I agree wholeheartedly with your view that the connection to our heritage is, indeed, a means of passing our culture onto the next generation. As you point out, many of the culture bearers of our community have grown older, and indeed, it is time for us to take the mantle and, if we wish, to carry it on.

For me, the most regrettable part of this transition is that many people who once engaged with our heritage are no longer in this world. This makes it all the more important that we, those who have the connections, the knowledge, and the desire, move forward to make sure that the traditions and customs are preserved.

Thank you for your thoughtful remarks. I believe that, together, we can ensure that our heritage remains alive and vibrant for generations to come.

Sincerely,
[Your Name]
MAPFRE/Commerce West Insurance Company, formerly Western Pioneer, was formed in 1948 with the help of many Nisei insurance agents to provide Japanese Americans affordable automobile insurance. MAPFRE/Commerce West Insurance Company continues the “Western Pioneer Group Program” today, in which members of Japanese American non-profit organizations can purchase automobile insurance at discounted rates. In addition, annual donations are given to non-profit organizations that have the most members joining this plan. This special discount program benefits the drivers and the Gardena Valley Japanese Cultural Institute (GVJCI). Please ask your agent about this program. Below is a partial list of participating agencies.

WHAT’S IMPORTANT TO YOU IS IMPORTANT TO US.

Union Bank® understands the importance of community. We are deeply grateful for the personal and professional ties we have developed throughout the years. And with our proven history of solid financial performance, we will continue to put our strength to work for you. Together with you, we look forward to building a successful future for generations to come.

Union Bank is proud to support the Gardena Valley Japanese Cultural Institute.

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Friends of the Gardena Valley JCI

The Gardena Valley Japanese Cultural Institute is an integral part of the South Bay community. Japanese American clubs/organizations have been a part of many Japanese American lives. Today, clubs/organizations are continuing to use the GVJCI as a place to hold meetings and classes. And, the GVJCI is creating programs that enrich all aspects of the Nikkei communities in the South Bay from the descendants of the farming communities of Gardena, Moneta and Lawndale, to the families of post-war immigration from Japan, from Japanese Americans from Hawai’i to Japanese descendants from Central and South America.

The area is home to one of the largest population of Nikkei in the U.S. and the GVJCI is a foundation of the community. Please join as a Friend of GVJCI to help support the center and its programs such as Day of Remembrance observation and the TANOSHII Fun Camp for children to discover their heritage. GVJCI is more than a place but a space for which all of South Bay can explore Japanese heritage—the contributions to the culture and communities in the South Bay.

Joining this first year will make you a “Charter Friend” and a legacy for subsequent years. So far, GVJCI is on board to make its modest goal. 78 Charter Friends have joined and raised $15,415—60% of our first year goal. But why stop there? There is room for more Charter Friends. Please complete the "Friends of Gardena Valley JCI” form at www.jci-gardena.org/friends or visit our office, and be part of this South Bay treasure.

Below are our Charter Friends so far who have pledged support. Thank you Friends!

Bronze ($100 - $249)
- Anonymous
- Keith & Shoko Agee
- Miles Akiyama
- Dorothy Awakuni
- Kimie Colditz
- Jeffrey & Lorraine Doihzen
- Richard & Teri-Lynn Gekko
- Richard Hamada
- Chizuko Hara
- Icy & Janey Hasama
- Eleanor Igawa
- Tamotsu Ikeda
- Dale Inafuku
- Myrna Kawahara
- Richard & Alice Kimura
- Iku Kiriyama
- Victor & Lilian Kitagawa
- Alison & Jimmy Kochiyama
- Yvonne Koga
- Jean Kohama
- Harry Kondo
- Mr. & Mrs. S.K. & J.H. Kuniyoshi
- Susie Kuwahara
- Teresa Matsushima
- Melvin & Christine Mayeda
- Florence Mayeda
- Mayewaki Family
- Matsuko McKellar
- Toshi & Alexis Mihara
- Dorothy Mizuba
- Hideo & Miyoko Mura
- Aiko & Aki Muranaka
- Mae Nakakihara
- Emma Nakaoki
- David & Lily Nakatani
- Alice Noda
- Warren and Juliet Oda
- Shirley Okazaki
- Mr. & Mrs. Robert Okazaki
- Betty Oshiro
- Masanobu Oshiro
- Ed & Irene Russ
- Louise Sakamoto
- Yoshiko Sasahara
- Jane Shimatsu
- Joseph & Lilly Shirota
- Hiroyuki Tago
- Ivy & James Toma
- Hannah Uemura
- Sadas Uwahori
- Asa Wakinaka
- Sue Watanabe
- Donald & Karen Watanabe
- Pat Watanabe

Silver ($250 - $499)
- Anonymous
- Donald Hata
- Bob & Taeko Nakata
- Alan & Yvonne Nishio
- Hazel Shimabuku
- Lynnie Tabata
- Harry Yonemura, ABC Nursery

Gold ($500 - $999)
- Mildred Kawano
- Yoshiko Kita
- Sadas & Ruby Mochidome
- Helen & George Nakano
- Grant & Tracy Nakaoka
- Michi Oki
- Marilyn Sunahara

Platinum ($1,000 and above)
- Steve Awakuni, Law Office of Steven Awakuni
- May Cambra
- Jeff & Christine Murakami
- Ray & Sharon Shibata

For more information and ticket sales, please email us at info@jci-gardena.org or call us at 310-324-6611
Hello, interns!

Meet the amazing young team that’s growing our community! Starting in June, we’ve had four interns at GVJCI. These interns have been working on programs, the Matsuri-Carnival, marketing, and many other projects. We are thankful to the South Bay F.O.R for their monetary support, it ensures we can continue to have development and leadership programs for young leaders!

Nicole Kanemistu
My name is Niki Kanemitsu and I am an intern at GVJCI through the Nikkei Community Internship. I am a rising junior at Syracuse University, where I am studying Public Relations in the Newhouse School of Public Communications. Through this internship, I hope to gain more knowledge about my Japanese heritage and learn about what it means to identify as a young Japanese American woman. At GVJCI, I hope to gain insight into the non-profit work environment by working closely with the staff and volunteers, and I also hope to meet the many influential leaders within the Japanese American community that are involved with the organization.

Stephanie Mayeda
My name is Stephanie Mayeda and I am a proud 2016 graduate of California State University, Long Beach! As a Torrance native, I have deep roots in the South Bay area and hope to bring my knowledge and enthusiasm for the community to my job as a GVJCI social media and community outreach intern here at GVJCI. I graduated from California State University Northridge Fall of 2015 with a B.A. in Communication Studies. I grew up with a deep passion for serving and volunteering, and I also hope to meet the many influential leaders within the Japanese American community that are involved with the organization.

Stephanie Munson
My name is Stephanie Munson and I am serving as one of the Social Media and Community Outreach interns here at GVJCI. I graduated from California State University Northridge Fall of 2015 with a B.A. in Communication Studies. I grew up with a deep passion for serving the community that only strengthened during my studies and involvement in non-profit organizations. During my time here I would like to continue to provide services that enrich the community by creating opportunities for them to participate in educational events. I believe that hands on learning is the best way we can enlighten the community as well as get them more involved. Already, this internship has proven to be extremely helpful in teaching me how to find and use resources available to us to provide such opportunities. I’m excited to continue to learn more about being involved in non-profit organizations and hopefully gain new skills that will enrich my life and passions.

Leah Ishii
Hello, my name is Leah Ishii. I am currently a senior at California State University Long Beach majoring in Asian American Studies and will graduate spring of 2017.

I was given the chance to work with Gardena Valley JCI through the CSULB Asian and Asian American Studies Alum scholarship which allows me to work with a community organization. By interning at GVJCI, I hope to have a better connection with the Japanese American community. Career-wise, I hope my time here will give me the tools and knowledge needed to continue working with the community and nonprofit organizations in the future. While everything I am learning here is new and exciting, it is also quite intimidating and is out of my comfort zone. I want to be able to expand or even break down my wall of comfort to experience much more that will benefit me long-term.

Alex Fukunaga, Eagle Scout Project
Alex Fukunaga of Boy Scout Troop #378 successfully completed his project over the weekend of August 29th, 2015. We were fortunate to have Alex choose our facility to help us in two areas that needed some attention. Alex and his troop helped to make our second floor janitorial closet into an organized work area. Paint, shelving, new wash basin and a storage cabinet gave the once dingy and cluttered room a bright facelift. In addition to the janitorial closet transformation, Alex built a rack for our Main Hall stage railings. With the new rack, the railings are now off the ground and easily maneuvered onto the hall floor for easier assembly. A huge thank you to Alex and the members of his Boy Scout Troop and parents who graciously gave so much of their time to help our facility.

Got Crafts?
Craft vendors (circuit crafters or hobby crafters) wanted for our GVJCI Kansha Craft Show on Sunday, September 25th from 9:00am-2:00pm. For more information, visit our website at jci-gardena.org, call (310) 324-6611, or email Sharon at s_sawai@jci-gardena.org.

Tomo No Kai Corner
Thank you to all of the Tomo No Kai (TNK) classes and members for their support given to the 2016 GVJCI Matsuri-Carnival through presale coupon sales, donations, and volunteerism. TNK volunteers worked hard in the following areas: Food Preparation, Spam Musubi, Senior Crafts, White Elephant Sale, and the Volunteers Hospitality Room. Thank you as well to the TNK classes for their wonderful performances throughout the weekend. We couldn’t have done it without your support! TNK’s 2nd Quarter 2016 Contribution: $14,709 from TNK class participation fees, membership dues, and donations.

Established on May 31, 1979, the GVJCI Tomo No Kai or Senior Citizen Friendship Society was formed to promote and support programs at the GVJCI for the senior community, as well as, to provide recreational and social activities, such as, the monthly senior birthday luncheon, and the annual Christmas parties. Your membership dues, class participation fees, and donations support the senior programs and GVJCI facility operations. Thank you very much for your participation and support!
DIABETES EDUCATION AND EMPOWERMENT COURSE (DEEP) – KEIRO LIFELONG LEARNING CENTER WEDNESDAYS, AUG 3 – SEP 21, 9 AM – 11 AM GVJCI Classroom #206 Are you living with diabetes? This course is designed to help you manage your condition and reduce complications by living healthily, longer lives. This course will be on eight consecutive Wednesdays from August 20th through September 21st. All class sessions will be from 9:00 am to 11:00 am. Keiro facilitators will walk you through the program step by step.

This is a free course, but registration is required. Please contact Kanako Fukuyama at (213) 873-5709 to register and for questions.

THE ART OF TOKOYAMA: THE JAPANESE TRADITIONAL DANCE WIG LECTURE AND DEMONSTRATION SATURDAY, AUG 6, 4-6 PM GVJCI Nisei Veterans Memorial Hall An exciting and informative lecture and demonstration at the GVJCI featuring a Japanese wig stylist, Tokou Toyotani, and his protegée, son Ken Toyotani. During event, Toyotani of the renowned Gekidanshinpa Theatrical Group in Japan, will discuss the art of combing Japanese dance wigs used in Kabuki and classical dance. He has been invited to present this educational forum by the Nihon Buyo Kai of California, a nonprofit organization established by a group of Bando School students to promote and perpetuate the art of Japanese traditional and classical dance. Following the demonstration and lecture, a dance will be performed by a Bando student wearing the wig. Admission will be $5 per person. Seating is limited, and interested attendees are encouraged to reserve online at http://goo.gl/forms/CZq4QmuqE7ZLSqln1. For more information, call (310) 324-6611 or email info@jci-gardena.org. For Japanese language, call (310) 808-0118. “The Art of Tokoyma” is co-sponsored by the Nihon Buyo Kai of California and the Gardena Valley Japanese Cultural Institute.

WRITERS’ SALON SATURDAY, AUG 13, 1-3 PM Nisei Veterans Memorial Hall In August, the GVJCI begins a program called the “Writers’ Salon.” This informal event is an opportunity for writers to read selections from their published books or works in progress, followed by a discussion about the writing process of present and future projects, of the trials and tribulations of writing. After the discussion, the audience will be able to talk with the writers, and to purchase books if available. The first Writers’ Salon will feature Nick Nagatani, Gary Yano, Akemi Kikumura Yano, and Janet Mitsui Brown. For more information, please contact Tim Toyama at timtoyama@adsl.com, (310) 848-9890, or Michelle Yamashiro at myamashiro@jci-gardena.org, (310) 324-6611. For more information, visit our website at facebook.com/GVJCI réserve by February 2.

Fandango Onion Saturday, AUG 20, 11:30 AM-2:00 PM GVJCI Main Hall Interested in growing your own foods and learning about what you can do to help the environment? Join us in this multi-cultural experience to learn about Fandango (a participatory music and dance tradition from Veracruz, Mexico), gardening, and healthy cooking! This event is FREE and open to the public!

DISASTER PREPAREDNESS WORKSHOP FRIDAY, SEP 9, 1:30-3:30 PM GVJCI Classroom #206 Earthquakes, rains and floods will happen. Are you prepared for the next disaster? Join us at this workshop to find out how to plan, prepare and react before, during and after a disaster. Space is limited, so please call the GVJCI office to reserve your spot.

MIXED PLATE JAMS SATURDAY, SEP 10, 6-8 PM Nisei Veterans Memorial Hall Are you ready for Mixed Plate Jams, September edition?! We will be having another mixed plate jam, our open mic night in full swing. We will be having a dinner + show option for only $13, just the show ticket price is $5. Performers get in free, and their dinner price is only $8! Come join us for a beautiful night filled with food, drinks, music and all sorts of entertainment. You must register and pay by September 2nd for the $13 dinner + show price. Dinner will be a sushi, inari, and salmon bentou! You can contact us at info@jci-gardena.org or (310) 324-6611. All art forms welcome!

ARTHROPS BULLY UNIVERSITY SATURDAY, SEP 10, 2-4 PM Nisei Veterans Memorial Hall Arthritis can be a painful disease to live with. Discover the basics of arthritis at this Keiro Vitality Forum. Learn about the effects of this disease, and preventive measures you can take. Kanako Fukuyama, MSW, Health Promotion Specialist from Keiro will facilitate this free forum. Registration is required. Please contact Kanako Fukuyama at (213) 873-5709 to register and for questions.

LETTERS TO EVE WORKSHOP SATURDAY, SEP 17, 6-8 PM Main Hall Letters To Eve (written by Daniel Sugimoto) is a classic story of love, friendship, family, and honor. This epic WWII musical follows a Japanese American family and their plight through forced internment, an African American jazz musician captured during Germany’s occupation of France, and the powerful spirit of music and literature. This breathtaking new work will uncover the lost letters of history and paint a pure picture of a fascinating era. Discover the power as these characters decide to stand up for what’s right, and create a legacy for the ages! You may purchase tickets for this exclusive showing for $10 at sugi- mation.com under “Current Works.” Join us for a night of music and storytelling!

CHRONIC KIDNEY DISEASE 2 SATURDAY, OCT 9, 1-3 PM Nisei Veterans Memorial Hall Iku Kiriyauma and Dr. Dean Kajibi, Kaiser Permanente nephrologist, will discuss Chronic Kidney Disease and the risk factors of diabetes and hypertension in a question & answer format with audience participation interspersed during their discussion. For the past 10 years, Iku Kiriyauma has shared her expertise and dedicated to her husband, George’s death in 2005, which segued to her personal health issues. She believes people can be proactive for their own lives if they gain knowledge through professional information and personal experiences early on. Chronic Kidney Disease II is a sequel to a program presented last year. Since that program, Iku discovered many people with diabetes and hypertension who did not know about their conditions as they related to kidney disease until it was too late. Dr. Dean Kajibi, who presented with Iku at the forum last year, will again offer his professional expertise. This program is free and open to the public, but you must RSVP to info@jci-gardena.org.

OTSUKUMI FRIDAY, OCT 14, 6-8 PMGVJCI Main Hall Celebrate Halloween early with GVJCI by attending Obake Night! We will have games and treats for an early Halloween party, come dressed up and join in on the fun! Great for ages 5-15 years! Please RSVP to info@jci-gardena.org. Price is $5 per child!

MAKE A DIFFERENCE DAY SATURDAY, OCT 22, 9 am – 3pm GVJCI Join the GVJCI for its second annual GVJCI volunteer day! We are participating in a nationwide campaign called Make a Difference day, where community members volunteer and give back! This volunteer day is open to any volunteers of all ages. We will be cleaning, organizing, and revamping the GVJCI so it can stay a community space for generations to come. RSVP to info@jci-gardena.org.

HEART HEALTH/HANDS-ONLY CPR FORUM SATURDAY, NOV 5, 2-4 PM Nisei Veterans Memorial Hall Having a healthy heart is vital to having a healthy life. In the first part of this forum, you will learn about the steps you can take to increase your odds of having a healthy heart. The second part of the forum will be an interactive session for learning how to do the hands-only CPR technique. This is a free program, but registration is required. Please contact Kanako Fukuyama at (213) 873-5709 to register or for more information.
NISEI WEEK SPECIAL!!!

FREE ELDER LAW SEMINARS

- How to avoid “Bad Timing” “Bait & Switch”
- A Way of Being Trusted and PIA (s) Explained
- Classic Warnings: “Free, Gifts, and “Offers”
- How to avoid a “Tell-All Call”
- How to protect your family home
- How to protect your health
- How to move safely

WIN AN AD!

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1. Call or email us to arrange pickup at (310) 324-6611 or cars@jci-gardena.org.
2. HCDS will arrange towing, always free to you. (Disabled Vehicles, Junk Cars, Scrap Cars and Wrecks also accepted)
3. HCDS handles all DMV paperwork and documentation. (Disabled Vehicles, Junk Cars, Scrap Cars and Wrecks also accepted)
4. If you get rid of an unwanted car and the satisfaction of helping others, and you receive an IRS-approved tax deduction!
5. You get rid of an unwanted car and the satisfaction of helping others, and you receive an IRS-approved tax deduction!

GVJCI CAR DONATION PROGRAM

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

Here’s the Easy Steps:
1. Call or email us to arrange pickup at (310) 324-6611 or cars@jci-gardena.org.
2. HCDS will arrange towing, always free to you. (Disabled Vehicles, Junk Cars, Scrap Cars and Wrecks also accepted)
3. HCDS handles all DMV paperwork and documentation. (Disabled Vehicles, Junk Cars, Scrap Cars and Wrecks also accepted)
4. After car is sold, your acknowledgement and tax forms will arrive by mail.
5. You get rid of an unwanted car and the satisfaction of helping others, and you receive an IRS-approved tax deduction!

Congratulations to the following graduating seniors who received 2016 GVJCI Scholarship awards on June 25, 2016 at the GVJCI Matsuri. The high academic achievements and goals of all of the recipients, as well as the many dedicated hours of community volunteerism were very impressive and inspirational. These youth had also been affiliated with GVJCI over the years through various activities, projects and activities. CONGRATULATIONS to the award recipients—GVJCI wishes you all the best for your bright future ahead!

Applicants must have been directly related to the Japanese American community, be a student in good standing, be an undergraduate student as of Fall 2016, be enrolled at a post-secondary educational institution, have a minimum of a 2.5 GPA and have post-secondary educational plans.

2016 GVJCI Scholarship Recipients

Congratulations to the following graduating seniors who received 2016 GVJCI Scholarship awards on June 25, 2016 at the GVJCI Matsuri. The high academic achievements and goals of all of the recipients, as well as the many dedicated hours of community volunteerism were very impressive and inspirational. These youth had also been affiliated with GVJCI over the years through various activities, projects and activities. CONGRATULATIONS to the award recipients—GVJCI wishes you all the best for your bright future ahead!

Want to advertise for your business while supporting the GVJCI?

Every year, the GVJCI creates a calendar that showcases the various organizations, volunteers, classes, and programs that call the GVJCI their home. Included throughout the calendar are business ads & well wishes from various businesses and supporters. These one-of-a-kind calendars are a “hot commodity” and reach 2,000 households throughout the South Bay annually. If this sounds ideal and you would like more information, please visit our website at jci-gardena.org or call (310) 324-6611.