

Nisei Student Relocation Commemorative Fund, Inc.

Southeast Asian Refugee Scholarship Program

“To extend helping hands once offered to us.”



2004 Awards Ceremony

**Recognizing students in
Oregon and Clark County, Washington**

Saturday, April 24, 2004

Legin Restaurant Banquet Hall

Portland, Oregon

Nisei Student Relocation Commemorative Fund, Inc.

Background

In 1942, many Japanese Americans of college age were faced with the possibility of having their educations terminated because of the mass evacuation of Japanese Americans from the West Coast and their incarceration in internment camps during World War II. Responding to this crisis, concerned educators, church groups, and service organizations formed the National Japanese American Student Relocation Council for the purpose of enabling students to leave the concentration camps and continue their education. Through the Council's efforts, over 4,000 Nisei (second-generation Japanese in America) were able to relocate to more than 500 institutions of higher learning outside the restricted areas of the Western Defense Command.

In 1980, a group of former students who had been helped by the Council during World War II founded the Nisei Student Relocation Commemorative Fund (NSRCF). Recalling how they had been helped during World War II, they established a fund to assist other students whose education had been disrupted by war. The NSRCF chose Southeast Asian refugee students for assistance because of their similar experience of being uprooted by war, interned in camps, and having their education disrupted.

This year, the Portland Organizing Committee is awarding \$7,500 in scholarship funds to graduating high school seniors who reside in Oregon and Southwest Washington for study during their freshman year in college. The NSRCF national fund contributed \$5,000 and the local organizing committee raised \$2,500. This evening, we gather to recognize these hard-working youth and wish them well as they pursue their higher education.

The main traveling portion of the Fund is awarding scholarships in East Lansing, Michigan. In 2005, the awards will be given in Denver, Colorado. Between 1983 and 2002, the NSRCF awarded 365 scholarships for a total of \$340,100 to Southeast Asian refugee students.



NSRCF Board of Directors

President: Ryozo Glenn Kumekawa

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History of NSRCF scholarships venues

Year – Location

1982 – Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

1983 – San Francisco Bay Region

1984 – New England Area

1985 – Illinois, Chicago area

1986 – Los Angeles area

1987 – Twin Cities, Minnesota

1988 – Houston area

1989 – Denver area

1990 – Philadelphia, Pennsylvania area

1991 – Seattle, Washington area

1992 – Southern New England

1993 – Stockton, California area

1994 – Sacramento Valley, California

1995 – Fresno area, California

1996 – New York City

1997 – San Diego, California

1998 – Madison, Wisconsin

1999 – Hickory, North Carolina

2000 – Boston, Massachusetts

2001 – Merced, California

2002 – Atlanta, Georgia

2003 – Oregon and Clark County,
Washington

2004 – East Lansing, Michigan

2005 – Denver, Colorado

NSRCF Named Funds

The Nisei Student Relocation Commemorative Fund (NSRCF) was established by Americans of Japanese ancestry who were incarcerated in internment camps during World War II. Assisted by the National Japanese American Student Relocation Council, these young men and women, called Nisei, were allowed to leave the camps to continue their education. As an expression of gratitude and commitment to help young people whose lives were also disrupted by war, the NSRCF annually awards scholarships to Southeast Asian refugee students.

NSRCF scholarships are made possible by contributions from individuals and organizations. Named Fund scholarships enable anyone, including organizations, to honor, commemorate, or pay tribute to individuals, groups, or events. To date, the following Named Funds have been established:

American Friends Service Committee*
 Tom R. Bodine*
 Ann Graybill Cook*
 Monroe E. Deutsch*
 Woody and Betty Emlen*
 Kei Enomoto
 Joseph Goodman
 Suezo and Kikuyo Hayashida
 Junzo and Ito Hibino
 Nobu and Yosh Hibino
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 The Issei Generation
 Elinor Umezawa Kajiwara
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 Yoshiko Uchida
 Paul R. Wada
 Michi N. and Walter Weglyn
 Mabel Sheldon Williams*
 Kay Yamashita

* The Nisei Student Relocation Commemorative Fund (NSRCF) Board of Directors established these and the following Named Funds in the hope that what happened during World War II will never be forgotten and also that future generations will continue to have the opportunity to receive a higher education.

Amache, Colorado Alumni Fund
 Gila River, Arizona Alumni Fund
 Heart Mountain, Wyoming Alumni Fund
 Jerome, Arkansas Alumni Fund
 Manzanar, California Alumni Fund

Minidoka, Idaho Alumni Fund
 Poston, Arizona Alumni Fund
 Rohwer, Arkansas Alumni Fund
 Topaz, Utah Alumni Fund
 Tule Lake, California Alumni Fund

To: **Nisei Student Relocation Commemorative Fund, Inc.**
19 Scenic Drive
Portland, CT 06480

From: Name _____

Address _____

City, State, ZIP _____

I/We would like to "Extend a Helping Hand."

Enclosed is a check for \$ _____ (tax deductible) payable to NSRCF, Inc.

_____ Add to existing Nisei Student Relocation Commemorative Fund called _____

_____ Start a Named Fund called _____



www.nsrcfund.org

2004 Awardees



Hanh Ngoc Cao

Vietnamese, James Madison High School, Portland, Oregon

The adage “Diligence is the mother of success” was taught to Hanh Ngoc Cao by her community supporters. She struggled in Vermont against environmental hazards, in Alabama against discrimination, and, in her final move to Oregon, with language and discrimination. She excelled in her studies and still had time to volunteer at Providence Portland Medical Center each week. She will be active in the community as she pursues her further study at Portland State University in the fall. Hanh hopes to become a pharmacist to help her community.

Yan Chhai

Cambodian, Aloha High School, Aloha, Oregon

It was while giving a eulogy at a memorial that the choice of a health care career really came to life for Yan Chhai. Facing the grief of others, she resolved to make her words and actions help the families of patients. She will give it her all, according to her teachers, as she doesn't know any other way. She strives to do everything to the fullest, even spending two hours a week learning more about Cambodian culture and language. The SMART (Start Making A Reader Today) program and the Beaverton Library have also benefited from Yan's volunteering each week. Yan will attend Pacific University in the fall.



Thien Thanh Le

Vietnamese, John Marshall High School, Portland, Oregon

Thien Thanh Le saw her parents struggle, in Vietnam and in the U.S., as a result of not having the educational opportunities others take for granted. They taught her the values of hard work and perseverance and she rewarded them by putting that appreciation into action. She aspires to be a pharmacist and will attend Oregon State University in the fall, seeking more academic challenges and personal growth.

Quan Nguyen

Vietnamese, James Madison High School, Portland, Oregon

The tripod of love, respect, and discipline established the foundation of this young man's focused ambition. Quan Nguyen's gratitude is evident in his choice of a career in nursing. He seeks to repay his family for their belief in him to be a successful and caring community member. He has assisted in the community by helping to care for 16 disabled Vietnamese young people through his high school career; this has made him more certain of his career choice. He will attend Linfield College in McMinnville, Oregon.



Alexandria Nguyen-Johnson

Vietnamese, Lost River High School, Merrill, Oregon

Being active in student government and extra-curricular activities may be seen as no special achievements in a graduating class of 50, until one reads the words of Alexandria Nguyen-Johnson's coach/teacher: “This young lady gives maximum effort to every aspect of her life.” When she became interested in health occupations, she joined Basin Explorers and worked with the ambulance at every football game and fairgrounds event. Her achievements at the University of Oregon, her next academic home, will not come as a surprise to her community. Alexandria hopes to pursue a career in the health care field.

Kimberly Moua

Hmong, Roosevelt High School, Portland, Oregon

Kimberly Moua is a responsible, high-performing student who has impressed teachers with her sacrifice and her commitment to do her best for herself and her community. This teenager had to assume the “mother role” in her family when her mother had an accident at work, temporarily losing the use of her hand. Kimberly assumed all her mother's household duties until she regained the use her hand three years later. The gusto which she shows in her school's leadership roles is evidenced by her achievements. Kimberly enjoys being a student and will undoubtedly excel at Oregon State University in the fall.



2004 Awardees



Arnan Outhaythip

Laotian, Beaverton High School, Beaverton, Oregon

“No limits” is the phrase that teachers attach to Arnan Outhaythip in his quests to do the best he can at a multitude of tasks. Arnan tells of his football career, sitting on the bench for three years and wanting to play. With a teacher’s encouragement and praise for his heart, he decides to give it a real effort. After a summer of hard work and concentrated body building, he earns the position of starter and goes on to be named Most Improved Player and Third Team All Metro Defensive Back. A high point of the successful senior year football story is being featured as a KOIN-TV Hit of the Night. Arnan will take his “can do” attitude to Oregon State University in the fall.

Rinna Rem

Cambodian, Heritage High School, Vancouver, Washington

Rinna Rem has excelled at high school and has simultaneously taken courses at Clark College to get a jump start on the college education she knows she must have to help provide for her mother and siblings. While economic stability is a goal, she also wants to let her mother know she appreciates the sacrifices she made for Rinna. She has realized success in her leadership roles, her science competitions, and her stints as an athletic trainer for Heritage High teams. This fall will find Rinna at Reed College, following more demanding academic challenges.



Leutpaxa Sihapanya

Laotian, James Madison High School, Portland, Oregon

The journey to a new country at age 11 was earthshaking for this young lady, but she has risen to the challenge and amazed many adults around her. As she masters more and more of the language, her resolve to do things for the community also grows. In the fall she will attend Portland Community College to begin her journey to become a dental hygienist. If you believe you can do it, you will achieve your goals. Leutpaxa Sihapanya will reward her parents’ sacrifices with all of her future achievements.

Dat Trong Tran

Vietnamese, James Madison High School, Portland, Oregon

Oregon State University will truly receive a gift this fall of a student whom teachers love to have in their classroom. Dat Trong Tran will be missed by his teachers at Madison because of his love of learning and positive attitude in the classroom. He shares his “bag of tricks” by helping to teach seven- and eight-year-olds how to read and understand Vietnamese weekly in a special program. He also works 20 hours a week at the Rose City Golf Club. He will pursue a career in computer engineering and will undoubtedly be very successful, but he has already made a life-changing discovery. In his words, “If everyone gives a little, then we as a whole could really make a difference.”



Khou See Vang

Hmong, James Madison High School, Portland, Oregon

When she attends Portland State University this fall, Khou See Vang will be thinking of what kind of example she sets for her younger siblings. Coming from a big family and being the one who helps her parents with the marketing of their flowers, she knows how she can help make their profits grow. Her teachers see her as a future entrepreneur in the community, running a successful business with superb customer service. These are skills she learned by working part time for the past four years. With five younger siblings, Khou See has had responsibilities of working to help support the family business, and maintaining good grades also. She has her mind set on success, and she will reach that goal.

2004 Awardees

Marina Un

Cambodian, Aloha High School, Aloha, Oregon

Marina Un has learned much from her keen observation of others and their struggles. While in high school, she watched a family member lose focus and suffer disappointments, leading to self-destructive behaviors. With the resolve not to follow that path, she found herself determinedly pursuing good grades and positive involvement. The Cambodian dance group, Asian Culture Club, and Asian Youth Leadership Conference were some of those community volunteer activities. She is able now to celebrate the “recovery” of her family member, and has hopes that success will come to that family member, too. Marina plans to attend Portland State University.



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2004 Oregon and Clark County, Washington NSRCF Committee Members

Committee Chairperson: Al Abe
Committee Treasurer: Henry Ueno
Committee Secretary: Michelle Sugahiro
Committee Public Relations: Jody Lim
Cambodian Representatives: Vathara Oung and Sandy Oung
Hmong Representative: Lee Po Cha
Lao Representative: Vanh Lang “V.K.” Khamsouk
Mien Representative: Pan Fou
Vietnamese Representative: Bac-Ai Nguyen

Japanese community volunteers

Patsy Abe
Kay Endo
Kay Fujita
Shig & May Oka
Carrie Saito
Wayne & Sharon Takahashi

Special thanks to local donors:

| | |
|------------------------------------|----------------------------|
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| George and Nobuko Azumano | Seichi and Shu Konno |
| Tai and Nobu Funatake | Albert Nakata |
| Hikomichi Hiram Hachiya (deceased) | Kathryn Nitta |
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Japanese American Citizens League (JAACL), Portland Chapter
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Oregon Vietnamese Community Association (OVCA)
The Asian Reporter
Wat Lao Buddhathamaram, Portland, Oregon

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***For more information about the Nisei Student Relocation Commemorative Fund, Inc.,
establishing a Named Fund, or making a gift, contact:***

Nisei Student Relocation Commemorative Fund, Inc.
19 Scenic Drive
Portland, CT 06480
www.nsrefund.org

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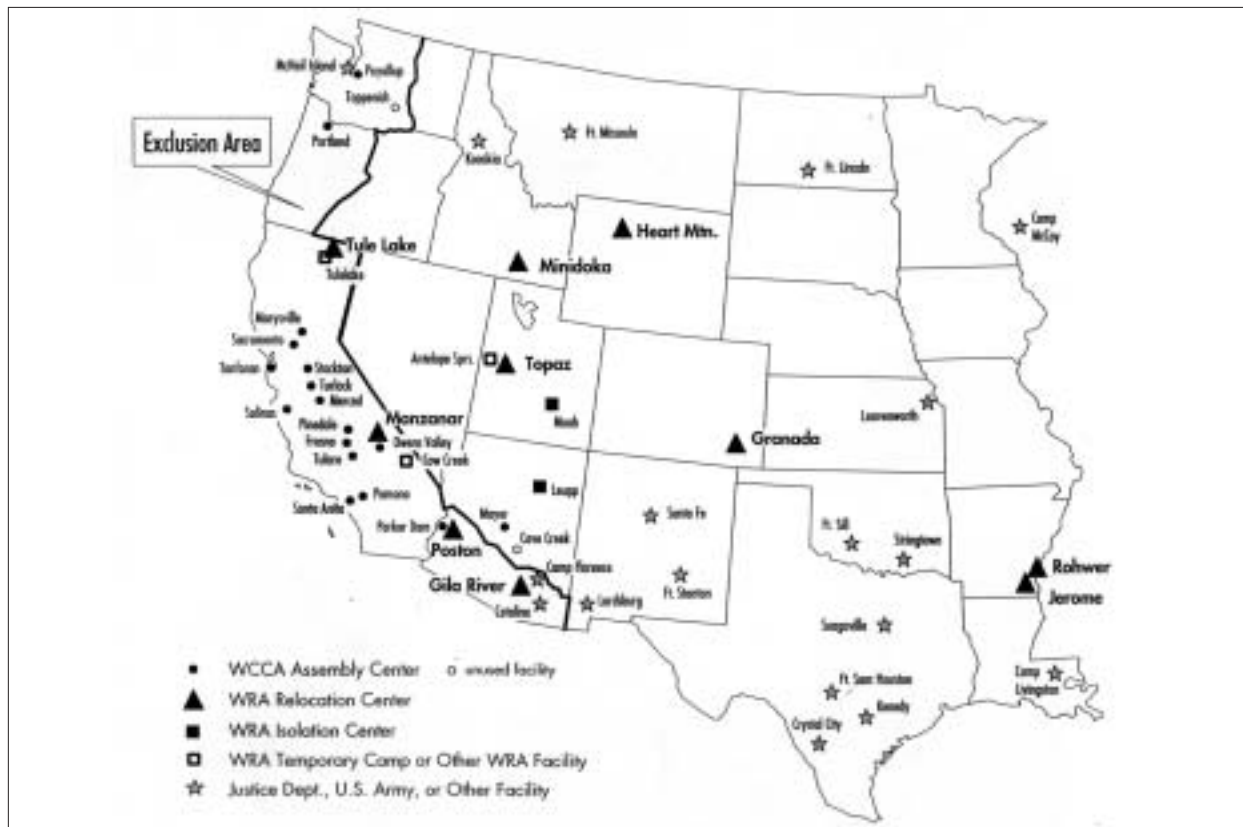


“The Issei, through their sacrifices, prepared the Nisei to utilize the educational opportunities that the wartime National Japanese American Student Relocation Council made available.”

-- Issei Generation Named Fund

“I looked at the scholarship winners and said, ‘My God, there I am 45 years ago.’ I felt like I was part of a long chain all the way from 1945, holding hands and helping each other.”

-- Esther Suzuki, Recipient (1943), at the 1987 NSRCF Awards Ceremony



Sites in the western U.S. associated with the relocation of Japanese Americans during World War II. (“Confinement and Ethnicity,” National Park Service, 1999)