Executive Notes by Cathy Inamasu

We are finally feeling settled in our expanded facility and working on the last few projects of the outdoor spaces. It has been a challenging and gratifying period, and we thank all of you for your support!

We neglected to announce in the last newsletter, that in the fall of 2017, NLF successfully submitted an application to be a San Francisco Legacy Business and be included in the City’s Registry which recognizes long-standing, community-serving businesses as valuable cultural assets to the City. We were honored to be the first Japantown business/organization to be acknowledged as such! As a Legacy Business, we are also able to apply for an annual assistance grant.

Over the past year and a half, the teaching staff have been diligently developing NLF’s “Universal Values” that encompass what NLF hopes to instill in the children during their time with us. Although we have incorporated these throughout NLF’s past 43 years, we have encapsulated them into 5 primary guiding principles with Japanese terms for staff, parents and the community to better understand. Please see the Values listed below.

From all of us at NLF, we wish you a Happy and Healthy 2019!

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>NLF’s Universal Values</th>
<th>Sushi Social 2018</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>思いやり “OMOIYARI”</td>
<td>Delicious sushi was prepared by Chef and Owner Andy Tonozuka (on left) and his chefs from We Be Sushi during NLF’s 43rd Anniversary &amp; Sushi Social Celebration on Nov. 16th.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>being considerate</td>
<td>Photo credit: Kaz Lewis</td>
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<tr>
<td>Omoiyari encompasses caring, embracing diversity in others, respect, sympathy and empathy for others.</td>
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<tr>
<td>忍耐 “NINTAI”</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>perseverance</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Nintai teaches us to be patient, self-regulated, resilient, and able to cope with difficulties and adversities.</td>
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<tr>
<td>感謝 “KANSHA”</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>gratitude</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Kansha helps us to remember to be thankful, appreciative, sincere, respectful towards others and the environment.</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>創造性 “SOUZOUSEI”</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>creativity</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Souzousei reminds us to be creative, Innovative, a pioneer, and hopeful.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>学問 “GAKUMON”</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>learning</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gakumon reminds us to be critical thinkers, lifelong learners, and inquisitive.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Honoree Augie Philips was presented with a replica of a plaque to be installed on the rooftop playground, designed by nddCreative to acknowledge his extraordinary contributions as a parent of alums, Board member and volunteer. Pictured from left to right are Kaz Naganuma, Maya Yoshikawa, Augie and Cathy Inamasu.</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Photo credit: Kaz Lewis</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
Honoree, Augie Phillips with family and friends enjoy the great food and drinks during the evening event.

All Sushi Social photos courtesy of Kaz Lewis (NLF alum)

Long-time supporter, Mary Ishisaki (second from left) enjoys meeting up with some of the musicians of “Nihonmachi Big Friends” including Shoko Hikage, Mark Izu and Anthony Brown. Mark & Anthony are parents of NLF alums. The band, including Masaru Koga, performed during the program.

**Capital Campaign Committee Update** by Makiko Kambayashi

As we reflect on the blessings of this past year during this holiday season, we have so many reasons to be thankful and hope you feel proud of all that we have accomplished together thus far.

**Rooftop Playground and Garden.**

Our vision of creating a nature-rich environment through an interactive rooftop playground and garden became a reality. Thanks to Augie Phillips, a current Board member and alumni parent, volunteer, and skilled builder, the rooftop above the Wakaba classroom now offers outdoor recreation, nature studies, and educational opportunities for the preschoolers. The playground consists of a climbing wall, a dramatic play deck, a sandbox, and large building blocks. At the south end of the playground is the children’s garden with planters, a work table, and a water exploration table. We are hoping to further enhance the rooftop features by adding a log climbing structure, water/wind proof shades, and boulders for the children to climb.

**Tane Maki Garden.** We’ve started our Tane Maki Garden project, the front garden of the preschool addition, and are grateful to Charles Stewart, a landscape designer, who graciously donated his services. As a Japanese-inspired garden, traditional Japanese plants and flowers such as bamboo, maple, camellia, and hydrangea are included, along with hardscape elements such as rocks, bamboo fences and roof tile borders.

**1830 Sutter Restoration Projects.**

We are thrilled that NLF was chosen as one of the three recipients of $150,000 in preservation grants by American Express and the National Trust for Historic Preservation! The three historic sites in San Francisco, including the Doolan-Larson building and the Roxie Theater, were selected based on their contribution to the unique cultural heritage of the City. NLF’s $150,000 grant will be used for much-needed exterior work on its historic Sutter site, including the repair and replacement of exterior windows, stucco repair and painting of the building’s exterior.

1830 Sutter Documentary Film Project. As a part of our ongoing effort to create a lasting legacy for the 1830 Sutter building, we are embarking on a documentary film project. Through “Reaching for Justice - the Triumph of 1830 Sutter” (working title), we hope to present the history, legacy, and lessons handed down from the Issei women founders so that the audience will learn and be inspired by this aspect of Japanese American history and apply it to contemporary issues. The production team is currently focused on raising funds for the planning and research stage. Stay tuned for further details on this project.

While we have made great strides and are appreciative of your generosity, we have much more to accomplish in the years ahead. Fundraising for the new facility is continuing as the construction costs were greater than anticipated. Naming opportunities are still available starting at $1,000, with recognition on donor boards prominently displayed in the new building’s lobby.

We thank you for your continued support and generosity.
In 2012 Nihonmachi Little Friends began its capital campaign to create a new building that, along with the historic 1830 Sutter Issei Women’s Legacy building, would be a permanent home for its preschool programs. Inspired by the action of planting a seed that would one day grow to be a beautiful tree, the “Tané Maki” or Plant a Seed Campaign was begun. Through the generosity of many donors, NLF’s dream is coming true.

Reflecting qualities of strength, beauty, richness, flexibility and steadfastness; the theme for recognition of the major donors to the Tané Maki/Plant a Seed Campaign is traditional Japanese trees. With thanks for helping NLF continue to grow and pass on the rich cultural and community heritage of Japantown, major donors will be listed in a specially created display in the main lobby of the new building.

Levels of Giving

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Level</th>
<th>Tree</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>$250,000+</td>
<td>Ginkgo (いちょう)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$100,000+</td>
<td>Bamboo (たけ)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$50,000+</td>
<td>Maple (もみじ)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$25,000+</td>
<td>Pine (まつ)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$10,000+</td>
<td>Oak (かしわ)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$5,000+</td>
<td>Cherry (さくら)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Nihonmachi Little Friends’ Children’s Songs
Community Building Campaign Display

Levels of Giving

$3,500 +
Koinobori
Carp Streamers こいのぼり

$2,500 +
Okina Taiko
The Big Drum おきないたいこ

$1,000 +
Kaeru no Uta
The Frog Song かえるのうた

Strengthening Nihonmachi as a community has always been an important part of NLF’s mission. Traditional songs that pass along culture and teach language are an integral part of the NLF experience. For our Community Level donor board, recognizing significant grassroots donations, NLF will recognize donors in a display in the lobby of the new preschool building. Community donors will be listed in three categories represented by three of our most well recognized children’s songs.

Donors of $5,000 or more are eligible for the Major Donor Board.
At some point in our lives, we dream about being someone we admire... maybe the world’s best baker or an MVP professional baseball player. One of the exciting moments during childhood is to dream big—the possibilities are endless!

Time goes by, and the expectation of the work force in our society has changed. Lately, it seems that the enthusiasm to dream about our future has faded away and the only thing children care about is becoming a famous YouTuber. But we were wrong! The children at NLF’s After School Program (ASP) are still passionate about what they can be in the future. Their dream is not about being a YouTuber or a video game designer (there is nothing wrong with either), but their dreams are to be someone they see in their daily lives. Some of them want to be a doctor or a vet because they want to help sick people and animals. This is how our World of Occupations Project launched.

Thanks to some ASP parents and other guest speakers, the students enjoyed insightful presentations by a librarian, plumber, engineer, and a business entrepreneur. But how could the children really experience and explore the REALITY of these occupations? The learning moment arrived unexpectedly. During free play time, some of the K-2nd children designed their own string phones using yarn and paper cups.

Many of them struggled to make holes on the bottom of the cups and attach string for sound vibrations to travel. While diligently working to successfully create a string phone, the “AHA!” moment traveled throughout the room and a light bulb went off. *DING*, the children exclaimed, “Engineers are people who investigate problems and fix it!” Somehow, it became the slogan of their project. The children started looking at their creation, string phones, from an engineer’s point of view. They analyzed what was not working, made changes, and then tried it out again. A couple days of trial and error led to the creation of successful string phones. But that was not the end of the journey. As they struggled, they also started to wonder if they could use other items to make an improved string phone. This was the moment when the children transformed from engineers to inventors.

As an inventor creating an innovative string phone, learning from their previous obstacles, some children chose to use clear straws instead of string because they believed the sound waves travel better through a thicker object. An amazing finding about the straw connected phone was that while the string had to be completely stretched out for the sound to travel, the straw could be connected in many ways with the same result.

Another group of children were inspired by the word, “conference call.” The traditional string phone allows only two people to talk to each other, while a conference call string phone could add more lines. The children’s curiosity continuously sparked and cultivated an endless source of new ideas such as “I wonder if I can see the sound travel through this clear straw” to “How can I send text messages through this string phone?” These inquiries are rather creative and intrigued everyone (adults included) to want to find the answers.

As this interesting journey continued, the children became engineers, inventors, scientists, artists, and more. They could not have successfully made their new string phones without the help of all of the occupations they learned about. The World of Occupations Project expanded from understanding individual job descriptions to the awareness that all occupations are inseparable from one another.

The beauty of project-based learning is that the projects are transformative for children. They see a real-world impact and it gives them a sense of urgency and purpose. Through this project, the children developed admiration for real everyday people and dream to follow in their footsteps. Therefore, it may not be significant for the children to dream of what they want to be, but rather to find out who they want to be. The starting point of finding “Future Me” is to develop a clear vision of who they want to be and the rest will follow.
Have you ever heard of the word “Pinkellow”? It is a new color born and developed in SF, and it is about to become a new trend in fashion magazines! This is the story of how Pinkellow was born and established in NLF’s preschool.

For preschool-aged children, the very first establishment of group identity stems from being called by a group name. So why not take the initiative and really discuss what the group name should be with all its’ members? NLF’s preschoolers are on it. They are sending a clear message to the world what their group name should be. Long story short, each group in the Wakaba classroom discussed possible themes for group names, voted on it, and “Flowers” became the group names theme.

The seven groups undertook a mission to search for a flower to represent their groups. Most of them were excited to name their groups after the flowers they liked, such as sunflower, tulip, rose, sakura, hibiscus, or daisy. However, there was one group of children that was struggling to find that one flower to represent them. They wondered if they should just pick a flower name they already knew, or if they should really look for “THE ONE” for them. The group ended up setting off on an adventure to find “THE ONE”.

Their journey started by visiting the local flower shop several times. By the third visit, the owner of the shop got to know them and gave beautiful flowers to inspire them. The vibrant colors of the flowers caught the children’s attention, and they wondered if they could recreate these beautiful colors of nature with the ordinary paint they use at school.

They were particularly focused on remaking the yellow they saw in the flower. During the experiment of mixing colors to refabricate them, the children noticed that there are different shades in colors. Some of them made a yellow closer to white, while others made much darker ones. “I like purple in this flower!” “I like the red in this one, too!” While the discussion about colors heated up among them, one unique idea popped up in their mind. Why don’t we use a color from the flowers as our group name? Great! But how can we pick one color from all these wonderful selections?

Coincidentally, the community was all excited about the midterm elections. The children were often hearing adults say, “Don’t forget to vote!” So, THEY did! Several attempts of voting successfully helped narrow down the selections. But it was still hard to pick “THE ONE”. After several more attempts of voting, the count did not change - yellow 3 and pink 3. The six children sighed as the result stayed the same. They were about to decide that the group name will be “Pink/Yellow”. Then, another exceptional idea popped up. “We can mix it!” “Do you mean we mix two colors?” “No, pink (she put up her left forefinger) and yellow (she put up her right forefinger), makes “pinkellow” (she connected both forefingers side by side)! The other group members joined her, “pink, yellow - pinkellow!” They were excited to find “THE ONE.”

The two-month journey to find “THE ONE” finally ended, and they were ready to go on another adventure as the Pinkellow Group—to visit JCCCNC on the actual election day. Connecting their experience (voting for their group name) to the real world (actual election) helped them to understand what it means to vote. A teacher showed and explained to the children her mail-in ballot before it was sealed and they were able to take 3 mail-in ballots to put in the voting boxes at JCCCNC. They proudly walked out from the voting office with the feeling that they were one of them. We don’t know where the next adventure will take them, but I know wherever the journey takes them, they will always be a proud member of Pinkellow!
General Program Support: Your contribution will go toward keeping our service fees affordable for our predominately low to moderate income families. There are many ways for you to support the work of NLF (check NLF’s website for other ideas).

* **Online Donation:** Give online through our website at [www.nlfchildcare.org](http://www.nlfchildcare.org). If your employer matches donations, you can double your gift!

* **Mail-In Donations:** Checks should be made payable to NLF, 1830 Sutter Street, SF, CA 94115

* **Amazon Smile** Visit [www.amazonsmile.com](http://www.amazonsmile.com) and select charity: Nihonmachi Little Friends, and a portion of proceeds comes back to NLF!

* **United Way of the Bay Area** provides funds to NLF if you use code number 3251.

* **Remember NLF in your will or estate planning.**

**NLF is a 501(c)3 non-profit organization.** Your contribution is tax-deductible to the extent allowed by law.

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**Ways to Support NLF**

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**Board of Directors**

- **Adrienne Shiozaki Woo,** Board Chairperson
- **Joelle Matsuura,** Board Vice-Chairperson

**Capital Campaign Committee**

- Cathy Inamasu
- Karen Kai
- Makiko Kambayashi
- Susan Kobayashi
- Mari Matsumoto
- Kaz Naganuma
- Joyce Oishi
- Augie Phillips
- Irene Duller Robinson
- Korby Satow
- Mayuko Saul
- Cynthia Tsuchimoto
SAVE THE DATE:
Dowa No Omatsuri: A Festival of Children’s Stories Fundraiser
Sunday, February 24, 2019, 12:00–4:00 pm
Palace of Fine Arts Theatre

NLF celebrated Tanabata with a special sake tasting with Todd Eng of Sake Brothers. Guests included alumni & their families and supporters.

ASP children perform at the Dowa no Omatsuri in February.

Preschoolers performed their version of “L.O.V.E” at the Palace of Fine Arts Theater at the Dowa event.

Firefighters Kimberly and Stacy talked to the children about fire safety and then they explored the fire truck from Station 38.

Water feature in NLF’s new Tane Maki Garden.

Photo credit: Chip Fong

Photo credit: Susie Kagami

Photo credit: Miki Heitzman

Photo credit: Miki Heitzman