

# STAND UP

Asian Americans need to speak out and stand up for themselves, psychologists say in panel.



Program panelists included (clockwise from top left) psychologists Satsuki Ina, Gordon Nagayama Hall, Carolee Tran and HMWF's Shirley Ann Higuchi.



By Ray Locker

Dr. Carolee Tran, a Vietnamese American psychologist practicing in Sacramento, Calif., was shopping in her local Costco when an older white man approached her in the aisle.

"You're a disgusting, animal-eating Asian woman," he said to her.

Tran, who was 8 years old when her family fled the collapse of South Vietnam in 1975, was not having it. "I said to him, 'Shut the f--- up, get out of my face or I am going to call the manager.' I am sick of it.

"My daughter thought I was going to get killed," Tran said.

Tran, who joined psychologists Satsuki Ina and Gordon Nagayama Hall in a panel titled "Lessons From the Past: Yellow Peril in COVID-19 Times," presented by the JACL on May 27 in conjunction with Asian American Heritage Month, said the time has come for Asian Americans to shed their historic reticence to speak up.

For too long, the panelists in the webinar, which was watched by more than 250 people, said that Asian Americans have tried to fit into the "model minority" niche consigned to them by white Americans; that provided comfort for many older people, particularly those who

were among the 120,000 Japanese Americans incarcerated during World War II.

Now, however, there is greater awareness that being a model minority is a myth that has stripped many Asian Americans of their identity and feelings of self-worth.

Ina, who born in the Japanese American concentration camp in Tule Lake, Calif., said for years she internalized the fears that surrounded her and her family after the incarceration. Her family was first sent to the camp in Topaz, Utah, and then to Tule Lake when they protested their treatment. After her birth, her father was sent to the prison in Bismarck, N.D., and then the family was sent together to Crystal City, Texas, where they were released in 1946, a year after the war ended.

"I had to rise above the legacy of fear they had lived through to find my voice," said Ina, who is one of the founders of the social justice group Tsuru for Solidarity.

For most of her young life, Ina said, she followed the message that she had to be good and study hard. When most of her class of 100 students at the University of California, Berkeley, were out protesting, she was one of the two or three who showed up to class until her professor told her to get out with the rest of

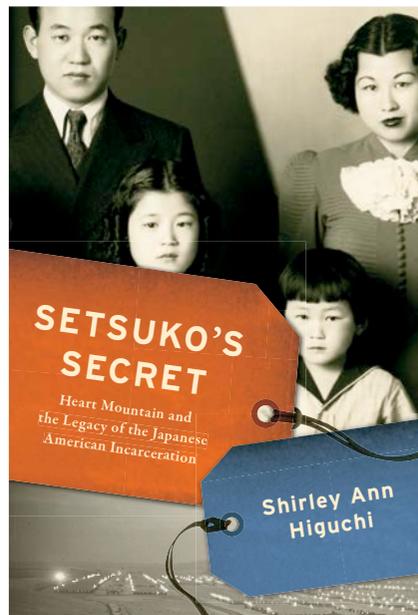
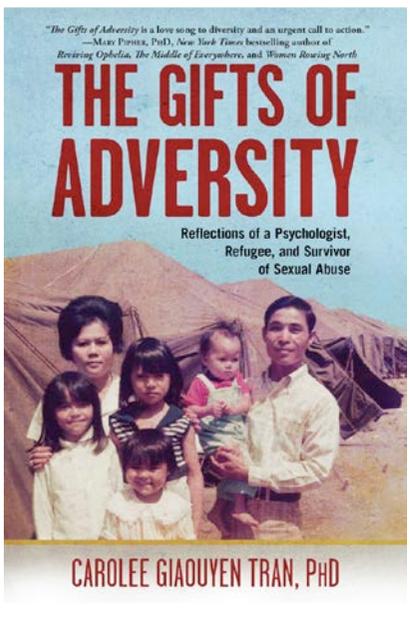
the class. "It kept me quiet for many years," she said.

Now, however, as Ina witnesses the treatment of Latinx immigrants to the United States and the Trump administration's family-separation policies, "I am pissed off and more activated than ever before."

The webinar was moderated by Shirley Ann Higuchi, chair of the board of the Heart Mountain Wyoming Foundation, a sponsor of the event, and the senior director for legal and regulatory affairs for the American Psychological Assn. Other sponsors were the National Council of Asian Pacific Americans, the Asian American Psychological Assn. and the Southeast Asia Resource Action Center.

Tran has captured the lessons she's learned in a new book, "The Gifts of Adversity," which recounts her journey from Vietnam to become the nation's first Vietnamese American psychologist and her survival after suffering seven years of sexual abuse at the hands of a Roman Catholic priest. Higuchi is the author of an upcoming book that tells of her family's experiences before, during and after the incarceration: "Setsuko's Secret: Heart Mountain and the Legacy of the Japanese American Incarceration."

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Four generations of women at a refugee camp, Dr. Tran is in the striped shirt sitting next to her maternal great-grandmother; sister, Jane; grandmother; and sister, Betty. Dr. Tran's mother is in the back holding her sister, Kathy.

PHOTO: COURTESY OF DR. CAROLEE TRAN

Paperback:  
<http://www.amazon.com/dp/1734686804>

Author Website:  
[www.caroleetran.com](http://www.caroleetran.com)

Radio Interview with Capital Public Radio on 4/30/20:  
<https://www.capradio.org/news/insight/2020/04/30/local-author-carolee-tran-and-her-new-memoir-the-gifts-of-adversity/>

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Higuchi's parents, William and Setsuko, were forced from their homes in San Jose and San Francisco and met as children in the seventh grade in the Heart Mountain school. They reunited as students at Berkeley and married in the 1950s.

Hall, who is a psychology professor at the University of Oregon, said Asian Americans face a constant stream of "microaggressions" from non-Asians, including questions about where they were really born or comments about how Asian American women are "exotic." He cited a study that found that 78% of Asian Americans face some kind of microaggression every two weeks.

The son of a Japanese American woman who was incarcerated at the camp in Poston, Ariz., and a Caucasian man who served in the Navy during World War II, Hall said he learned that people "can be an ally even if they are not part of a group."

His father, Charles Hall, grew up in Washington state, where he attended a Methodist church with a largely Japanese American congregation. When his father got leave during the war, he told his commanders he was visiting family members in

Pennsylvania. Instead, he went to the camp in Heart Mountain, Wyo., where his friends from home were incarcerated.

"He stayed in the camp," Hall said. "He did it because these people were his friends. He wasn't trying to be noble."

Second Class Petty Officer Charles Hall of Cold Bay, Alaska, is listed as a visitor in the Sept. 18, 1943, edition of the *Heart Mountain Sentinel*.

After the war, Charles Hall quit his local Elks Club when they refused to admit Japanese Americans and joined the Nisei Veterans Committee. "My dad became an honorary Nisei."

That kind of bearing witness for others is critical to her current work with Tsuru for Solidarity, Ina said. That group fights to raise awareness of the treatment of Latinx immigrants and also organizes "healing circles" to help people cope with multigenerational mental health trauma.

Tran agreed. "We need to ally with other people about how this is a repeat of history," she said. "We need to fight it with whatever we can. Every bystander needs to stand up." ■

**TOD » continued**

The ACLU further explains in its statement, "Marijuana prohibition and the policies surrounding it result in a series of other civil liberties violations, including threatened rights to free speech and protection from illegal searches and seizure." Between 2001-10, more than 7 million arrests were made for marijuana possession alone. Data gathered by the ACLU shows that the policing and enforcement of marijuana laws are also significantly biased along racial lines. Although more white Americans use marijuana on a regular basis, African-Americans are actually 3.73 times more likely to be arrested. Selective prosecution

of these cases has likewise resulted in a disproportionate number of African-Americans serving jail time on low-level possession charges.

Regardless of whether the JACL adopts a formal stance on this issue, it is clear that the Japanese American community has long held stake in this conversation, thanks to the tireless advocacy of Dr. Tod Mikuriya.

*Special thanks to Mary Jane and Beverly Mikuriya for sharing their memories and photographs that helped shape this article and Fred Gardner for the wealth of information about Dr. Tod Mikuriya and the medical marijuana movement published in his O'Shaughnessy's journal.*

**AMERICAN HOLIDAY TRAVEL****2020 TOUR SCHEDULE**

KENYA WILDLIFE SAFARI HOLIDAY TOUR (Carol Hida) . . . . . Sep  
CLASSICAL JAPAN HOLIDAY TOUR (Ernest Hida) . . . . . Oct 7-19  
Tokyo, Lake Kawaguchi, Nagoya, Gifu-Cormorant fishing, Hiroshima, Kyoto.  
PAINTED CANYONS OF THE WEST TOUR (Elaine Ishida) . . . . . Oct 4-12  
Denver, Grand Junction, Bryce-Zion Canyon National Park, Springdale-Utah,  
Arches-Canyonland-Capitol Reef-Grand Staircase National Parks, Las Vegas  
OKINAWA HOLIDAY TOUR (Ernest Hida) . . . . . Nov 11-20  
Naha, Onnason, Islands of Ishigaki, Iriomote and Taketomo.

For more information and reservations, please contact:

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312 E. 1st Street, Suite 240 \* Los Angeles, CA 90012  
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Ernest or Carol Hida Elaine Ishida (Tel: 714-269-4534)

## A NATIONAL GUIDE TO NOTABLE COMMUNITY EVENTS

**CALENDAR**

**DUE TO HEALTH AND SAFETY CONCERNS IN THE U.S. BECAUSE OF THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC, PLEASE CHECK REGARDING THE STATUS OF EVENTS LISTED IN THIS ISSUE'S CALENDAR SECTION.**

**NATIONAL****JACL National Convention**

Continue to follow JACL on Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, JACL.org and PacificCitizen.org for updated information regarding this year's National Convention. There will be a virtual National Board meeting on Aug. 15.

Info: Visit [www.jacl.org](http://www.jacl.org).

**Tadaima! A Community Virtual Pilgrimage****National Event**

June 13-Aug. 16

Price: Free

Hosted by the Japanese American Memorial Pilgrimages website, this collaboration brings together representatives from many different parts of the Nikkei community who are committed to actively memorializing the history of Japanese American incarceration during WWII. Spread across nine themed weeks, "Tadaima!" will feature prerecorded and live-streamed content, as well as opportunities to engage as a community.

Info: For more information, visit <https://www.jampilgrimages.com>.

**Presidential Town Hall****National Event**

June 27

Price: Free

This nonpartisan event will be the largest convergence of Asian American and Pacific Islander professionals and community leaders in this opportunity for the presidential candidates to participate and address issues relating to the AAPI community's needs for the future. In addition, a series of workshops will also be organized before and after the event to support community building — all done within an interactive environment.

Info: Visit <https://www.apiavote.org>.

**NCWNP**

**Your Family, Your History With Genealogist Linda Harms Okazaki Biweekly Webinars Thru Aug. 5 via Zoom**

Price: Sessions 2-8 Course Enrollment \$30 Members/\$50 General Public

(Course enrollment includes access to webinar video recordings)

Have you ever wanted to research your family history but didn't know how to begin? Genealogist Linda Harms Okazaki will guide you through the research and help you to write your story. Each session

includes a homework assignment and culminates with sharing your final written report.

Info: For course information and to register, visit <http://bit.ly/yourfamilyyourhistory>.

**PSW****Queer Nikkei Stories:****Intergenerational Conversations**

June 18

Los Angeles, CA

Online via Zoom 6:30-8 p.m.

Price: Free; RSVP

Okaeri, JANM and Visual Communications invite you to listen and participate in conversations with several generations of LGBTQ+-identified Japanese Americans as they talk about their experiences at the intersections of these identities. Join George Takei, USC student/JACL member Justin Kawaguchi and June Lagmay, founder of Asian/Pacific Lesbians and Gays, who will be in dialogue with Aya Tasaki, a bicultural advocate. The audience will also be encouraged to take part in a Q & A portion, and the event will also include short films about Takei and Lagmay and their impact within the LGBTQ+ community and beyond.

Info: RSVP at [janm.org/events](http://janm.org/events).

**JANM Online Museum Collection**

Los Angeles, CA

Japanese American National

Museum

Online

JANM's Museum Collections Online features selected highlights from the museum's permanent collection of more than 60,000 unique artifacts, documents and photographs. Among the collections that can be viewed online are the "Stanley Hayami Diary," "Hisako Hibi Collection," "George Hoshida Collection" and "Hideo Date Collection," "Estelle Ishigo Collection," among others. Although the museum is temporarily closed, viewers can still experience its inside treasures.

Info: [www.janm.org](http://www.janm.org).

**Keiro No Hi Festival**

Los Angeles, CA

Virtual Event September

Price: Free

Keiro No Hi, or "Respect for the Aged Day," is a Japanese holiday that honors and celebrates older adults. This third-annual event will take place in September, with registration opening in June. The "Quality of Life" Fine Arts Showcase will feature artwork created by community members. Last year featured artwork and projects submitted by more than 1,100 individuals. Everyone in the community age 60 and above

is invited to participate.

Info: Visit the Keiro website for registration information coming soon and more event details.

**PNW****Wing Luke Museum Online****Digital Content**

Seattle, WA

**Wing Luke Museum**

Although the museum's doors are temporarily closed, there is still a plethora of curated stories, digital content and neighborhood resources available to access and view. Viewers can check out Education, YouthCAN, Collections and Community Art all online!

Info: [www.digitalwingluke.org](http://www.digitalwingluke.org).

**EDC****Japan Society of Boston Free****Online Resources**

Boston, MA

**Virtual classes and information**

Price: Free

The Japan Society of Boston is offering free online resources featuring Japanese language learning tools, Japanese cooking, origami, arts and lectures and much more, all in a virtual online capacity.

Info: Visit <https://japansocietyboston.wildapricot.org>.

**Kimono Couture: The Beauty of****Chiso**

Worcester, MA

Thru July 26

Worcester Art Museum

55 Salisbury St.

This is the first exhibition outside of Japan of historic and contemporary kimonos from the collection of Chiso, the distinguished Kyoto-based kimono house founded in 1555. The exhibit will include 13 kimonos from the mid-1600s-2000s. A special video will also document the contemporary creation of a kimono, from start to finish.

Info: Visit <https://www.worcesterart.org/exhibitions/kimono-couture/>. ■

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# REIMAGINE EVERYTHING

## AARP AND THE WOMEN'S ALZHEIMER'S MOVEMENT UNVEIL GROUNDBREAKING REPORT ON THE STATUS OF WOMEN AND ALZHEIMER'S, DEMENTIA AND BRAIN HEALTH

By Ron Mori

Seventy-five top Alzheimer's and dementia experts collaborated on a 10-year strategic plan for researchers, policymakers and caregivers.

A new report released by AARP and the Women's Alzheimer's Movement synthesizes years of data and findings to help explain why women are disproportionately affected by Alzheimer's disease.

Two-thirds of the 5.8 million Americans living with Alzheimer's disease today are women, and they also do the majority of caregiving for people with Alzheimer's and dementia.

"It's Time to Act: The Challenges of Alzheimer's and Dementia for Women" is a comprehensive examination of the state of research and offers a first-ever five-point strategic plan for all who seek meaningful change in the next decade.

At current rates, 13.8 million Americans will be living with dementia by the middle of the century, and most of them will be women — yet there is still no vaccine or cure.

Ten years ago, the Women's Alzheimer's Movement partnered with the Alzheimer's Assn. and, with additional support from AARP, first cast a spotlight on the extraordinary burden that women carry for Alzheimer's and other forms of dementia in "The Shriver Report: A Woman's Nation Takes on Alzheimer's."

Since that time, there are still not enough answers to address the enormous physical, social and financial challenges these brain diseases place on women.

"It's Time to Act" is the culmination of a yearlong effort by AARP and WAM supported by the AARP Foundation's A. Barry Rand Fund for Brain Health Research. The two organizations convened 75 dementia researchers, advocates and policy experts to examine the current state of research, identify gaps in knowledge and forge a path forward with a strategic plan addressing both science and policy. This group will collaborate to drive change for women and dementia over the next decade.

"At AARP, we recognize that we can't simply sit back and wait for a cure for Alzheimer's disease and dementia. We need to work to reduce risk, improve care and help people keep their brains healthy while they age," said AARP CEO Jo Ann Jenkins. "But no one organization or researcher can do it alone. We need to tap into everyone's strengths and also make a call for women to take ownership of their own brain health."

"Medical research has historically left women out of clinical trials, making the assumption that they are basically the same as men," said Maria Shriver, founder of the Women's Alzheimer's Movement. "That has led to a gap in knowledge about women's health in general and Alzheimer's in particular. We have got to close that gap. And, if the COVID-19 crisis has taught us nothing else, it is that we must be prepared for an epidemic that data predicts — and science accepts — as inevitable fact. We cannot allow Alzheimer's and dementia to continue to claim the lives of our mothers, aunts, grandmothers, sisters, nieces, daughters and friends in record numbers."

Founded by Shriver, the Women's Alzheimer's Movement is a nonprofit organization that is dedicated to raising awareness about women's increased risk for Alzheimer's and to educating the public — women and men — about lifestyle changes they can make to protect their brain health. Through annual campaigns and initiatives, WAM raises funds to support women-based Alzheimer's research at leading scientific institutions around the country.

The report's recommended strategic plan details a global strategy to help all women and their families who are contending with Alzheimer's and dementia, regardless of income, ethnicity, education or cultural background. The five-step action plan strives to:

- **Eliminate the Stigma of Dementia.** Stigma stands in the way of diagnosis and quality care for this serious, public health problem.

- **Empower Women to Stay Brain Healthy.** Science has shown that we can all do a great deal to promote our own brain health.
- **Ensure That Research Is Inclusive.** Researchers must learn why dementia affects so many women and underserved communities, and they should report such data in their findings.
- **Support Family Caregivers.** All family caregivers should have access to training and local services that help them perform their duties. They should have paid leave and health care benefits.
- **Improve Medical Training for Dementia.** Health care providers must do a better job of addressing, spotting and treating cognitive decline in older women.

The full report and recommendations are available online at <https://www.aarp.org/health/brain-health/global-council-on-brain-health/womens-report>.

"Putting the spotlight back on better brain health will improve lives for everyone — but it will make the greatest difference for women because women bear a disproportionate burden, and underserved communities are especially affected," said Sarah Lenz Lock, senior vp at AARP and executive director of the Global Council on Brain Health.

*Ron Mori is a member of the Washington, D.C., JACL chapter and manager of community, states and national affairs — multicultural leadership for AARP.*

## STATEMENT FROM AARP CEO JO ANN JENKINS



WASHINGTON, D.C. — The following statement was released by AARP CEO Jo Ann Jenkins:

"As we witness the protests over racial injustice and face the ongoing coronavirus pandemic, we believe our nation desperately needs healing. The incidents of racial violence and COVID-19's disproportionate impact on people of color are not random, but instead are the result of inequality due to a lack of social, economic and political opportunities. Discrimination of any kind corrodes our communities and our society from the inside out.

"AARP today continues to be guided

by the promise that our founder, Dr. Ethel Percy Andrus, made over 60 years ago: 'What we do, we do for all.' Through our advocacy, programs and services, we fight against discrimination, advocate for access to health care and work to improve the lives of all people, especially those most vulnerable.

"As we consider this moment in time, it's clear this work is more important than ever. During these difficult days, AARP will use its voice, resources and trust in our brand to continue our fight for what is right so all people can live a life of dignity regardless of race, age or income." ■

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