



## Oregon Scholarship Awards #2

### Students from Oregon and Clark County, Washington Recognized

On April 24, 2004, the *Asian Reporter* newspaper held its 6th annual scholarship and awards banquet in Portland, Oregon. Among the winners were 12 students who received NSRC Fund scholarships. As is the policy of the NSRC board of directors, \$5,000 in "seed money" is offered to a local committee to continue the scholarship awards a second year. The Oregon local awards committee not only agreed to do it again, but successfully raised \$2,500 on its own to bring the total award amount to \$7,500.

Many people give their time and energy in selecting the scholarship recipients as well as in organizing the awards event. While it is most gratifying to recognize the potential and hard work of these exceptional students, the NSRC board of directors understands how much effort goes into the process each year, and we are so grateful. This year's local committee included Al Abe, chairperson, Henry Ueno, Michelle Sugahiro, Jody Lim, Vathara Oung and Sandy Oung (Cambodian representatives), Lee Po Cha (Hmong representative), Vanh Lang "V.K." Khamsook (Lao representative), Pan Fou (Mien representative) and Bac-Ai Nguyen (Vietnamese representative). The Japanese community volunteers included Patsy Abe, Kay Endo, Kay Fujita, Shig and Mary Oka, Carrie Saito and Wayne and Sharon Takahashi. Many local individuals and organizations also contributed to making the second year a big success. Congratulations!



## NSRC Scholarships at Michigan State

### 2004 Michigan Awards Go to 24 Students

On June 4, 2004, students and their proud parents, friends, teachers and guidance counselors gathered in East Lansing, Michigan on the beautiful campus of Michigan State University for the 24<sup>th</sup> annual NSRC Fund scholarship awards. The awards ceremony and reception were held at the school's International Center. The chair of the local awards committee, Ms. Van Nguyen, is the Outreach Coordinator of the Asian Studies Center at MSU. Due to the departure of the original chairperson, Ms. Nguyen volunteered to step in, and she did with grace and competence, ensuring that the selection process and awards ceremony would be handled professionally and expertly.

The beautiful "Vietnamese Teacup Dance" performed by high school students from Eastern High School in Lansing opened the evening's event, and was followed by Van Nguyen's and Jean Hibino's welcomes. The keynote address was given by Iwao

## *Greetings from the Board*

Dear NSRC Supporters and Friends,

As the autumn leaves change color, it is time once again to take stock of last year's work and accomplishments, and to thank our supporters for their generosity and to prevail upon them again.

The Fund's net worth stands at \$800,655 (as of June 30, 2004); it was a very good year! The goal of \$1 million dollars in the Fund is within reach. We are grateful for the supporters and friends who believe that the Fund's mission continues to be both worthwhile and deserving. For calendar year 2003, Treasurer Lafayette Noda reports that the NSRC Fund received \$49,900 in gifts and \$36,168 in investment returns. Scholarships totaling \$35,000 were awarded, and operating expenses were \$8,300. The board of directors is determined to keep operating costs to a minimum in order that gifts to the Fund go primarily towards scholarships.

This year in East Lansing, Michigan, \$29,000 in scholarships was awarded - 19 \$1000 scholarships and five \$2000 Named Scholar awards. The awards selection process and ceremony were chaired by Ms. Van Nguyen. Many thanks to Van and her committee for their hard work and energy. Also this year was "Oregon II" - 12 students received \$7,500 in scholarships in April. The Oregon local committee raised \$2,500 on their own to go along with the \$5,000 "seed money" provided by the board of directors. Thanks again to Al Abe

and his committee. We say this every year and never tire of repeating it. The volunteers who come forward from across the country to offer their help and expertise in organizing the scholarship selection process and the annual awards ceremonies are exceptional. If it weren't for them, the awards ceremonies would not happen and the scholarships would not be as meaningful or personal. We are indebted to them.

Next year's awards will be presented in the Denver/Boulder, Colorado area, and in 2006 they will be given in the Phoenix/Tempe, Arizona area. If anyone is interested in joining the local awards committee, attending the ceremony, and/or helping out in other ways, please email Yutaka Kobayashi at [ykoby24@cs.com](mailto:ykoby24@cs.com).

The board of directors is grateful indeed to Alan Hassenfeld, chairman of the board of Hasbro, Inc. of Pawtucket, Rhode Island. Alan made a challenge grant of \$5,000 addressed to members of the NSRC board of directors to raise a matching \$5,000 to enable us to update our brochures, maintain and improve the NSRC website, and develop our outreach efforts. Mr. and Mrs. Hassenfeld were also major supporters of the NSRC's 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary celebration. Thank you!

The NSRC Fund website is up and running, thanks to Kesaya Noda, Bob Naka and Don

Stevenson. Please visit it at [www.nsrcfund.org](http://www.nsrcfund.org). If you have ideas and suggestions to improve the site, we would love to hear from you.

Lastly, a special note about milestones. Board members Yutaka Kobayashi and May Takayanagi, celebrated their 80<sup>th</sup> birthdays this year. A group of East Coast Nisei, NSRC board members and longtime supporters affectionately dubbed "The 1919s," celebrated their 85<sup>th</sup> birthdays this year - Yosh Hibino, Mayme Noda, Sus Ito, Taka Takayanagi and Tak Moriuchi. As for the NSRC, the board looks forward to celebrating its 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary in 2005. One-quarter century of perseverance, dedication and making a difference. The Nisei founders of the NSRC Fund probably never dreamed their idea and vision would go this far!

In grateful appreciation,

### **NSRC Board of Directors**

Ryozo Glenn Kumekawa, *President*  
 Jean Y. Hibino, *Executive Secretary*  
 Yosh D. Hibino, *Assistant Treasurer*  
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 May O. Takayanagi  
 Paul Y. Watanabe

## 2004 “Kay Yamashita Scholarship Award Winner”

# *To Always Learn*



### **Panhia Yang**

*[Excerpts of the acceptance speech given at the Michigan awards ceremony on June 4, 2004.]*

Good evening and congratulations. I, as well as many of you, am much honored to be here and to be one of the recipients of these auspicious scholarships. When one of the coordinators of this program asked me to say a few words on behalf of all the scholarship recipients, I thought to myself, “What should I say?” We are of so many different backgrounds, thoughts, ideas and our goals and aspirations are not all the same. What could I possibly say that would adequately represent all of you? But then I thought, I should expound upon something that we as Southeast Asians can all relate to. That something is called struggle.

Many of us are second generation, others maybe more. As our generation has grown up in America we have struggled to find a middle ground between our heritage and the culture of

America today. We have struggled to please our parents, and yet follow our own dreams. We have struggled to move past pre-conceived notions that other Americans may have of us. Most of all, through the midst of all these other challenges, we have struggled to find who we are – our own identity.

When our families started arriving in the United States, they undoubtedly struggled to gain a foothold in this vast and very complicated country. They struggled to learn the language, they struggled to find jobs, and they struggled to find a place in the American culture, a culture that to them was nearly impossible to understand.

Many of us are here because our families wanted better lives. ... However, as the theme here is, in the path to making dreams become realities, there is no such thing as an easy walk. ... So face these challenges with resilience and honor, because we have the responsibility to stand tall in the face of adversity as our ancestors

did in the past, and they did not live through their struggles to see us run away from ours.

One experience that we have yet to embark upon is college. It is a truth universally known that college is essential in the furthering of one’s knowledge and life. We know this because the idea of going to college has been pounded into us from a very tender age. What we don’t know is what we will take from the experience, because each of us will learn something different – but hopefully we will fulfill the purpose of these scholarships, and that is to always learn. The moment we receive these awards we signed on to live the legacy of these scholarships. The Nisei Student Relocation Commemorative Fund scholarship was given to us in honor of the Japanese incarcerated during World War II. ... This scholarship is to help us seek our own education. May you do so willingly and with open hearts and minds. Thank you.



## Michigan 2004 Winners' Profiles

### **Peter Huu Do**

Vietnamese, East Kentwood High School, Kentwood, MI. For all four years of high school, Peter has been a member of his school's track team, making varsity the three final years. He also volunteers as a pole-vault coach. Besides his commitment to the track team, Peter was inducted into his school's National Honor's Society as a junior and he was involved with the Youth Service Organization. In his own words, he is "a hard worker that has a plan for the future." He plans to attend Michigan State University to pursue a degree in chemical engineering.

### **Joshua Nurhadi Florida**

Amerasian-Indonesian, Community High School, Ann Arbor, MI. In the past four years, Joshua has traveled to Indonesia three times, accompanying his mother as she did research. He has participated in the Gamelan at the University of Michigan and recently played in an interpretation of the Ramayana epic. Joshua also attends Quaker Meeting and has helped the Quakers with numerous fundraising efforts, including the annual crop walk with one of his classes. Having witnessed poor living conditions on his trips to Indonesia, Joshua wants a career that will help those less fortunate than himself.

### **Thanh-Dong Thi Le**

Vietnamese, Everett High School, Lansing, MI. Thanh-Dong's family moved to the U.S. in late 1995 under the Humanitarian Organization Program. In the nine years that she's lived in the U.S., Thanh-Dong's accomplishments include a mastery of the English language, a 3.9 GPA, and membership in the National Honor Society. She is also actively involved in the Vietnamese American Buddhist Association of Lansing (VABAL), assisting Vietnamese families with their integration efforts in the U.S. She is team leader of the VABAL Youth Group, where she and other Vietnamese youth strive to retain their religion, language, and culture. She plans to attend Michigan State University working towards a degree in medicine.

### **Chue Lor, Hmong**

Pontiac Central High School, Pontiac, MI. English is not Chue's first language, yet she was willing to take the most rigorous English classes offered at her high school, and she has excelled in them. She is actively involved in her school's Key Club, Asian American Club, and National Honor Society, all three of which focus on community involvement in the form of volunteering or fundraising. She also plays on the volleyball team, and was captain at the Junior Varsity level. She intends to pursue a career in diagnosis medical sonography, but plans to continue learning for the rest of her life as "education is never ending and never enough" for her.

### **Mai S. Lor**

Hmong, Osborn High School, Detroit, MI. Mai's family immigrated to the U.S. 11 years ago. She juggles a busy schedule of school, work as a waitress four days a week, as well as volunteering with her school's National Honor Society. She is also part of a group that performs Hmong traditional dances at various events including the Hmong New Year and a cultural celebration at the Detroit Children's Museum. She plans to attend Michigan State University's College of Education with the goal of attaining a teaching certificate so that she can return to Detroit to teach.

### **Matthew Sean Naughton**

Amerasian-Filipino, Community High School, Ann Arbor, MI. Maintaining a 3.9 GPA while balancing a schedule of high school classes, college courses, and volunteer work is not easy, but Matthew has done just that. He has also participated in Academic Games since 6th grade, winning the top overall title in the nation in 8th grade and going on to win four other championships during high school. Matthew also tutors other students in math which allows him to apply his knowledge in a useful way while also giving him the opportunity to meet many people of different backgrounds. His Latin

teacher states that Matt is "involved, dependable and a leader among his peers."

### **Chau Hong Nguyen**

Vietnamese, East Kentwood High School, Kentwood, MI. Twelve years ago, Chau, her parents, two older sisters and an older brother emigrated to the U.S. from Vietnam. It was a rough start for them since no one knew any English. Today Chau has a 3.9 GPA, is a member of her school's National Honor Society, and has earned a spot on the All-Academic team in track and cross-country, adding to the 5 varsity letters that she had already earned. She is a team leader in her Church Youth Group, which volunteers in various community activities including visiting nursing homes and fundraising for orphanages in Vietnam. Chau plans to study medicine and become a pediatrician.

### **Dieu Thi Nguyen**

Vietnamese, Everett High School, Lansing, MI. Dieu's journey to the U.S. was long and difficult. In 1989, her family first left Vietnam looking for more freedom and better opportunities for education. This trip ended in the Philippines where they lived for 7 years. Her parents were in the process of applying for citizenship to the U.S. when the Vietnamese government discovered their location and sent them back to Vietnam. The family resigned themselves to the fact that they would have to live the rest of their lives in Vietnam, but in 1997 U.S. immigration called the family to be interviewed for U.S. citizenship. Before they were all able to resettle in the U.S., Dieu lost two brothers at sea as they were making one last trip on their family's fishing boat. Despite all these hardships, Dieu is graduating from high school this year and plans to attend Michigan State University where she will pursue a degree in nursing.

### **Jean Ngoc Nguyen**

Vietnamese, City High School, Grand Rapids, MI. Jean was born in Malaysia after the family escaped from Vietnam by boat in

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# Oregon Winners' Profiles

## Hanh Ngoc Cao

Vietnamese, James Madison High School, Portland, Oregon. The adage "Diligence is the mother of success" was taught to Hanh 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. 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 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'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'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 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.

## 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 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 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

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# Michigan 2004 Winners' Profiles

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1986. The entire family immigrated to Grand Rapids, Michigan in August of 1987. Jean is co-president of her school's National Honor Society, she has a 4.0 GPA, and she has perfect attendance for her four years of high school. She is captain of the Varsity tennis team and was awarded MVP (Most Valuable Player) junior year. She takes part in many community activities including volunteering at the Grand Rapids Children's Museum, the American Red Cross, and for the local library's summer reading program. She was recently awarded a "Good Citizen Award" by the Daughters of the American Revolution.

## Mien Hai Nguyen

Vietnamese, Grandville High School, Grandville, MI. In 1995, Mien's family was sponsored by an uncle who had come over alone to the U.S. in 1975 with the first wave of Vietnamese "boat people." Life was difficult at first, but from a rough beginning, Mien has risen to ranking 5th in her graduating class of 456 with a 3.99 GPA. Last year in the AATF National French contest, which drew over 22,000 students, Mien placed 10th out of 2000+ students from Michigan. In addition to her academic success, she is actively involved in various activities including Science Olympiad, National Honor Society, Asian American Club, Students Against Destructive Decisions, and Family Community Career Leaders of American. She plans to study medicine in college.

## Tuyen Dang Nguyen

Vietnamese, Godwin Heights High School, Wyoming, MI. **Winner of the Koh, Mitsu, and Dr. Kotaro Murai Scholarship Award.**

Tuyen began his personal essay with a Vietnamese proverb, "a blessed family has a son who is better than his father," meaning that if a generation exceeds the previous in life status, success and fortune run in the bloodline. Making these words his motto, Tuyen strives to repay his father's struggles and sacrifices to give his son a better life in the U.S. Tuyen will graduate with a 4.0 GPA. He also excelled in sports, receiving honors for soccer including Most Improved Player freshman year, All-Conference in the following three years, All-District Selection, Team Captain for two years, and team MVP. He is a member of his church's Youth Society, raising awareness of Vietnamese culture among Vietnamese youth and the general public. Tuyen plans to pursue a medical degree.

## Hong-Anh Megan Pham

Vietnamese, East Lansing High School, East Lansing, MI. **Winner of the Nobu Kumekawa Hibino Scholarship Award.** Hong-Anh states in her essay, "I feel as if I see-saw between both cultures, both identities." Nineteen years ago her father and eldest sister left their family in Vietnam in a crowded boat. They eventually made it to the U.S. and worked hard to save money to bring the rest of their family over. Hong-Anh, her mother, and two sisters eventually joined them and Hong-Anh has worked hard to fulfill her father's dream of a better life for his daughter and family. Besides becoming fluent in English, she has also excelled in French. She was president of her school's National Honor Society and the Asian Pacific Affairs Club, and remains active in both. Though fully assimilated into the American culture, she still values her Vietnamese heritage, and recently went to her birth country for a visit.

Hong-Anh intends to pursue a career in international business or law.

## Ngan Phu Pham

Vietnamese, Central High School, Grand Rapids, MI. Ngan's family emigrated to the U.S. in 1995 through the Humanitarian Organization Program. It was difficult balancing school and work with English as his second language, but Ngan succeeded. He was a member of his school's National Honor Society

for two years and he will graduate in the top quarter of his class. His love for soccer led him to excel in this sport earning him a position on junior varsity and then the varsity team where he was voted MVP two years running and awarded All-City Soccer Player senior year.

## Yen H. Pham

Vietnamese, City High School, Grand Rapids, MI. Yen's family emigrated to the U.S. in 1993 and she now leads a busy life juggling high school classes, college courses and internships, but still finds time to volunteer. She interned at the American Red Cross of West Central Michigan where she took part in "Safe On My Own," a program offering assistance to latchkey children. In addition to her internship, she also volunteered at the American Red Cross as well as Santa's Helper and at her previous elementary school where she mentored minority students. She plans to attend Michigan State University where she will pursue a degree in medicine.

## Vanessa Tran Phan

Vietnamese, Godwin Heights High School, Wyoming, MI. **Winner of the Lafayette and Mayme Noda Scholarship Award.** After emigrating with her family to the U.S. in 1994, Vanessa worked hard and will graduate 3rd in her class with a 4.0 GPA. She was on the Girls Varsity Tennis Team and Golf Team all four years of high school and made All-Conference for both. She was president of her school's National Honor Society for 3 years, treasurer of the Student Council for 3 years and vice-president of her class for one year. Along with her success in academics and sports, Vanessa is also very active in her Buddhist Youth Group. After her father passed away from liver cancer a few years ago, Vanessa has been determined to study medicine and become a doctor.

## Ubonwan Sae-Ung

Thai, Grand Ledge High School, Grand Ledge, MI. **Winner of the Gladys Ishida Stone Scholarship Award.** Having only emigrated to the U.S. in 2001, Ubonwan has had to overcome many barriers and needless to say, language was one of them. She did not shy away from taking advanced classes in school and has excelled in them while balancing a 30 hour work load which includes helping to manage her family-owned restaurant, not to mention her many extra-curricular activities: set designing for school





plays, Archery Club, Photography Club, Art Club, Diversity Club, National Honor Society, and student government. She also likes to paint and will have three of her paintings permanently on display at her school. She has a passion for science and hopes to pursue a career with the United Nations or World Health Organization.

#### **Thuy-Vy Than**

Vietnamese, Eastern High School, Lansing, MI. Thuy-Vy's family emigrated to the U.S. in 2000 where they joined her grandparents in Michigan. Since then she has struggled to do well in school while also learning a new language. She is a member of her school's National Honor Society and the Asian Club, which works to break down barriers between different Asian ethnicities as well as to celebrate the Asian culture with the community. Thuy-Vy is also a member of a dance group that performs traditional Vietnamese dances at various cultural events in the community. They perform 6-7 times a year and, more-impressively, they develop their own choreography.

#### **Khanh Trung Truong**

Vietnamese, Lee High School, Wyoming, MI. Khanh arrived in the U.S. with his family in 1995. His father was a soldier in the South Vietnamese army during the Vietnam War, became a political prisoner and spent 6 years in a communist prison camp. Because of his status, his family was eligible to be part of the Humanitarian Organization Program. After 8 years in the U.S., Khanh excelled in his studies, graduating in the top 10 of his class. He was nominated for the National Honor Society his last two years of high school. With his exceptional computer skills, he hopes to pursue a career in digital animation and game design.

#### **Phong Duy Vu**

Vietnamese, Lansing Catholic Central High School, Lansing, MI. Phong balances a busy schedule of high school courses, college courses, and a heavy workload at his parents' convenience store. Although his family has struggled through many hardships, both medical and otherwise, they have remained strong. They fully support and encourage his decision to go to college to study medicine. Phong is a member of his school's National Honor Society and he also played intramural basketball though his four years of high school serving as team captain all

four years. He plans to study physiology at Michigan State University and hopes to become a family physician or pediatrician.

#### **Brittani Wilson**

Amerasian Thai, Cass Technical High School, Detroit, MI. Although she grew up in South Carolina in an area that did not have a large number of Asian Americans, Brittani has developed a growing sense of her Asian American identity. She has made substantial contributions to both the metro Detroit Asian community and to the community at large. In the past year, she has sat on panels with well-know community activists Grace Lee Boggs and Helen Zia, has shared her experiences in a college course called "Asians and Blacks in Detroit" at the University of Michigan, and has worked with the National Conference for Community and Justice to further understanding among high school students and teachers about concerns of Asian American youth. Brittani plans to study social work at Wayne State University and pursue a career in community work to benefit the less privileged.

#### **See Xiong**

Hmong, Eastern High School, Lansing, MI. See and her family emigrated from Laos in 1989. She is one of eight children and has assumed family responsibilities including a part-time job to help support her family. Balancing her work with high school has been difficult, yet she still found time to be active in the Asian Club with which she has performed traditional Hmong dances at various venues including her school's annual culture day, Michigan Folk Festival, Annual Red Cross/Refugee Services Cultural Celebration, and the Annual United Nations Day Program in Lansing. She hopes to study medicine and travel the world observing how other cultures approach medicine.

#### **Christina Yang**

Hmong, Hazel Park High School, Hazel Park, MI. Although Christina has a heavy workload working as a cashier as well as an office assistant for a co-op, she has still excelled in her studies graduating in the top 3% of her class. In her senior year, she was the news editor and reporter for her school's newspaper, for which she was a business manager the previous year, and she was also a member of the National Honor Society for which

she volunteers as a tutor during her free time. She is also an active member of Students Against Destructive Decisions leading the fundraising committee in the past year. She plans to study communications in college and pursue a career in advertising.

#### **Pa Nhia Yang**

Hmong, J.W. Sexton High School, Lansing, MI. **Winner of the Kay Yamashita Scholarship Award.** Both of Pa Nhia's parents are refugees who were displaced during the Vietnam War. They emigrated to the U.S. during the late 1970s, met, and married in 1980. Pa Nhia is a member of her school's National Honor Society and will graduate as valedictorian with a 4.0 GPA. She plans to study medicine at Michigan State University. Along with her success in school, she has been active in her church youth group and tutors ESL students while also working a part time job. She was featured in the 2004 edition of the Lansing State Journal's Annual Great Grads Publication. Her greatest desire is to help people and hopes to be able to go back one day to her parents' native land and provide health care for the Hmong. She is proud of her heritage, even writing a poem in Hmong for her English class.

#### **Shoua Yang**

Hmong, Waterford Kettering High School, Waterford, MI. Shoua's family are Hmong immigrants from Thailand. Her parents were originally from Laos. They emigrated to the U.S. in 1989 settling in Michigan with relatives. Shoua's parents have worked hard to provide for their children, not allowing them to work so that they could concentrate on their education. Shoua will be the first in her family to go to college. She is proud of her Hmong heritage and is actively involved in the Hmong Oakland Association where she is part of a dance group that performs traditional Hmong dances. In the past 6 years, they have performed for New Year celebrations in Michigan, Georgia, and Wisconsin as well as for various culture shows locally. Shoua plans to study business administration and hopes to one day own her own business.

## Honoring Kenji Murase

The Nisei Student Relocation Commemorative Fund Board of Directors honored Kenji Murase for the dedication, energy and leadership that marked his tenure on the Board.

The Board's citation reads, "Dr. Kenji Murase played a critically important role in the development and success of the Nisei Student Relocation Commemorative Fund. One of the earliest members of its Board of Directors, Dr. Murase organized the first NSRC Fund student award ceremony in June of 1983 in Berkeley, California. He involved eighteen local committee members and established a model for

all subsequent local award committees. His wise requirement that all applicants submit personal essays has led to the collection of a rich archive of materials offering a panoramic view of Southeast Asian perspectives.

Over the years, Dr. Murase also represented the NSRC Board of Directors at award ceremonies in several communities in California and nearby states, and conducted the preliminary research and investigation for award ceremony venues throughout the country. In 2003 he wrote, "During the past 40 years I have been associated with many worthy

charitable and service organizations. None has been as rewarding in interpersonal terms or as effective in fulfilling its mission as the NSRC Fund." The Board, in turn, has been enormously rewarded by Dr. Murase's years of devoted work.

**RESOLVED:** The Board of Directors of the Nisei Student Relocation Commemorative Fund meeting at its annual meeting in Concord, Massachusetts on April 10, 2004 adopts this citation of gratitude with its deepest appreciation of Dr. Kenji Murase's three decades of distinguished service on the Board."

## Michigan Awards

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Ishino, Professor Emeritus, Anthropology at Michigan State. Professor Ishino talked about three "unintended consequences" of Executive Order 9066 (the order signed by President Franklin Roosevelt that paved the way for the opening of the concentration camps): the National Japanese American Student Relocation Council; the heroism of the 100<sup>th</sup>/442<sup>nd</sup> soldiers; and the redress and reparations movement for compensation for the Japanese American internment. Professor Ishino made clear the connection be-

tween the formation of the NSRC Fund in 1980 and the World War II context in which it was established.

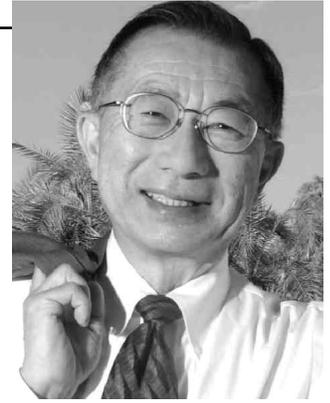
Also speaking was Ms. Helen Erlandson of the Asian Pacific Women Association and MSU Academic Specialist Emeritus, Natural Science. She was helped by the National Japanese American Student Relocation Council to leave the Minidoka (Idaho) concentration camp to attend the University of Minnesota. Ms. Erlandson is now a college advisor. Panhia Yang, the winner of the 2004 "Kay Yamashita Schol-

arship Award" spoke on behalf of all the winners. [Her speech is excerpted in this issue.] Van Nguyen recounted her own family's struggle in leaving Vietnam in 1979 in a boat set upon by pirates and with food and water running low. She went back to visit in 1995 and upon her return to the States, went to college and studied Vietnamese language and culture. The evening's program concluded with the "Vietnamese Hat Dance." A wonderful reception followed with plenty of tasty hot and cold hors d'oeuvres.

Continued on next page

*Dr. Bob H. Suzuki, founding member of the NSRC Fund*

## “None as Unique and Special as the NSRC Fund”



The NSRC Fund is honored to have Bob Suzuki present this year's appeal letter. As a founding member of the NSRC Fund, Bob has lent his time and expertise to the Fund's growth and development for over 20 years. The NSRC is lucky to have him as one of its "West Coast Connections."

Bob is a "young" Nisei, born in Portland, Oregon. He and his family were interned at Minidoka in Idaho. After the war, when Bob was three years old, his family resettled in a rural community near Spokane, Washington, where he grew up and worked on the family's farm. He attended the University of California at Berkeley where he received his B.S. degree and his M.S. degree in Mechanical Engineering. He went on to receive his doctorate from the California Institute of Technology, and then taught in the Department of Aerospace Engineering at the University of Southern California.

While teaching at USC, he became deeply involved in civil rights and public and community affairs. Among numerous activities, he was one of the leaders of a successful nationwide campaign that led to the Congressional repeal of the Emergency Detention Act of 1950, and as chair of the National Education Commission of the Japanese American Citizens League (JACL), he was responsible for initiating action that led to the inclusion of Asian Americans in federally-mandated affirmative action programs.

As a result of these experiences, Bob was moved to change his professional field and devote himself fulltime to work that more directly addressed pressing societal problems. In 1971 this career change took him to the University of Massachusetts in Amherst, where he first became involved with the New England Nisei group that formed the Nisei Stu-

dent Relocation Commemorative Fund. From there he went to the California State Universities at Los Angeles and Northridge. In July of 1991, Bob was selected as the 4th president of California State Polytechnic University, Pomona. In accepting this position, he became one of only a handful (less than 10) of Asian American college presidents among the 2,300 four-year colleges and universities nationwide.

After 12 years as president of Cal Poly Pomona, Bob retired in July of 2003. He remains actively involved on several commissions and boards dealing with issues he cares deeply about. He and his wife, Agnes, have three grown children, and he says, "I hope retirement will also give us more time to spend with our children and grandchildren, and to travel." The rest of the NSRC board of directors hope he and Agnes get their wish.

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## Michigan Awards

Continued from previous page

The Michigan Local Committee's hard work and efforts made this year's award program a success. In doing so, they made a meaningful and thoughtful difference in the lives of the

student recipients. In addition to Chair Van Nguyen, congratulations go to Joseph Cousins, Helen Erlandson, Iwao Ishino and Soh Suzuki. A special note of appreciation goes to Tom Nishi, who initially accepted the invitation

to chair the committee but was unable to continue his involvement. Thanks also go to the Michigan State University Asian Studies Center.

[Ed. Note: In this issue we note the passing of three extraordinary people who felt compelled by their convictions to serve others during WWII. Two of them, Joseph Goodman and Helen Ely Brill, were that extremely rare and precious breed called "internment camp teacher," and the third, Woody Emlen, worked with the National Japanese American Student Relocation Council. Each touched countless people during their long and active lives, and certainly the Japanese American community has been no less impacted. These justice-minded and farsighted individuals with their unswerving faith in the young Japanese American students, stepped forward without hesitation and lent their support. They will always be remembered.]

Drawing by John Goodman



## Joseph R. "Doc" Goodman (1911 - 2004)

Joseph R. Goodman, Ph.D passed away on April 17, 2004. "Doc" Goodman was born in Tacoma, Washington and received a bachelor's and a Ph.D in Chemistry from the University of Washington. He moved to Los Altos, California in 1961 and remained there until his death. Dr. Goodman was an internationally recognized researcher who developed some of the fundamental techniques

used in the analysis of cell structure with the electron microscope. He worked for the Veteran's Administration Hospital and was a Professor in the Department of Pediatrics at the University of California at San Francisco. He published over 120 papers spanning six decades including important work on Alzheimer's disease and AIDS.

It was Pearl Harbor, however, that changed his life. As a conscientious objector, he and his wife Betty were hired to work at the Topaz (Utah) internment camp. He was a high school teacher and student advisor from November 1942 until January 1944. His impact is best summarized by the dedication in the 1944 Topaz High School yearbook, "To those of us fortunate enough to have fallen within his friendly circle, he left inspiration and faith in man."

NSRC board president, Glenn "Rosie" Kumekawa, established the Joseph R. Goodman Named Fund

several years ago. He was a student of "Doc" Goodman's while at Topaz, and says, "We are all diminished by his passing. A man of principle, discipline, and with a core set of beliefs upon which he acted, and in doing so, provided succor, support and validation to those of us interned in camp who needed that assurance for our own emotional survival. "Doc" Goodman came to Topaz not as a benefactor, but rather as a participant in our lives. We were aware of the subtle differentiation made because of his conscientious objector status by other camp administrators and personnel, but for many of us, it was a mark of distinction we cherished as a demonstration of commitment and service.

"I remember one day we asked the camp administration if our school classes could be canceled so that we could bid farewell to our classmates who were being shipped off to the Tule Lake "Segregation Center" as a

result of the failure of the government's so-called "Loyalty Questionnaire." We were so mad when they refused. But Doc Joe was there for us, quietly speaking during our chemistry class, trying to make us understand that ultimately, values of friendships, notions of justice, and the enduring quest for peace would prevail.

"The legacy that Dr. Goodman leaves for us is that under any circumstances, there is the possibility of good. That under whatever constraint, there is the possibility of hope. That there is extraordinary potential in every one of us. And that in service to others, there is unbelievable compounding returns. I was so grateful "Doc" was able to join us at the NSRC's 20th anniversary celebration. I know he was pleased with our efforts."



## Woodruff J. Emlen (1913-2002)

“Woody” Emlen grew up in Germantown, PA, went to Haverford College and received his MBA from Harvard. He spent most of his working years in banking and investment counseling, but it was his Quaker faith that defined his early career in wartime service. Woody met his wife, Betty, at Cambridge (MA) Meeting while he was studying at Harvard. They married in 1942 and then Woody moved to San Francisco to work at the National Japanese American Student Relocation Council office. The Council had formed in May of 1942 under the leadership of the American Friends Service Committee, the YMCA-YWCA, the Pacific College Association, and many other concerned individuals, churches and organizations. Its charge was to process all eligible

Japanese American students out of the internment camps and into colleges as quickly and efficiently as possible. Betty followed Woody to work at the San Francisco office two months later. When the decision was made to consolidate the Council’s offices in Philadelphia, Woody was given the task of setting it up. Again, Betty followed him but not until after she closed the San Francisco office.

By the time Woody received his overseas assignment to France, Betty was the Director of the Council and had to wait until her replacement, Ann Graybill Cook of the YMCA, arrived before she could follow Woody to Europe. Betty says, “Our entire marriage was me playing catch up with Woody!” In all, the Council processed over 4,500

student applications from its inception through June 30, 1946 when it ceased operation. Over that period it was estimated that the staff wrote an average of 25 letters on behalf of each and every student. Betty recalls, “I remember Nobu Hibino and Kay Yamashita at the Philadelphia office, it was a wonderful group of people working there.”

Betty goes on to say, “Both Woody and I were very concerned about the tragic dislocation of the Japanese Americans, especially the college students, and were only too glad to have a part in relocating them. In the death of Woody Emlen, they lost a dear and devoted friend.” May Woody’s indomitable spirit and courage continue to inspire.

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## Helen Ely Brill (1914-2003)

Helen Ely Brill was born in Cedar Rapids, Iowa. She graduated from Scripps College in Claremont, California and also earned a Master’s Degree. As a Quaker, she was shocked at the injustice of the Japanese American internment, and was spurred by her faith to volunteer to teach high school at Manzanar in August of 1942. She spent two years teaching, of all things, the U.S. Constitution, a requirement for graduation from all California high schools, even ones behind barbed wire.

Helen met her husband, Bob Brill, a Quaker and conscientious objector, when he visited Manzanar. He was allowed into the camp because he knew Helen’s name. Helen had been encouraging people to see the internment camps with their own eyes. After they were married they moved around and ended

up in Connecticut in the 1960s, where they both remained active in social causes the rest of their lives.

NSRC Fund board member, Bob Naka, recalls, “I was sent to Manzanar in May 1942. Helen Ely was the person who approached me in the summer of 1942 to tell me that a Quaker group had arranged for me to leave Manzanar to complete my college education. It came as a wonderful surprise to me!!! She said that I should get ready to leave in September for Ohio State University, but shortly thereafter she told me that a student riot protesting the presence of Japanese American students had occurred. It was successfully quieted down because one of the Nisei students, dressed in the typical college student attire of the day right down to his saddle shoes, addressed the student body with

a ‘what’s all the fuss about anyway’ speech. Even so, Helen told me that a decision had been made not to add more Japanese American students. I was very disappointed but was told to hang on for another university assignment. It turned out to be the University of Missouri to which I reported in February 1943. The National Japanese American Student Relocation Council had done a thorough job in preparing for the arrival of the Japanese American students. The faculty warmly welcomed the group of us that had arrived and the townsfolk were friendly.

“After all those years had passed, I was very pleased to find out that Helen was coming to the NSRC 20th anniversary celebration in 2000. I got to sit with her and reminisce about those days. She was a wonderful person.”

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## 2003-2004 NSRC NAMED SCHOLARSHIPS AND NAMED FUNDS

The NSRC Fund's annual awards are made possible by contributions from individuals and organizations. Named Scholarships and Named Funds enable anyone, including organizations, to honor, commemorate or pay tribute to individuals, groups or events. If you would like information about establishing a Named Scholarship Fund (minimum \$20,000) or Named Fund (minimum \$2,000), please contact the NSRC Fund at 19 Scenic Drive, Portland, CT 06480.

The following Named Scholarships and Named Funds have been established, and are designated by who created them, \* and (). The board of directors is grateful for the generous support these funds have received, as noted, during the period from October 1, 2003 to October 1, 2004.

### American Friends Service Committee\*

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Asako Yamashita

\* The NSRC Fund 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 Alumni Fund**

**Gila River Alumni Fund**  
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James McIlwain  
George Sakata  
David & Barbara Takagi

## ***Association for Asian American Studies and the International Leadership Foundation Recognize NSRC's Work***

# **NSRC Recipient of Two National Awards**

### **Association for Asian American Studies "Community Achievement Award"**

Since its inception the Nisei Student Relocation Commemorative Fund has devoted itself fully to the task of recognizing the outstanding achievements of hundreds of high school graduates from throughout the United States. It was, therefore, an unexpected but very welcome surprise when the tables were turned and the NSRC Fund was the one being honored for its accomplishments at the National Conference of the Association for Asian American Studies (AAAS). The AAAS, founded in 1979, is the premier organization representing Asian American scholars and students. At its annual conference held in Boston this spring, the AAAS selected the NSRC Fund as a recipient of its Community Achievement Award.

At the awards dinner, the NSRC Fund's selection was warmly and enthusiastically received. In bestowing the award, Professor Peter Kiang of the University of Massachusetts at Boston, a member of the AAAS awards committee, related the significant achievements of the NSRC Fund and especially its powerful role in uniting generations and diverse Asian ethnic groups. Board president Glenn Kumekawa and Board member Jean Hibino gratefully accepted the award on behalf of the many dedicated people who have supported the work of the NSRC Fund.

### **International Leadership Foundation "Salute to Asian American Volunteers"**

The International Leadership Foundation (ILF), based in Washington, D.C., was founded in 1994 in Sacramento, California as a way to work with Asian American high school students, particularly from disadvantaged neighborhoods, to expose them to opportunities in government and public life. Currently the ILF offers scholarships to students nationwide for a six-week summer internship in the offices of federal government and elected officials in the D.C. and Sacramento areas.

"Salute to Asian American Volunteers" was the theme of ILF's Annual Awards Gala held in Washington, D.C. in July. The keynote speaker and recipient of a Lifetime Achievement Award was the Honorable Norman Mineta, U.S. Secretary of Transportation. Of the 13 recipients of this year's awards, the NSRC Fund was the only organization recognized, the 12 other awardees were individuals. The Fund was honored with ILF's "2004 Excellence Award." NSRC board president, Glenn Kumekawa, accepted the award on behalf of the Fund.

## Thanks to Our Supporters

In addition to those who gave to specific Named Funds and Named Scholarships, the NSRC Fund board of directors extends its thanks and appreciation to the following contributors who gave to the general fund between October 1, 2003 and October 1, 2004. We appreciate that they continue to believe the Fund's mission is worthwhile and deserving.

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 Christine Yoshinaga-Itano  
 Nobuo & Pamela Yutani  
 Walter & Rose Zydlewski

## Oregon Winners' Profiles

Continued from p. 5

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 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.

### Marina Un

Cambodian, Aloha High School, Aloha, Oregon. Marina 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.



Bottom: Michigan award ceremony attendees at the buffet  
Left: Van Nguyen, chairperson of the Michigan event



If you would like more information about the NSRC Fund, establishing a Named Fund, or making a gift, please write:

TO: **NISEI STUDENT RELOCATION COMMEMORATIVE FUND, INC.**  
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