

MARCH 2022

FAPAC-DOI Newsletter



In this issue

Contributors

Lena Chang
Ashley Chou
Barbara Green
Kelly Kim
Cindy Lowman
Martin Moore
Kimiko Oliver
Masami Oshita
Karen Sinclair

Table of Contents

Women who inspire us.....	2
President's letter.....	3
Member spotlight.....	4
Sharing stories of Japanese incarceration.....	6
Remembering victims of nuclear impacts.....	8
Twelve haikus.....	9
Member resources.....	10
Help wanted: AANHPI month event.....	11

Celebrating the women who inspire us!



No one works harder than my mom, **Young Kim**. A lifelong public servant, my mom is currently serving her freshman term in the U.S. Congress for the Southern California district my siblings and I grew up in (CA-39). It's been amazing to see her journey as an immigrant, businesswoman, mother of four, and public servant and she has been breaking glass and bamboo ceilings so others can follow in her wake.

- Kelly Kim, Office of Human Capital

There are so many brilliant scientists and change-makers who have inspired me, but if I could select one person who has a daily influence in my life, I would select my nature-enthusiast partner-in-crime **Jeyla Fendi**! The first time I met her was during a Halloween party in which she was dressed as physicist and chemist Marie Curie while slaying her audience with physics and chemistry puns. Could you blame me if I was a little intimidated in approaching her?! Luckily, we have become close friends over the years and she continues to inspire me with her quick wit, her self-taught botany skills, and her gorgeous illustrations and nature journaling spreads!

- Karen Sinclair, FAPAC-DOI Vice President of Outreach



President's Letter

Dear Chapter Members,

Happy March! When I think of March now, it is hard to not think about March 2020, when life as we knew it was forever altered by the pandemic. I also think about a transitioning season, longer days, if we will get more rain...

March is Women's History Month, and we are celebrating the women we admire. I will take this opportunity to share about my mother, whom I celebrate every day and am fortunate enough to get to live near and see often. My mother is the epitome of strength and kindness. She made me who I am.

Born in South Korea in 1939, my mom lived through war, was orphaned at a very young age, and was raised by her grandparents. She immigrated to the U.S. in her young 20s and became a successful business owner, living in the Bay Area of California. She worked hard her whole life, and lost everything more than once, just to build herself up again. She beat breast cancer and raised two daughters who love her dearly. When I see this photo of my young mom in her Ford Mustang, I think to myself, "SHE IS American muscle". Her story, like so many who pursued the American Dream, is a beautiful one - full of pain and hardships along with triumphs, and yet you will never see her without a smile on her face or with an ounce of displeasure for the life that she lives.

Here's to all the women out there who give, struggle, and triumph every day. Please take good care of yourselves and take the credit, the deep breaths, and long breaks you deserve. You are my heroes!!

Sincerely,



Lena Chang
President, FAPAC-DOI



Sunny Chang (Lena's momma), Stockton California

Member Spotlight

Kimiko Oliver

**Principal Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Accessibility (DEIA) Strategist
Office of Diversity, Inclusion, and Civil Rights**

How long have you been employed in the Federal government?

I was offered a position in the Department's Office of the Secretary Management Development Program (OSPMD) in 2010, so this year makes 12 years that I have been employed at DOI. A BIG shout out to Shari Hanscomb in [OED](#), who did an amazing job of leading multiple cohorts through such a fantastic management development program!

During my tenure at DOI I've also worked in [ONRR](#), [BLM](#), [PMB](#) and now [ODICR](#). My time spent with BLM was most endearing because my fellow BLM colleagues and the executive leadership team were super supportive and appreciative of my efforts leading internship programs and other diversity recruitment initiatives. My work at BLM never felt like "work." Helping others, especially individuals from underserved communities, achieve their employment and career goals is rewarding on so many levels. The photo below was taken during a tour of the Capitol. I'm joined by a handful of the 100+ college interns I placed in the summer of 2019. Many of them now hold permanent positions in DOI through the [direct hire authority for resource assistant internship program](#). This is one of many tools managers and supervisors can use to hire diverse qualified candidates into mission critical job series.



When did you join FAPAC-DOI?

My dear friend and colleague Acquanetta Newsom was the first person who introduced me to FAPAC. Back in 2011 she very generously offered me the opportunity to attend a FAPAC conference in Crystal City. I recall so much excitement and energy at the conference, and it was the first time I had the privilege of hearing a key-note speech from the now Senator Tammy Duckworth. So, I have been following FAPAC communications and attending trainings and events for more than 10 years. I finally joined as a member in 2021.

What are some of your favorite things about being a member of FAPAC-DOI?

FAPAC-DOI is a well-organized ERG that offers valuable career development resources such as training, conferences and other professional development opportunities. The ERG holds regular meetings with lots of information sharing. I wish there were more hours in the day because anyone who knows me knows that I genuinely enjoy comradery, meeting new people and building relationships, so if I could, I would join as many ERGs as possible.

It was through a FAPAC announcement that I learned about a past [SHRM](#) Diversity & Inclusion Conference. I was approved to attend, and low and behold, one of the key-note speakers was Lisa Ling, who is my ALL-TIME favorite investigative journalist! I was on cloud nine!



How do you enjoy spending your free time?

I enjoy spending free time with my partner Allen, our children and Teddy, our shorkie (shih tzu/yorkie mix), doing whatever makes us happy in the moment. I prefer weekends when nothing specific is planned, and I am free to just “go with the flow”. That rarely happens, so when it does, I cherish those moments.

We are a family that loves travel and spending time in the great outdoors! Last summer we ventured to Sand Harbor Beach in majestic Lake Tahoe, Nevada. For those of you who have never been, I highly recommend that you add it to your bucket list! Travel around the country is awesome because there are so many wonderful places to visit right here at home! This is us before walking across the [Golden Gate Bridge](#), which is a National Park Service Recreation Area. Oh, and I recommend that you add visiting this destination to your bucket list too!



My kids love when I cook filipinx food. Their favorites are chicken adobo, pancit and lumpia. I recently taught them how to roll lumpia. They have all reached the age where they can help out, so if they want to eat delicious cuisine, they gotta help Mommy in the kitchen! For those of you who enjoy the convenience of instant pot cooking as much as I do, my childhood friend Jeannie Celestial co-authored “[The Filipino Instant Pot Cookbook](#).” Check it out!

What advice would you give to a new Federal employee?

My advice to new Feds is to consult with a financial planner, and as soon as you can, max out your Thrift Savings Plan (TSP) contributions, diversify your TSP investments, and invest in a Roth-IRA. You too can become a TSP millionaire!

What do you look for in a mentor? How have mentors helped you in your career and what more can mentors do to help employees on their career paths?

I’ve had a few mentors in DOI, and they have been truly supportive and helpful, but I want to discuss sponsorship, because while both are important, I view sponsorship as even more valuable than mentorship. *“In everyday practice, sponsors model behavior and drive the sponsored individual’s career vision, fully invested in their upward movement. Sponsors provide visibility, even using their platforms to increase exposure to help the sponsored individual build network connections.”* (from [Forbes](#))

The DOI leaders who have sponsored me have been invaluable because they saw my potential and endorsed and promoted me so that I was well positioned to advance in my career. I pay that forward by serving as a sponsor and helping others to advance their career goals by endorsing them and connecting them to opportunities, and I have even gone so far as to help write resumes and conduct practice interviews. I genuinely strive to be that same top notch results-driven sponsor that I have also relied on. Sponsorship is a powerful tool that we all have in our toolkits to help others advance in their careers, and I encourage and invite everyone who is in a position to do so, to step your game up and sponsor a high potential colleague.

What else would you like FAPAC-DOI to know about you?

My parents are my rock, and every day I count my blessings and give thanks for the privilege of being their daughter. They are kind and compassionate hard working individuals who did everything in their power to raise me and my 4 siblings into spiritual, kind, educated and productive adults, and they succeeded in doing that. So today and every day, I give all the glory to God and honor my parents Sharleen (mother), Lou (step-dad) and Darby (father) who continue to support me, guide me, and show me true unconditional love.

Sharing Stories of Japanese Incarceration through the NPS

Masami Oshita

**Museum Technician, National Park Service
Carl Sandburg Home National Historic Site**

With anti-Asian sentiment spreading during the pandemic, it is now more important than ever to represent people of color in American history. Asian-American history is American history, and to appreciate diversity without regarding minority communities as “the other” is essential to sharing these stories.

Throughout my life, I have struggled with my identity as a person of mixed race in America. As a Museum Technician in the National Park Service there was a desire to use the resources within my reach and my unique platform to highlight the injustices of American people of color, and, relevant to my own family, the thousands of Japanese American citizens forcefully taken from their west-coast homes to be confined and assimilated into white suburban cities across the Nation. To my surprise an opportunity to share this untold piece of history came in the unlikely homogenized town of Flat Rock, NC, at the remote Carl Sandburg Home National Historic Site.

Carl Sandburg - “Poet of the People,” Lincoln biographer, activist writer, and Pulitzer Prize-winner - settled with his family in the small mountain town of Flat Rock, North Carolina in 1945. After his death in 1967, the National Park Service worked with his family to establish the estate, named “Connemara,” as a National Historic Site to honor the late poet and preserve his life’s work. While park museum collections proved that the Sandburgs had two Japanese American employees at their former Michigan farm, there was not a deep understanding as to the nature of their employment. A black and white photo from

the park’s archives sparked a sudden interest to me. As a Museum Intern for the park at the time, I was enamored to see evidence of another Japanese

American in connection to the white-washed town I had settled in.

A connection was finally made through the autobiography of the Sandburgs’ granddaughter, Paula Steichen. In her book, *My Connemara*, she remembers that the Sandburgs sponsored two Japanese American incarcerated, providing refuge from the relocation camps. Through a fury of internet-sleuthing that would put any spy movie to shame, I began to unravel the untold story of Kaye Miyamoto and Sunao Imoto, two American citizens of Japanese ancestry who escaped relocation camps through the employment of Carl and Lilian Sandburg. While internet sleuthing led to the discovery of archives of camp newspaper articles, the Sandburg’s employment ads, year-book pages, and more, my hopes of conducting an oral history were dashed upon my discovery of Sunao Imoto’s obituary from 2020.

Knowing that my only chance for details on the experiences of Miyamoto and Imoto was through those who remembered them, I contacted the Sandburgs’ grandson, who had been looked after as a small child by Imoto. Unfortunately, he had no recollection of her from such a young age, but he knew someone who did: his stepmother.



Adeline Polega had been the Sandburgs' housekeeper at their Michigan home in the 1940s. She had never spoken of her relationship with the Sandburgs publicly, but upon my contact with her she happily agreed to contribute memories of her time with Kaye and Sunao.

Attempting to navigate an oral history for the first time, during a pandemic nonetheless, was a daunting task. No current employee at my park had experience with creating oral histories, and while I had studied oral histories during my undergraduate work, I had never conducted one in a professional setting. Thankfully, the NPS has extensive resources available to employees and actively encourages networking. Armed with resources from other NPS historians, a simple phone interview was scheduled. While unorthodox for typical oral history interviews, this created a relaxed environment that allowed us to speak more comfortably than in a rigid office space with a recorder between us.

With more information to piece together a story by using this interview alongside the archival evidence, an article was produced, which became the first published mention of Japanese Americans at Carl Sandburg Home NHS. While Mrs. Polega provided much insight into life with the Sandburgs in Michigan, the struggles of people of color during this time were not made obvious to someone of her privilege. Her recollection of life with the Sandburgs during this period was a heartwarming tale without any perception to the hardships Kaye and Sunao would have faced as Japanese Americans in the 1940s. Not being able to interview Miyamoto or Imoto themselves created a barrier to the story that could not be avoided. As impartial as we try to be in interpreting history, there will always be bias whether through the sources we use or our writing itself.

While the article had been produced, writing the story of these two individuals without the knowledge of their family members weighed on me. With subtle hopes of uncovering more biographical details, I continued to search for news of Kaye Miyamoto. While Sunao and Adeline had remained in contact throughout the years, I had no knowledge of what had become of Kaye.

Halfheartedly expecting to find an obituary as I had with Sunao, I instead came across an article by none other than the granddaughter of Kaye Miyamoto, Lora Kleinsasser. Similar to my initial roadblocks with researching Sunao Imoto due to a misspelling of her name in the park archives, I was surprised to find that Kaye Miyamoto was born Takashi Miyamoto. Desperate for more information, I informally reached out to Kaye's granddaughter over Facebook as I had no luck finding any other method of contact. Though Kaye had sadly passed away, through this contact by social media, another oral history was produced with Kaye's son, Gene Miyamoto. Through this interview, we were able to piece together not only the Sandburg story but gaps in the Miyamoto family history to create a fuller picture of Kaye's relationship with the Sandburgs.

Being able to connect with the family members of these individuals was a rewarding experience as witnessed by the real-world impact it created. Although both Kaye and Sunao have passed away, it is an honor to share their stories and preserve their legacy for their families, as well as to serve as representation for all those who have been affected by the mass incarceration of Japanese Americans in WW2. It is important to highlight these stories to show the versatility of the National Park Service as well as the untold injustices America still needs to face. As professionals, we need to do better and utilize what resources we have in order to spread awareness of the past and the very real repercussions that America's long history of discrimination to POC creates today. I am thankful to have the NPS Asian American Pacific Islander Employee Resource Group supporting me through this process. It is wonderful to finally find a community to share these meaningful stories with and I hope that they can be dispersed to a wider audience.

The article of Kaye and Sunao can be found [here](#). The new information on Kaye Miyamoto has yet to be released and will be updated in the near future. NPS terminology for the mass incarceration of Japanese Americans can be found [here](#). Read Lora "Miyamoto" Kleinsasser's article on her grandfather [here](#).

Remembering Victims of Nuclear Impacts

Martin J. Moore III
FAPAC-DOI Vice President of Programs

Just north of the equator between the Hawaiian Islands and the continent of Australia sit 29 coral atolls that sit at sea level and comprise a sovereign nation known as the Republic of the Marshall Islands. The Marshall Islands has remained an independent nation since 1986 and harbors a population of nearly 60,000. Although it has remained independent for over three decades, the Marshall Islands was instrumental in U.S. Defense.



Between 1946 and 1958, the United States conducted 67 nuclear tests in the Marshall Islands. The U.S. conducted 23 of these tests at Bikini Atoll, and 44 near Enewetak Atoll, but fallout spread throughout the Marshall Islands, in addition to two other atolls. Many indigenous Marshallese were displaced from their islands to accommodate the testing. Impacts can still be seen today among the population.

Each year, March 1 has been recognized in the Republic of the Marshall Islands as Nuclear Victims Remembrance Day honoring those who were impacted by the nuclear testing.

Some notable dates during this time:

7/1/1946: Testing begins at the Marshall Islands, with Shot Able.

7/25/1946: Shot Baker is conducted, under Operation Crossroads.

4/30/1948: Shot Yoke, under Operation Sandstone, is conducted. This was the first fission weapon to use a levitated core design.

4/20/1951: Shot Easy nuclear test is conducted at Enewetak Atoll, under Operation Greenhouse. The Easy test was meant to test a new, lighter implosion bomb.

5/1951: Operation Greenhouse testing occurred at Enewetak Atoll.

11/1/1952: The Mike Shot is conducted at Enewetak, under Operation Ivy. This was the first U.S. thermonuclear test.

6/28/1958: The Oak test is conducted, at Enewetak Atoll, under the Operation Hardtack I series. This was the 6th largest U.S. nuclear test. Hardtack I included 35 total tests. Hardtack I was the last testing series conducted on the Marshall Islands.



The Runit Dome, which was built in the late 1970s, contains over 100,000 cubic yards of contaminated soil and debris that were encapsulated in concrete inside an unlined nuclear test crater, the Cactus Crater, on the north end of Runit Island.

Powerful Spoken word by Marshallese artist and poet, Kathy Jetnil-Kijiner: [Anointed](#) | [History Project](#)

Twelve Haikus

Barbara Green

**Equal Opportunity Manager, National Park Service
Alaska Regional Office**

When I attended middle school in Okinawa, we were influenced by Japanese culture and I dabbled in writing haiku – unrhymed poems with three lines, with the first line containing five syllables, the second line seven syllables, and the third line five syllables. I spent this past weekend cloistered at home during a time we broke a record for snowfall in March on the 5th (15 inches where I live in Eagle River, Alaska), and chose to revisit my youth and write haiku.

*I love chocolate...
Even better with some nuts –
A delicious treat.*

*Grey's Anatomy...
I am a faithful viewer;
It is a great show.*

*Too much snow in March...
Climate change affects weather.
Please go away snow.*

*I must have coffee...
I cannot live without it;
Coffee equals life.*

*Nachos are tasty...
I could eat it every day.
I must have some now.*

*Glorious mountains...
Alaska is majestic;
A beautiful state.*

*Palm trees...ocean breeze.
Hawaii is paradise.
I left my heart there.*

*My greatest blessings...
Beloved son and daughter.
Love, cherish, adore.*

*Amazing husband...
Love of my life and soulmate.
Thank you, God for him.*

*National parks are
God's gift to all of us to
Visit and enjoy.*

*Fabulous FAPAC...
Inspirational members,
Committed to good.*

*Honor caregivers
For Women's History Month.
Thank you for your care.*

Thank you for your time; I sincerely appreciate it. Happy Women's History Month. The National Women's History Alliance sets the theme, and the 2022 theme is "Women Providing Healing, Promoting Hope." Thank you to caregivers and frontline workers, and to all of the women who provide healing, caregiving and promote hope for our future. We appreciate you immensely.

Member resources

What we're watching...

- [Google Doodle for International Women's Day](#)
 - [Women Make Science: Robogal](#)
 - [National Day of Remembrance: 80 Year of Reckoning](#)
-

What we're reading...

- [Finish the Fight! The Brave and Revolutionary Women Who Fought for the Right to Vote](#) (Veronica Chambers)
 - [Overlooked](#) (series of obituaries about remarkable people whose deaths went unreported in the Times, beginning in 1851)
-

What we're listening to...

- [Cecilia Muñoz: Lessons for Women of Color on the Rise](#)

Contact us at fapacboard@ios.doi.gov to join our email list and get the latest news!

MEMBERSHIP

FAPAC has been a reputable organization since 1985 because of its members' contributions. Your dues support FAPAC programming and a portion of it goes directly to our FAPAC-DOI chapter. Sign up at fapac.org/Membership



FEDERAL ASIAN PACIFIC AMERICAN COUNCIL
DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR (DOI) CHAPTER

HELP WANTED

We're looking for a diverse range of skills and talents to help us plan and prepare our annual celebration of Asian American, Native Hawaiian, and Pacific Islander (AANHPI) month in May!

This is your chance to network and broadcast your skills!

"Individually, we are one drop. Together, we are an ocean."
- Ryunosuke Satoro

Skills Needed:

Can you imagine yourself doing any of the following?

- Event Idea Brainstorming
- Creating Flyers and Advertising
- Ensuring Reasonable Accommodations and ASL Translation
- Schedule Coordination
- Recruiting Speakers
- Drafting Emails
- and more!

Interested or Want more information?
Email us at fapacboard@ios.doi.gov