

A. Hirotooshi Nishikawa, Ph.D.

Japanese Internment Camp Survivor, Board Member Japanese American Citizens League Philadelphia Chapter



Hiro Nishikawa is a native of San Francisco and a sansei (3rd generation American of Japanese descent). During WWII as a four-year old, he and his family were sent to Poston, AZ and incarcerated for the duration of the war. Afterwards his family settled in Gilroy, CA where he finished high school. He received a B.A. in biochemistry at U.C.-Berkeley and later a Ph.D. at Oregon State Univ. in Corvallis. He and his wife, Sumie, have a daughter and a son, both married. They have a grandson and two granddaughters.

He was engaged for nearly 30 years in biotech pharmaceutical drug discovery and development, earlier at Hoffmann-LaRoche (Nutley, NJ) and then at GlaxoSmithKline (King of Prussia, PA), where he retired as Group Director.

Hiro became involved with the Japanese American Citizens League (JACL) Philadelphia Chapter in 1997 and soon joined its board of directors. He attended the JACL/OCA Leadership Workshop in 1999 and then served as chapter president from 2001-2005. In July 2005 he was elected Eastern District Council governor for a two year term. He has been a delegate to National conventions since 2000 and has served on the Resolutions Committee (2002, 2004, 2006, 2011, 2012, 2013, 2014). He chaired this Committee at 2008 and 2010 Convention. Since 2003 he has been active in the chapter Speakers Bureau, giving PowerPoint talks to college classes and high school students as well as general audiences about the history of Japanese Americans incarcerated in WWII concentration camps. In 2011-12 he served on the JACL Power of Words handbook committee.

A life-long photographer and lover of classical music, he has also been an avid student of Japanese American history. In recent years, he has been active in social justice and anti-racism causes at the Main Line Unitarian Church in Devon, PA. He is now retired from the board of PICC (Pennsylvania Immigration & Citizens Coalition) but supports work for comprehensive immigration reform.

He has been active on the boards of the Philadelphia JACL, the Japanese Association of Greater Philadelphia (JAGP), Asian Arts Initiative of Philadelphia (AAI), the Japan America Society of Greater Philadelphia (JASGP), and the Faraway Homeowners Association (FHA). Also he is a member of Shofuso (Japanese House and Garden) and a supporter (Friend) of the Curtis Institute of Music, the Leopold Mozart Academy, the Kimmel Center for the Performing Arts, the Philadelphia Museum of Art, Opera Company of Philadelphia, the Philadelphia Orchestra, the National Constitution Center, and Museum of the American Revolution.

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