

February 2026: *Shared Traditions*

In this issue: Day of Remembrance, Welcome our new DSD, Executive Director Update, Setsubun, TADAIMA: "I'm Home" Exhibit Opens 2.19, Share the Love, Open rooms at Nikkei Manor, Highlights, Amazon Wish List & more



Photo by Eugene Tagawa

The new year is well underway, and residents at Nikkei Manor have been staying engaged through everyday moments of creativity and connection. Last month, residents created sensu (traditional folding fans) as celebratory crafts, pieces that reflect care, tradition, and the enjoyment of making something together. As February continues, we pause to acknowledge Day of Remembrance on February 19 and the importance of remembering history and honoring community. Together, these small moments of creativity, remembrance, and care help shape the rhythm of life at Nikkei Manor and throughout our Keiro Northwest community.



Photo collage from the office of Sen. Bob Hasegawa and Rep. Sharon Tomiko Santos of Legislative Day of Remembrance events in Olympia.

Day of Remembrance, February 19

As we approach Day of Remembrance on February 19, we join the broader community in honoring the resilience and strength of Japanese Americans whose lives were forever changed by Executive Order 9066. Each year, Nikkei Manor residents are honored to attend the Day of Remembrance ceremony at the Washington State Capitol as special guests, and we are grateful for the opportunity to stand alongside our elders as their presence and lived experiences continue to shape remembrance, reflection, and education. We hold deep appreciation for our residents, whose stories remind us why this day, and this history, must never be forgotten.

For additional Day of Remembrance events taking place throughout the greater community, visit: <https://napost.com/2026/dor-event2026/>



Celeste Pham, Dining Services Director

Welcome Celeste Pham as new Dining Services Director

We are delighted to welcome Celeste Pham as Nikkei Manor's new Dining Services Director.

Celeste brings more than two decades of culinary and leadership experience, including an extensive career as a private chef for notable individuals and families in both New York and Seattle. Most recently, she served as a full-time private chef in Seattle for nearly a decade, following earlier roles with families and organizations on both the East and West Coasts. She has also held leadership roles in institutional dining, including serving as Executive Chef and Food & Beverage Director at a preparatory school in New York.

A graduate of the French Culinary Institute, Celeste is known for her thoughtful, high-quality approach to food and her ability to tailor meals to the needs and preferences of those she serves. We are excited to have her expertise, creativity, and care guiding our dining program and enhancing the daily experience of our residents.

Please join us in giving Celeste a warm welcome to the Nikkei Manor community!



Photo by Eugene Tagawa

From the Desk of Nikkei Manor's Executive Director

Hello February! ❤️

What a gift that sunshine was this past week. I hope some of you were able to step outside, soak in a little vitamin D, and enjoy the beautiful weather.

Earlier this month, I learned about a new Japanese tradition during Setsubun. At Nikkei Manor, our Life Enrichment and Kokoro Kai team celebrated with residents by throwing beans at an “evil spirit” (attached to a bowling pin!) to drive away bad luck and welcome good fortune in preparation for spring. It was fun and meaningful way to honor tradition.

This month also brings several moments of celebration, Lunar New Year, a time to leave behind the old and welcome new beginnings; Valentine’s Day, a reminder to celebrate love, friendship, and appreciation; and even the excitement of the Seahawks making it to the Super Bowl, bringing team spirit into homes everywhere.

As we share in these celebrations together, it’s also an important reminder to share your love, not your germs.

We are currently in cold and flu season and are seeing an uptick in illness across the state, including among residents and staff. Taking care of yourself is essential, not only for your own well-being but also for the health and safety of everyone around you.

To help keep our community as healthy as possible, please continue to practice good hygiene:

Proper handwashing and appropriate use of hand sanitizer

Staying up to date with vaccinations

Maintaining adequate fluid intake

Wearing a mask when needed

Wishing everyone a loving, healthy month!

Best Wishes,

Amy Nguyen

Nikkei Manor Executive Director



Setsubun and the Passing of Seasons

This month, we marked Setsubun, a traditional Japanese observance that welcomes the changing of the seasons. Celebrated on the eve of Japanese spring, Setsubun is a time for renewal and setting intentions for the year

ahead. Traditions often include casting away misfortune and inviting good fortune in, symbolizing a fresh start as winter gives way to spring.

At Nikkei Manor, moments like Setsubun create space to honor cultural identity and the memories that are so important to our elders. Through these shared traditions, stories are exchanged, connections are strengthened, and customs are carried forward from one generation to the next.



TADAIMA: “I’m Home” Feb. 19 - Apr. 26 on View at MOHAI

Nikkei Manor is proud to share that residents and community members recently participated in TADAIMA: “I’m Home,” a powerful new exhibition now on view at the Museum of History and Industry (MOHAI) from February 14 through April 26, 2026.

After more than 80 years, a treasured collection of traditional Japanese Girls’ and Boys’ Day dolls has returned “home” to Seattle’s Japanese American community. In 1942, Japanese American families facing forced incarceration entrusted these dolls to Bailey Gatzert Elementary School for safekeeping. Most were never reclaimed after the war. Drawing on recent research from MOHAI’s collection and interviews with Japanese American survivors and their descendants, artist Miya Sukune created Tadaima, a name meaning “I’m home.”

The exhibition reconnects the dolls with their traditional role of protecting and blessing children, while inviting visitors to reflect on resilience, memory, and the enduring cultural traditions of the Japanese American community. Alongside the dolls, Sukune’s painting Tadaima is also on display, featuring

portraits of families who were forcibly incarcerated during World War II and their descendants.

A floral installation inspired by hanachōzu displays commonly found at Japanese temples is also featured in the exhibition. In honor of Hinamatsuri (Girls' Day), community members created floral offerings to accompany the dolls. More than 150 volunteers contributed to this installation, which serves as a Day of Remembrance offering on February 19, marking the anniversary of the signing of Executive Order 9066.

Nikkei Manor was honored to host one of the flower-making workshops that contributed to this installation, alongside Mukai Farm, Urban Artworks, Vashon/KCLS, and FamilyLink. We are grateful to our residents, staff, and volunteers who participated and helped bring this meaningful project to life.

Community members are invited to visit the exhibition and attend a Meet the Artist event on Saturday, February 14 at 1:00 PM, featuring a brief talk by Miya Sukune followed by exhibit viewing.

For those interested in learning more about the history of the Bailey Gatzert Elementary School dolls, excerpts from MOHAI Curator Fellow Polly Yorioka's 2024 research talk are available within the exhibit.



For more history on the Bailey Gatzert Elementary School Dolls

Watch MOHAI's 2024 Curator Fellow Polly Yorioka's research talk on the history of the dolls. Excerpts available for viewing in the TADAIMA: I'm Home exhibit.

[MOHAI YouTube Link](#)



Felt flowers made by Nikkei Manor residents during the workshop.
Photo by Mariko Ueno



Current Availability at Nikkei Manor

We want to share a brief update regarding residency availability at Nikkei Manor. At this time, there is **no active waitlist**, which means we are currently able to welcome new residents.

If you or someone you know is interested in learning more about life at Nikkei Manor, we encourage you to reach out to our team for additional information or to schedule a tour.

206-726-6460

NikkeiManor.org

Share the Love - Leave a Google Review!

Nikkei Manor is launching a new “Share the Love” campaign, and we invite you to help spread the word by leaving a review on Google.

If you've had a positive experience with our community, we encourage you to share it, and to recognize the staff members who made a difference. Any staff member mentioned by name in a review will receive a special reward as our way of saying thank you for their excellent care and service.

Your words not only uplift our team, but also help families in the community learn more about life at Nikkei Manor. Thank you for taking a moment to share the love.

[Leave a Review](#)



Photo by Eugene Tagawa

January's Highlights at Nikkei Manor

1-7 Oshiruko (Red bean mochi soup) tasting

1-14 New Years BINGO

1-16 Outing to West Seattle's Alki beach

1-19 Kokoro Kai shuji (caligraphy)

1-20 Mochi making and tasting

1-21 New Years craft

1-23 Legacy Education Seminar on 2026 Financial Planning with Purpose

1-28 Watercolor class



Photo by Eugene Tagawa

February: Upcoming Activities & Events

2-3 Setsubun celebration/game

2-7 "Hikari Chorus" performance

2-8 Super Bowl Game Day

2-10 Watercolor class

2-14 Saturday BINGO with our family and friends

2-24 UCDS visit (Nikkei Manor has been sharing fun times with this elementary school for over 20 years now!)

Community Events:

- >Day of Remembrance on Thursday February 19th at the State Capital
- >New Exhibit “**TADAIMA: I’m home**” at Museum of History and Industry (MOHAI)

We are able to continue offering art classes by Seniors Creating Art this year thanks to a generous family donation.

Full Calendars: [Kokoro Kai Activities](#), [Resident Activities at Nikkei Manor](#)



Photo by Mariko Ueno

Years of Service

February Staff Anniversaries

Marjorie Cavan G.: 02/14

Yukako Kawai: 02/16

Raquel Mumpar: 02/21

Nancy Woodward: 02/21

Leticia Estrella: 02/23

Thank you for making every day the BEST day for our residents and participants.



A Gift from Amazon

Looking for a simple way to support our residents and program participants? You can help by purchasing an item from our Amazon Wish List! From activity supplies to everyday essentials, each donation enhances the quality of life at Nikkei Manor and Kokoro Kai.

Amazon Wish List



Photo by Eugene Tagawa

最後に、ありがとうございました。



Our Mission Statement: Honoring the past and preserving Japanese American heritage, we provide uniquely-tailored care to meet the physical, emotional, and spiritual needs for elders to thrive.

www.keironw.org



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