

NCCR to Recognize 3 Individuals With Fighting Spirit

Gerald Sato, Linda Consolo and Bruce Iwasaki will be honored for their roles in winning redress for the children of voluntary evacuees.

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The National Coalition for Redress and Reparations (NCCR) will honor Gerald Sato, Linda Consolo and Bruce Iwasaki for their roles in winning redress for the children of voluntary evacuees, at its annual Day of Remembrance (DOR) program to be held on Saturday, March 22.

Sato represented Consolo in her successful lawsuit against the United States after she was denied redress by the Office of Redress Administration (ORA).

Iwasaki wrote the NCCR *amicus* brief supporting the argument that Consolo was eligible for redress (according to provisions of the Civil Liberties Act of 1988) based on a deprivation of liberty.

Their victory made 900 individuals, previously denied, eligible for redress and opened up eligibility to potentially 5,000 people.

Consolo's parents, Dr. Arthur Kawabe and Josephine Masako Kawabe, had evacuated in 1942 from Los Angeles to Garland, Utah, where they had been promised work at a sugar mill factory. The Kawabes were forced to move again when the sugar mill reneged on its promise. Unable to support his family through the practice of medicine, Dr. Kawabe relocated his family to Fielding, Utah, where family members found work in the sugar beet and tomato fields and where Linda Consolo was born in 1943.

Linda Consolo and her family were prohibited by law from returning to their home in Los Angeles. The federal West Coast Military Command had designated California as an area from which all per-

sons of Japanese descent would be excluded under Public Proclamation No. 1.

Attorney Sato argued that the Consolo case in the federal Court of Appeals, which upheld the lower court's decision in favor of Consolo's redress claim.

Sato's involvement in the fight for redress dates back to 1981 when he participated in the Los Angeles hearings of the Commission on Wartime Relocation and Internment of Civilians (CWRIC).

He assisted former camp internees prepare their testimonies, presented the issues of unlawful searches and seizures, and read the testimony of the late Hannah Tomiko Holmes on the experiences of the hearing-impaired and other disabled Japanese Americans who were interned.

Sato helped NCCR write its first redress bill and traveled to Washington, D.C., in 1987 to lobby for the passage of the Civil Liberties Act.

Sato, who also marched through the streets of Little Tokyo with

NCCR during the first Day of Remembrance program, is an employment law and civil rights lawyer in Ventura.

Iwasaki has been involved in fighting for justice for over 25 years. As a student at UCLA during the late 1960s, he helped to counsel young men on the military draft. He was active in the Little Tokyo Peoples Rights Organization which fought rampant redevelopment and the evictions of tenants and small businesses and community groups from Little Tokyo in the mid-1970s.

Iwasaki, who has provided legal advice to NCCR, helped to coordinate the involvement of attorneys as NCCR recognized the growing number of individuals and categories that had been denied redress.

An attorney at the law firm of O'Melveny and Myers, Iwasaki was honored by the American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU) for his work in fighting Proposition 187, a bill that would unfairly discriminate against minorities.

The National Coalition for Redress and Reparations honors those

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t Award

individuals who have dedicated themselves to the struggle for justice and who exemplify the fighting spirit that has enabled the community to win redress and reparations.

"It was very courageous for Gerald to take on the case of the children born outside the restricted area. It took a great deal of initiative for Linda Consolo to take on the government," stated Janice Harumi Yen, director of NCCR. "Both of them felt their convictions so strongly and believed that this was the right thing to do. Their actions benefited many people."

And Yen praised Iwasaki, saying he "voluntarily and willingly researched and found additional legal arguments supporting the righteousness of their fights."

The three will be recognized on March 22 at the Japan America Theater, 244 S. San Pedro St., Little Tokyo (downtown Los Angeles), at a fundraiser program featuring Keiko and Kazu Matsui in concert, a performance by Lane Nishikawa and emcee Jude Narita.

Proceeds from the program will



JANICE HARUMI YEN

Getting ready for the National Coalition for Redress and Reparations' Day of Remembrance, to be held on March 22, in Little Tokyo are, from left, are Robert Consolo, his wife, Linda, who will be receiving NCCR's Fighting Spirit Award, and fellow honorees, civil rights attorneys Gerald Sato and Bruce Iwasaki.

be used to continue the fight for redress for the Japanese Latin Americans, railroad workers and other categories that have been denied compensation for their loss of freedoms because of the U.S. government's actions during World

War II.

Tickets for the Day of Remembrance program can be purchased by calling NCCR at (213) 680-3484 or the Japan America Theatre at (213) 680-3700. General admission is \$40 and students are \$25. Silver

admission at \$75 includes a buffet dinner catered by Classic Caterers at 5:30 p.m. Gold admission at \$100 includes the dinner and preferred seating for the program. All are invited for coffee and dessert after the concert.