI staff and community members for their support and for providing me with this memorable experience.

I close with my sincerest appreciation and Issho Ni Gambarimasho,

Larry Hada  
GVJCI Japanese Language School Principal

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hard work, but all of you worked so diligently and always with a smile!

Thank you to our **Matsuri Committee** members for your input, suggestions and hard work. Your combined effort and support took the matsuri to another level and made it another success!



As a nonprofit community organization, this annual fundraising event is essential in order to support the operational, programming, overhead, and maintenance expenses of the GVJCI. We are able to continue to keep rental fees low for our community classes, and even waive fees for community youth organizations. Funding also supports our various cultural, educational, and social programs and services. On behalf of the GVJCI, we sincerely thank you all!

## MATSURI CORPORATE SPONSORS



### DISCOUNTED SERVICES & GOODS

B & G House of Printing  
Guerrero Mexican Foods  
Hawaiian Sweet  
Hong Kong Bakery  
Kabahead Kreations  
Mixer Ink

### IN KIND SERVICES & GOODS

Commline Inc.  
ConGlobal Industries, LLC  
Jimmy Kochiyama  
Tracy Lee

### HOURLY RAFFLE & BINGO DONORS

Chris & Lisa Aihara  
Auntie's Cafe  
Boy Scout Troop 683  
Cherrystone's  
Dr. Ernest Terao  
Eternal Nails  
Giuliano's Delicatessen  
High Low Gift Shop  
Kubota Mortuary  
Ladybug Cafe  
Lomeli's Italian Restaurant  
Marie Callender's Gardena  
Maui Chicken Gardena  
Bob Miyamoto  
Nijiya Market  
Phiten Torrance Shop  
Rage Salon  
Rascals Teriyaki Gardena  
Sakae Sushi  
Hazel Shimabuku  
Sprouts Market  
The Loft Restaurant  
Vons Market, Gardena

### MEGA MATSURI RAFFLE DONORS

FIA Insurance

Ray Shibata, Emeritus Board Member  
Michelle Hirano, Kerilyn Kotani, Randall Fujimoto - Board Members  
Alison Kochiyama, Executive Director  
Crenshaw Lumber Co.  
Derek Hirano & Hirano Homes Group  
Elder Law Services of California

### MONETARY DONORS

79+ donations from  
Individuals  
Corporate  
Member Organizations

### NURSERY DONORS

ABC Nursery  
C Stars Nursery  
Centeno's Nursery-Landscaping  
Garibaldo's Nursery  
H&H Nursery  
Hawthorne Nursery  
Javier's Nursery  
Mike Miyamoto  
Larry Kawahara

### VOLUNTEERS & MEMBER ORGANIZATIONS

Bando Hidesomi  
Boy Scout Troop 683  
Boy Scout Troop 719  
Boy Scout Troop 242  
Gardena Buddhist Church  
Dai Ichi Bonsai Kai  
GVJCI Board  
GVJCI Interns  
GVJCI Matsuri Committee  
GVJCI Matsuri Sub Committees  
GVJCI Staff  
GVJCI Tomo No Kai  
Gardena Evening Optimist  
Gardena JCI Kendo

Gardena Judo Club  
Gardena Kendo Dojo  
Gardena Police Department  
Gardena Tri City CERT  
Gardena Valley Nisei Club  
Happy Qi Gong  
Ikebana Class  
L.A. Men's Glee Club  
Manzanar Committee  
Kenji Mayeda, Japanese Tea Ceremony  
Nikkei Social Dance Club  
Nisei VFW Post 1961  
Randall Fujimoto & Friends  
Sandy's Pickleball Friends  
Sansei Baseball League  
South Bay Animal CERT  
South Bay F.O.R.  
South Bay Singers  
Southern California Kyudo Renmei  
Southern California Naginata Federation  
Yuujou Taiko

Special thanks to Assemblymember Al Muratsuchi and Gardena Mayor Tasha Cerda for coming out to show their support!

### GVJCI SOCIAL MEDIA/ONLINE FOLLOWERS

Facebook  
Instagram  
TikTok  
Website

**THANK YOU!** As you can see, our matsuri was a huge success because of the thousands of GVJCI supporters and you mean so much to us! We couldn't have done it without you and can't thank you enough! We hope to see you again next year!



GARDENA VALLEY

# JCI Calendar

## AUGUST

### HANAFUDA ART CLASSES THURS, AUG 15, 22, & 29

**GVJCI UPSTAIRS CLASSROOMS**  
Did you used to play Hanafuda?  
Register to join Girl Scout Molly Trotter in a three class series where we will be creating art influenced by the Hanafuda card designs. The finished products will be put on a display board in the Nisei Veterans Memorial Hall. This program is free of charge and supplies will be included along with light snacks. Each of the three classes are free and can be taken individually, limited to 20 participants each. Class 1 (8/15) will be tissue paper sakura flowers, class 2 (8/22) will be torn paper Nara deer, and class 3 (8/29) will be watercolor kiku flowers. To register, please visit the GVJCI website or visit the GVJCI office.

### MEMORY MATTERS: CARING FOR YOUR BRAIN

**FRI, AUG 16, 1-2PM**  
**GVJCI UPSTAIRS CLASSROOM  
207/208**

Workshop by Alzheimer's LA.  
Interested in learning how to care for your brain. Learn how to talk to a doctor about memory concerns, what to do when you notice signs and symptoms of cognitive impairment, and why getting an early diagnosis can be helpful for overall health and quality of life. RSVP is required: Kristy Huang-Arai at (323)930-6257 or khuang@alzla.org. Admission is free.

### セミナー「高齢者を狙った 詐欺について」

**8月26日月曜日午後1時-2時**  
**2階クラスルーム207/208**

リトル東京サービスセンターによる講演。「なぜ高齢者が狙われるのか」「身を守る方法」「被害にあってしまった際の対応」などについてお話し下さいます。参加希望者はオフィスにて申し込み又は(310)-324-6611内線108,email ynatori@jci-gardena.org

のいずれかにて要事前申込み

### セミナー「5つの願い（医療行為の事前指示書）」

**8月30日金曜日午後1時-2時**  
**2階クラスルーム207/208**

リトル東京サービスセンターによる講演。自分に判断能力があるうちに、あなたが最後に望む医療行為を事前に文書化しておく「医療行為の事前指示書」の大切さと作成法などについてお話し下さいます。参加希望者はオフィスにて申し込み又は(310)-324-6611内線108,email ynatori@jci-gardena.org のいずれかにて要事前申込み

## SEPTEMBER

### OUCHI-GOHAN WORKSHOPS (JAPANESE HOME COOKING WITH CHEF MIKE INOUE)

**SUNS, SEPT 15, 22, & OCT 6,**  
**10:00AM-12:00PM**

**GVJCI NISEI VETERANS  
MEMORIAL HALL KITCHEN**

Participants will be instructed by veteran sushi chef Mike Inouye on how to prepare a variety of Japanese home cooking! This fall, we will learn the basics of obento including various tsukemono, side dishes, and protein, and then we will cap off the series with chawan mushi and hiyashi chuka! This workshop series is limited to 8 people for in-person participants and 100 for virtual participants.

- Sunday, September 15 - Tsukemono for Obento & Sunday, September 22 - Obento 101 - \$90 for in-person/ \$45 for virtual
- Sunday, October 6 - Chawan Mushi & Hiyashi Chuka - \$50 for in-person/ \$25 for virtual

### GVJCI IZAKAYA

**FRI, SEPT. 20, 5-9PM**

GVJCI Izakaya! A culinary event fundraiser featuring specialty small bites, beverages and live music, with an izakaya vibe. See next page for details.

### GVJCI ART SHOW

**SAT, SEPT. 28, 11AM-5PM**  
**SUN, SEPT. 29, 10AM-4PM**

**GVJCI NISEI VETERANS  
MEMORIAL HALL**

This year, the theme for the GVJCI's annual art show is "art inspired by Japanese and Japanese diasporic artists." Come show your support for our local artist community! Light refreshments will be served. Admission is free, but donations are welcomed.

### KAMIBAND WORKSHOP: MACARON MAJOR & PIN CUSHION

**MON, SEP 30, 12:00-2:00PM FOR  
BEGINNER/ 2:30-4:30PM FOR  
INTERMEDIATE**  
**GVJCI UPSTAIRS CLASSROOM  
207/208**

Taught by Instructor Maggie Meza, participants will make a macaron major & pin cushion using beautiful fabric scraps. Beginner level is limited to 10 people. Intermediate level is limited to 15 people. Participation fee is \$25 per person.

### 紙バンドワークショップ： マカロンメジャーとピンク ッション（針山）を作りま しょう

**9月30日(月)、初級クラス10名午  
後12時-2時/中級クラス15名午  
後2:30-4:30**

**参加費\$25 場所：GVJCI2階クラス  
ルーム207/208**

講師マギーさんによるワークショップ。今回は美しいイギレを使用したマカロンメジャーとピンクッションを制作します。参加者に限りがあります。定員に達し次第受付終了します

# OCTOBER

## SANSEI STORIES WRITING WORKSHOPS

WEDS, OCT 2, 9, 16, 23, 30, & NOV 6

GVJCI UPSTAIRS CLASSROOM 205

Write and tell your story. Write about yourself, your family, your friends. Add a story to your legacy. This workshop is designed to help new and experienced writers develop an idea, character or story. Tim Toyama will conduct the workshop. Participation fee is \$10 for each workshop or \$60 for the entire series.

## GETTING READY FOR MEDICARE OPEN ENROLLMENT

THURS, OCT 10, 11-12PM IN JAPANESE/ 1-2PM IN ENGLISH  
GVJCI UPSTAIRS CLASSROOM 207/208

This workshop focuses on the upcoming Medicare Open Enrollment Period (10/15-12/7), including how to compare health insurance plans for possible changes in next year. It will be presented by the Center for Healthcare Rights, a non-profit organization that helps people navigate Medicare, Medicare, Medi-Cal, and

other healthcare systems by providing unbiased information. To register, please visit the GVJCI website or office.

## メディケア オープン Enrollmentの準備の説明会

10月10日(水)、午前11時-12時(日本語)、午後1時-2時(英語)、場所: GVJCI 2階クラスルーム207/208

Center for Healthcare Rights のスタッフが、メディケアのオープン Enrollment (10/15 - 12/7) についてお話しします。この時期に健康保険のプランを比較検討して、来年からのヘルスケアを変更することができます。この団体は非営利で皆様に公正な情報をお伝えしながら、メディケアなどのヘルスケアに関するお手伝いをしています。

## HALLOWEEN AMIGURUMI CROCHET WORKSHOP

SAT, OCT 16, 10AM-2PM  
GVJCI NISEI VETERANS

### MEMORIAL HALL

Join us for another amigurumi crochet workshop this spooky season! To celebrate Halloween, we will be making kawaii crochet black cats, pumpkins, and ghosts! This workshop is open to all who love to crochet, and participants of all ages are welcome to bring their own projects to work

on while enjoying the company of fellow crocheters. We also welcome volunteers who would like to teach beginners how to crochet! Crochet hooks, yarn, and other tools will be available for participants to use. Sweet treats, hot chocolate, and light refreshments will be served. Participation is \$10 per person. Please check the GVJCI website for more information!

## SENIOR SCAMS SEMINAR THURSDAY, OCT 24, 2:15-3:15PM GVJCI NISEI VETERANS

### MEMORIAL HALL

Each day, older adults are targeted by scammers and their deceiving tactics which could potentially result in billions of dollars lost. Scams continue to evolve over time, keeping up with current events. Join us for this interactive class as we share common tips to avoid being scammed. RSVP is required. Please visit to our front office to register or call (310)-324-6611 ext.108, or email: ynatori@jci-gardena.org. Admission is free.

SCAN THE QR CODE WITH YOUR PHONE CAMERA TO REGISTER FOR ANY OF OUR PROGRAMS!



## 2025 GVJCI Calendar: Ad Space Available for Purchase

Support us by placing an ad in the calendar! Your ad will promote your company/business or celebrate special people and milestones (graduations, birthdays, anniversaries, weddings etc.) with a personal ad. The calendar will be distributed to over 1,600 people and businesses and is enjoyed throughout the year. Please visit our website to purchase ad space. Donations are also welcome!

Full size: \$900      Business Card size: \$200  
Half size: \$550      Well Wisher: \$150  
Third size: \$350

Please consider supporting us by placing an ad in our calendar. All proceeds benefit the GVJCI.  
Contact: Cathy Lee at cle@jci-gardena.org or 310-324-6611

## 2024 SIGNATURE EVENT: GVJCI IZAKAYA

Date: Friday, September 20, 2024

Time: 5:00pm - 9:00pm

Place: Gardena Valley Japanese Cultural Institute

We invite you to join us at our 3rd Annual Signature Event: GVJCI Izakaya Friday, September 20th! A culinary event fundraiser featuring specialty small bites, beverages including a sake tasting hosted by Mutual Trading Company, beer, and live music, with an izakaya vibe.



Stop by happy hour style and stay for a little while, or throughout the evening and enjoy delicious food, drinks and live music!

Registration opens in August. Please visit our website for more information and to purchase tickets.



GARDENA VALLEY

# JCI Tomo No Kai Corner

We would like to extend our immense gratitude to Tomo No Kai for their ongoing support of the GVJCI Matsuri Fundraiser! This event takes many months of planning, and we cannot do it without the help of our Tomo No Kai students who dedicate themselves to various areas related to the Matsuri. Tomo No Kai has had a long history of supporting this fundraiser, and has always played a crucial role in its success. So it is with sincere kanchi that we thank all of you who volunteered for the preparation leading up to the event, as well as lending much needed support on the day of. Your volunteerism and steadfast support is always deeply appreciated. Thank you all so much for all that you do for GVJCI and our community!

TNK Class update: We are happy to announce that Chika Nagata has returned to GVJCI to teach beginner and intermediate ukulele on Tuesdays, from 9:30-11:30am! Current members can attend the class for a \$3 participation fee. If you'd like to sign up for 2024 membership, please visit our website or the GVJCI office to pick up a form!

GVJCI 祭り募金活動への継続的な支援をしてくださった友の会メンバーの皆様、心から感謝いたします。このイベントは計画の段階からさかのぼると何ヶ月前から準備に取り掛かってきました。祭りに関連するさまざまな分野で献身的に活動してくださった友の会の皆様の助けがなければ、成功できないイベントでした。友の会は長年この募金活動をご支援下さり、その成功に常に重要な役割を果たしてきました。イベントの準備にボランティアとして参加してくださった皆様、また当日私達スタッフと共にお祭りの運営に参加してくださった皆様に、心から感謝いたします。皆様のボランティア精神と揺るぎない支援に、いつも深く感謝しています。GVJCI と私たちのコミュニティのために尽力してくださった皆様、本当にありがとうございました。

友の会クラスの最新情報として、ナガタチカさんが GVJCI に戻って来られて、火曜日の午前 9:30 ~ 11:30 に初級および中級のウクレレを教えることのお知らせします。現在の会員は参加費 3 ドルでクラスに参加できます。2024 年の会員登録をご希望の場合は、当社の Web サイトまたは GVJCI オフィスにアクセスしてフォームを受け取ってください。

**Car Donation Program**

Thinking of donating your car to charity? Now you can, and at the same time, support GVJCI! We have teamed up with Harold's Car Donation Service.

**HOW IT WORKS:**

1. Call or email us to arrange pickup at: (310) 324-6611 or cars@jci-gardena.org
2. Harold's Car Donation Service (HCDS) will arrange towing, always free of charge to you. (Disabled Vehicles, Junk Cars, Scrap Cars and Wrecks also accepted.)
3. HCDS handles all DMV paperwork at time of pickup, including Release of Liability.
4. After the car is sold, your acknowledgment and tax forms will arrive by mail.
5. You get rid of an unwanted car and get the satisfaction of helping others. You also get an IRS approved tax deduction. Yay!

## INTERNSHIP REFLECTION ARTICLES

Andrew Bacon

My name is Andrew Bacon and for the last seven months I have been volunteering and interning behind the scenes at the Gardena Valley Japanese Cultural Institute. Professionally, I work within the music industry, but I have recently been looking for a way to become more involved in nonprofit work. I was given the opportunity to help at GVJCI, but this really helped me learn more about the Nikkei community and the Japanese and Japanese American experience. I've always called Southern California my home, but I am always reminded of how dense our local community is.

My time at GVJCI led me to meet some amazing people, staff, and volunteers! I really enjoyed not only working behind the scenes, but even being at the front office or helping out at our Senior Bento Program during the week. I'd be remiss if I didn't also mention the passionate staff at GVJCI that work everyday to ensure the continuation and growth of the organization. So many programs happen on a daily basis at GVJCI, and while the staff is great at organizing the events, it takes all the volunteers to help make these plans a reality. Their enthusiasm inspired me to volunteer my time when I wasn't scheduled for interning duties. I recall one of





my earliest volunteering opportunities was to help paint the library with a group of other volunteers. I didn't know anyone before I started, but it was easy to connect because ultimately we were all passionate about the work we were doing to preserve and update the space. I was inspired to think of ways to include the local community in GVJCI. And when I started my internship, I was asked to lead my own program.

Coming from a background in music, I was encouraged to plan and host an Open Mic Night for the community. I have always wanted to create a space for the performing arts and make it open to anyone, with minimal driving required. I saw the GVJCI as a perfect space to use for the performing arts and lovers of the arts. However, I realized how easy it is to forget that even something like moving chairs and tables, or even handing out refreshments would require volunteer assistance. I am so grateful that my vision became a reality and the event was well attended by both local artists and the local community. However, I really have to thank the volunteers (and our local performers) for making the event run smoothly; we could not have done it without any of them.

That's really been the main takeaway from my time as an intern; the community really makes the GVJCI great. I am very grateful for everyone welcoming me in as well and teaching me things along the way. I really look forward to giving some of my spare time back to the organization and I'll be encouraging my friends to come as well!

### **Kaitlyn Ho**

Hi! My name's Kait, I'm from Anaheim Hills California but I'm a rising senior at George Washington University in DC as a psychology and sociology double major! I consider myself yonsei (although my ba-chan jokes I'm 3 and a half gen), and am so excited to be reconnecting and interacting with my community again! I'm hoping to go into social work or research, so be sure to check out my workshops on intergenerational connections soon! I'm so excited to continue to meet new people here and see what we'll all accomplish!!



### **Kimi Look**

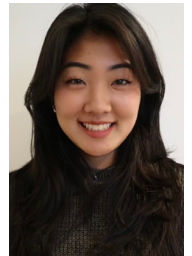
Hi! My name is Kimi Look and I am one of the Program & Event interns at the Gardena Valley JCI. I was born and raised in the South Bay and attended Palos Verdes Peninsula High School. Last year, I graduated from UMass Boston with a BS in Kinesiology and



Biology. Coming from a biomedical background, I am a novice in the marketing field, and therefore grateful for the opportunity to gain experience in the operations of a non-profit organization. Throughout this opportunity, I am most looking forward to becoming more involved in the community and implementing an educational program for the Nisei Veterans of the 100th Infantry Battalion and 442nd Regimental Combat Team. I hope to continue on as a GVJCI volunteer and engage with their affiliated organizations such as Yuujou Taiko, Japanese Language School, and Gardena Evening Optimist. I am looking forward to an amazing summer ahead with Alicia, Brooke, and Kait!

### **Brooke Shibata**

Hello! My name is Brooke Shibata and I am one of the interns for the Gardena Valley JCI this year. I am going to be a second-year at the University of California, Irvine, where I am majoring in International Studies and minoring in Economics! I remember volunteering at the Matsuri and enjoying the festival when I was younger, so I am excited to be able to support GVJCI and our community from behind-the-scenes. I am hoping to gain more technical skills through this opportunity while getting to know both the people who enjoy the programs here as well as the wonderful staff behind them! Since I'm hoping to go into foreign relations in the future, I am grateful for this experience that will keep me close to my Japanese-American culture while also teaching me about what it takes to run programs and communicate with all kinds of people. I am looking forward to my time here at GVJCI and am excited to see what myself and my fellow interns will accomplish over this summer!



### **Alicia Tan**

Hi! My name is Alicia Tan. I'm a gosei and one of the new programs and events interns at GVJCI. I am currently a sophomore at the University of California, Berkeley majoring in Media Studies and minoring in Creative Writing and Gender and Women's Studies. As an aspiring journalist and public librarian, I have a passion for writing, event programming, and the arts. I am ecstatic to contribute to the programs happening at GVJCI as well as help out in The Bridge: GVJCI Heritage Center and on the GVJCI blog. During my time with GVJCI, I hope to form connections with both my culture and the community as well as forge an intergenerational relationship with the people around me. I am astounded by the overwhelming hospitality and kindness that the GVJCI members offer and hope to repay them tenfold!





# Answer Keiro's Memory Survey!

Keiro announced its intent to develop board and care homes to meet the needs of older adults affected by memory loss. We invite you to participate in our survey.

Please answer the survey if you are...

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### How to Participate:

- 1 To get immediate access to the online survey, please visit website at [keiro.org/survey](http://keiro.org/survey).
- 2 To request a paper survey, please contact Keiro at 213.873.5700 or [survey@keiro.org](mailto:survey@keiro.org) before September 1, 2024.

*Online surveys must be completed and mailed surveys must be postmarked by September 30, 2024.*

Scan the QR code or visit [keiro.org/survey](http://keiro.org/survey). For questions, email [survey@keiro.org](mailto:survey@keiro.org).



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Scan here for more info!

For questions or concerns, please contact [events@keiro.org](mailto:events@keiro.org) or 213.873.5700.



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**GARDENA VALLEY JAPANESE CULTURAL INSTITUTE**

The Gardena Valley Japanese Cultural Institute (GVJCI) is a 501(c)(3) non-profit community center providing various classes, programs, services, and facilities to the South Bay area. We also provide affordable housing through the JCI Gardens Apartments, the adjacent senior housing property.

The GVJCI's roots date back to 1912, when it was known as the Moneta Gakuen, a Japanese language school. In 1967, it was formally incorporated as the Gardena Valley Japanese Language School. Then, in 1968, the corporation changed its name to the Gardena Valley Japanese Cultural Institute to incorporate the broader services and functions the organization offers. In 1971, Compton Gakuen, Gardena Gakuen, and Moneta Gakuen merged, opening its doors officially as the GVJCI's Japanese Language School. The GVJCI has a very proud history spanning over 100 years.

Today, we continue to provide a variety of activities, programs, and

services. We are truly fortunate to have an active and well-utilized center serving people of all ages. We thank you, the community, for your active participation and for your support through donations and volunteerism that enables the GVJCI to continue.

**MISSION STATEMENT**

A space to engage, share, and embrace the Nikkei experience and culture.

**VISION STATEMENT**

The GVJCI envisions a vibrant network and a welcoming space for all persons interested in Japanese heritage and culture where history and tradition are honored, people are inspired to create action and change, and cultural pride and respect for all humanity are promoted.

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