It has been an exciting 2015 with the start of construction on our new preschool addition to our 1830 Sutter Street building, and the celebration of Nihonmachi Little Friends’ 40th Anniversary! These two momentous events were only made possible by the help and support of many. We are truly so grateful for the continued generosity and assistance received from our Board, staff, parents, Capital Campaign Committee members, alum families, and our steadfast supporters!

We will continue to fundraise during the 12 months of construction to insure a successful completion to this project. We hope to be celebrating with all of you in the fall of 2016 at our new expanded facility! In the meantime, we will keep you updated on the progress.

From all of us at NLF, we wish you a Joyous Holiday Season and a Happy, Healthy and Peaceful New Year!!

Preschoolers and After School students did a great job performing at the 40th Anniversary Celebration in November.

Attendees enjoyed the great company and program.

SF Taiko Dojo Kids performed “Matsuri Daiko” and “Taiko Train” to get the celebration started.

Vic Lee, Channel 7 news reporter and Tamiko Wong, ED of the Oakland Asian Cultural Center, served as the evenings co-emcees.

On Friday, November 20, 2015, NLF’s gala celebration of its 40th Anniversary was held at the Hotel Kabuki in San Francisco. Over 280 guests joined in the festivities for a wonderful reunion and getting together of 40 years of friends, memories and a look toward the future.

The pre-dinner program started with an exciting taiko performance by the San Francisco Taiko Dojo Kids, led by sensei Alex Sinclair and accompanied by General Manager, Ryuma Tanaka, an NLF alum.

Co-emcees, Vic Lee and Tamiko Wong, another NLF alum, shared their experiences with NLF, and emphasized the importance of the organization to families and the community. Deputy Consul General, Nobuhiko Watanabe gave welcoming remarks on behalf of the Consulate General of Japan, praising NLF’s work over the past 40 years.

Approximately 60 NLF preschoolers through fifth graders and staff performed three songs for the guests. The last song, “Learning Together” was written for NLF’s 40th Anniversary by NLF teacher, Koji Taniyama. Koji-sensei accompanied the singers on guitar, and the audience sang along, too. It was a very special moment for all!

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An update on NLF’s Building Addition Project was given by NLF’s E.D. Cathy Inamasu, followed by a short video produced by Rick Quan about the “Plant A Seed Campaign”.

The honoree for the evening was the Tateuchi Foundation, represented by the Foundation’s administrator, Dan Asher, who enchanted the guests with his stories and memories of San Francisco. He also encouraged others to follow in the Tateuchi Foundation’s footsteps by giving generously to NLF’s Plant a Seed Campaign building project.

John Noguchi, representing Mayor Ed Lee, presented a special certificate from the Mayor to NLF. Capital Campaign Committee member, Karen Kai, and Board member, Augie Phillips, talked about the building fund and the importance of supporting the project.

The evening program ended with a lively raffle and auction of Warriors tickets, followed by music and dancing by the well-known Bay Area group, Pulse. Pulse keyboardist, Carey Huang, is also a parent of two NLF alums and was happy to be able to join in the celebration.

It was a perfect ending to honor 40 years of Nihonmachi Little Friends!

Ground Breaking Ceremony

On October 9, 2015, under clear and sunny skies, NLF held its long-awaited groundbreaking ceremony on its playground lot located next to its historic 1830 Sutter Street building.

Cathy Inamasu gave welcoming remarks highlighting the significance of the day. A group of NLF preschoolers, dressed in their Plant a Seed Campaign t-shirts and yellow construction hats, sang a few songs accompanied by Koji-sensei on guitar. Board member, Joyce Oishi, presented a giant Daruma Doll with NLF student, Evan, making a wish for a successful completion of the new preschool building.

Representatives of the Japanese American Religious Federation provided blessings and a purification ceremony. Participating in the groundbreaking ceremony were also representatives from HKIT Architects, Wickman Development and Construction (General Contractors), and NLF.

A toast brought the ceremony to its end, and a new beginning was officially started! The Contractor began work on the site in early November. Photos of the work in progress are posted on NLF’s website.
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**

- **$250,000+**
  - Ginkgo (いちょう)
- **$100,000+**
  - Bamboo (たけ)
- **$50,000+**
  - Maple (もみじ)
- **$25,000+**
  - Pine (まつ)
- **$10,000+**
  - Oak (かしわ)
- **$5,000+**
  - Cherry (さくら)
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 おおきなたいこ

$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.
In-depth Study on Leaves by Yuwen Ye

In early fall, a couple of the children from the Blueberry Group were collecting leaves from our playground. A few days later, Xyona brought in a couple of leaves to share at group time. The children started to notice the different shapes and characteristics of the various leaves. They chose one of Xyona’s leaves to observe and draw in detail. They were fascinated how one leaf could have so many colors. One of the children described one of the leaves as, “It looks like a rainbow with yellow, green, red, brown, and pink.”

We took walks around our neighborhood to identify the leaves and from which tree they came. Each day, they continued to bring in more leaves to share and talk about. They started sorting and classifying the various leaves by types and made observational drawings. They also decided to use the leaves for their holiday cards to their families.

When the children were asked the question, “Where do leaves come from?” they thought that all leaves came from trees. When I asked them about the “leaves” we eat at lunch in our salad, they said these leaves come from a store or a supermarket. Further questions, discussions and research led us to talk about edible leaves and non-edible leaves. The children are looking forward to bringing in an edible leaf from home to share during group time.

We are excited to see where this investigation will lead and the knowledge that will be gained from a topic as simple as “Leaves”.

Your Support is Needed—Be a Part of a Legacy

Plant a Seed (Tane Maki) Campaign Major Donor Wall: Pledge or contribute and have your name be a permanent part of the 1830 Sutter Street building.

Name:_________________________________________________________ Phone Number:____________________
Address:________________________________________________________ Email address:______________________________________________________

Amount of donation: $_____________ Amount of Pledge: $____________
I would like to have my name on the donor wall at the following level:

______ $5,000 (Cherry/Sakura) ______ $10,000 (Oak/Kashiwa) ______ $25,000 (Pine/Matsu)
______ $50,000 (Maple/Momiji) ______ $100,000 (Bamboo/Take) ______ $250,000 (Ginkgo/Icho)

Children’s Songs Community Building Campaign Display: Pledge or contribute and have your name be a permanent part of the Community Donor Wall.

I would like to have my name on the donor wall at the following level:

______ $3,500 (Koinobori/Carp Streamers) ______ $2,500 (Okina Taiko/The Big Drum)
______ $1,000 (Kaeru no Uta/The Frog Song)

Credit Card Donors:
Name as it appears on the card:__________________________________________ Amount: $_________ Card Expiration date:______________
Card number:_________________________ Phone Number:________________________
Email address:__________________________________________________________

Please remit this form and contribution to: NLF, 1830 Sutter Street, San Francisco, CA 94115 (415) 922-8898
The “Potato group” has been involved with an in-depth study project on “Potatoes” since August. In their discussions about how to eat them, the children said, “Peel off the skin and cut and eat it!” The raw potato tasted horrible! Maxi said we should “cook” the potatoes so we could eat them. Andy suggested that we should “heat” the potatoes in the microwave or put them in the pan and heat it.

The Potato Group went to Nijiya supermarket to buy some potatoes. The children were surprised to see the variety of potatoes. They bought several different types of potatoes and cut them in half. They discovered that not only the outside but also the colors inside were different, some yellow, white and purple. They also discovered that each potato tasted different. The children then wanted to make french fries.

Before making it, they decided to visit a shop in Japantown to interview the chef. The children ordered french fries, tasted and observed them. Maggie looked carefully at the inside of the french fry and said, “We need to make mashed potato first. Look, the inside is mashed potato!” The children interviewed the chef asking him how to “fry” the potatoes. The children thought to “boil water” to fry the potatoes, but the chef told them that they should use “oil.” The next day, they sliced the potatoes and fried them in rice oil with my assistance. The children ate the most delicious french fries they’ve ever had!

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2016 Dowa no Omatsuri

Five years ago, the After School Program’s (ASP) journey to support the Northern Japan Earthquake and Tsunami survivors started with a simple request from a Kindergarten student--“I want to share my toys with her. Can I send my toys to her?”

The staff brainstormed with the children and created the powerful slogan “Help, Heal, Hope” as a fundamental spirit for our activities. We raised over $7000 through a garage sale, sent encouraging letters to several elementary schools in the Tohoku area and visited the SF Consulate General to receive extra support in our efforts. The ASP then concluded this journey with a touching performance at NLF’s annual “Dowa no Omatsuri”

This year, the ASP will celebrate NLF’s 40th anniversary and also commemorate the 5th anniversary of the tsunami attack in No. Japan with powerful music and children’s dances once again. The story will begin by revisiting when the tsunami attack happened, and move on to how the survivors are rebuilding their lives by focusing on four themes, “Resilience”, “Respect”, “Reconnection” and “Remembrance”. These four themes highlight what has been happening in Tohoku, Japan and how the people in SF are contributing their efforts to continue to support the survivors.

Restaurant Project

During free activity time, the ASP staff recognized that many students were often drawing different kinds of food. After several discussions with the children, the Kindergarteners through 2nd Graders decided to start a project on opening their own restaurants. “Team Gohan” (dish with rice), “Noodle Group” (dish with noodles), and “Dessert Group” (several sweets), were created and the grand opening of their restaurants took place on Thursday, December 17th.

As part of the project, each group of children studied different floor plans to think about the flow of customers, and invited a special guest speaker, architect Roger (Raiden’s dad), to talk about building designs. The children ordered french fries, tasted and observed them. Maggie looked carefully at the inside of the french fry and said, “We need to make mashed potato first. Look, the inside is mashed potato!” The children interviewed the chef asking him how to “fry” the potatoes. The children thought to “boil water” to fry the potatoes, but the chef told them that they should use “oil.” The next day, they sliced the potatoes and fried them in rice oil with my assistance. The children ate the most delicious french fries they’ve ever had!
“Potatoes” (continued from page 6)

The next question was which do you like better --“Mashed Potatoes vs. French Fries”. All the children except Ryu in the Potato Group liked french fries better. How about the other children in NLF? How about the teachers? So, the group decided to take a survey on the two potato dishes, asking the teachers and children about their preferences. Then, they made a chart about their results.

The potatoes the Group had bought earlier, started to sprout. There were a lot of “eyes” on the potatoes, so we decided to plant them and see what would happen. We mixed plant soil with the organic soil from the worm bin, and put it in two pots and planted the sprouted potatoes. Ever since then, the children have been looking forward to watering and observing the pots every single day, and eagerly reporting, “We have more “greens”, Ryoko sensei!”

This project will continue after the holidays with more discoveries ahead for the Group!

Ways to Support NLF

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).

* Designate your contributions through the United Way, and Combined Charities Federal Campaign, to go directly to NLF. NLF’s code number is 3251.
* Escrip is an easy way to have a portion of your shopping go directly to NLF. Just go to Escrip.com and follow the directions to register.
* Online Donation: You can give online through our website at www.nlfchildcare.org
* Remember NLF in your will or estate planning.
* Amazon Smile If you shop online at Amazon.com, you can designate a portion of your purchases to go to NLF by signing up at www.amazonsmile.com and select charity: Nihonmachi Little Friends
* NLF is a 501(c)3 non-profit organization. Your contribution is tax-deductible to the extent allowed by law.
SAVE THE DATE:

*Dowa No Omatsuri: A Festival of Children’s Stories Fundraiser*

Sunday, February 28, 2016
12:00pm – 4:00pm
Palace of Fine Arts Theatre

Kagami Kai performed and provided delicious mochi for NLF’s Winter Family Social on December 13th.

The Bush preschoolers created their own costumes with the materials we had at school and went to the Kimochi Home to sing a few songs with the Seniors for Halloween.

Kindergarteners through 2nd graders making truffles for their restaurant project.

A great time was had by the many attendees who helped celebrate NLF’s 40th Anniversary.