SAN JOSE STATE UNIVERSITY
ONE WASHINGTON SQUARE
SAN JOSE, CA 95192

SS-S23-4, Sense of the Senate Resolution, Honoring and Recognizing a Day of Remembrance

Legislative History: On April 17, 2023, the Academic Senate approved the following Sense of the Senate Resolution presented by Senator Chuang.

WHEREAS: San José State University played a significant role in the forced removal and incarceration of local Japanese Americans during Executive Order 9066.The purpose of this resolution is to acknowledge and be accountable for the role played by SJSU during WWII, and to acknowledge and be accountable to the university and broader local community for the harms that were done as a result of that role; and

WHEREAS: February 19th is a significant date for the Japanese American community: On this day in 1942, President Franklin D. Roosevelt signed Executive Order 9066, which gave the U.S. Army the authority to remove civilians from the military zones established in Washington, Oregon, and California during World War II. This was a grave injustice and violation of civil liberties. Executive Order 9066 cited military necessity as the basis of incarcerating Japanese Americans and this led to the forced removal and incarceration of Americans of Japanese ancestry living on the West Coast, who had to abandon their jobs, their homes, and their lives to be sent to one of ten concentration camps scattered in desolate, remote regions of the country[1]. The forced relocation and incarceration of over 120,000 Japanese Americans, many of whom were American citizens, without any evidence of wrongdoing, was a discriminatory and racist act fueled by fear and prejudice. The denial of due process, attack on civil liberties, and the generational harm caused to the Japanese American community, made particularly visible in San José's Japantown commemorations, shed light on the atrocities that result from discrimination and Anti-Asian hate; and

WHEREAS: The presidential Commission on Wartime Relocation and Internment of Civilians (CWRIC) concluded in 1983 and the Civil Liberties Act of 1988[2] concurred that the forced removal and incarceration of Japanese Americans during WWII was due to "war hysteria, race prejudice, and the failure of political leadership." This points to one of the most critical and consequential lessons of the massive denial of civil liberties – the understanding that the Bill of Rights is not self-enforcing, and that in order to prevent a repetition of the "failure of political leadership," Americans at all levels of our society -- elected leaders, community leaders, religious leaders, writers, teachers, university administrators, professionals, workers, young people -- must individually and collectively stand up to enforce the guarantees of the U.S. Constitution for everybody, whenever they are threatened.

WHEREAS: San José State College played a key role in the incarceration of Japanese Americans, acting as a processing center for Santa Clara County to carry out Executive Order

[1] https://jacl.org/day-of-remembrance
[2] https://www.congress.gov/bill/100th-congress/house-bill/442

9066. This included having Japanese American employees and students of the university assist in the processing of their own community members; and

WHEREAS: San José State College helped the government of the United States to violate the civil rights of American residents and citizens on the basis of their race and national origin, violations that eventually were nationally recognized by the 1988 Civil Liberties Act that " acknowledged the fundamental injustice of the evacuation, relocation, and incarceration of United States citizens and permanent resident aliens of Japanese ancestry during World War II" and the 2018 Supreme Court decision Trump v Hawaii, which stated that "The forcible relocation of U. S. citizens to concentration camps, solely and explicitly on the basis of race, is objectively unlawful and outside the scope of Presidential authority"; and

WHEREAS: Yoshihiro Uchida Hall[3], formerly known as Spartan Complex and then Men's Gym, served as a processing center for Japanese incarceration at SJS College, now known as San José State University [4]; and

WHEREAS: Japanese American students and employees and their SJSU allies were surveilled by the University and 2,487 Japanese Americans were processed before being forced on buses to concentration camps in unknown locations for an unspecified period of time; and

WHEREAS: 125 Japanese American students[5] who were forced to leave SJS College, now known as San José State University in 1942 due to EO 9066; many never returned to complete their degrees.

WHEREAS: We remember the following individuals: Helen Mineta, Norman Mineta, Phil Matsumura, Irene Miura, Paul Sakamoto, Mike Honda, Yoshihiro Uchida, Vic Lee, Claude Settles, and Maroa Kanemoto. These significant individuals faced discrimination, incarceration, and hardship during Executive Order 9066. Some of these individuals after camp, came back to serve the University and Spartan Community. We memorialize this history and memory by not forgetting these individuals, their sacrifice, and life experiences, and continue their legacy of change for future generations at San José State University and the greater San José community.

WHEREAS: Helen Mineta, an alumni of SJS College, now known as San José State University in 1938, who was not allowed to be a teacher in local schools because of her Japanese ancestry. Instead, she became the Secretary of our Speech Department, was assigned to serve as a receptionist at the processing center in the Men's Gym, before being sent with her family to the Heart Mountain camp in Wyoming, where she helped educate her little brother Norm Mineta.

WHEREAS: Norman Mineta[6], who was processed at SJSU before being incarcerated in Heart Mountain camp in Wyoming with his family. He was the first Asian American to become Mayor of a major U.S. city, of San José in 1971, first Japanese American member of Congress

[3] https://www.sjsu.edu/senate/docs/SS-S18-1.pdf
[4] https://express.adobe.com/page/EBI61PVzY7cp8/
[5] https://www.calstate.edu/impact-of-the-csu/alumni/Honorary-Degrees/Nisei-Diploma-Project
[6] https://www.minetalegacyproject.com/timeline

elected from the lower 48 states in 1975, and authored HR 442, the Civil Liberties Act of 1988. In 2000, Mineta became the first Asian American Cabinet Member as Secretary of Commerce, and also became the first Asian American to serve in two Presidential Cabinets. During the attacks of 9/11, Mineta oversaw the grounding of thousands of airplanes in just over two hours, drawing up security plans, and ensuring that there will be no racial profiling at security checkpoints at airports. In 2006, Mineta received the nation's highest honor, the Presidential Medal of Freedom.

WHEREAS: Philip Matsumura (Phil Matsumura), student of SJS College, now known as San José State University, who was assigned to serve as a receptionist at the processing center in the Men's Gym. Phil served in the Japanese club as Reporter and Vice President[7] in 1935.

WHEREAS: Irene Miura, who was incarcerated as a young child at Poston, Arizona, before earning her doctorate in Child and Adolescent Development at Stanford, then rising through the ranks to Chair our Academic Senate from 1993-1994 and served as Executive Assistant to three SJSU Presidents: President Caret, President Crowley, and President Kassing.

WHEREAS: Paul Sakamoto[8], who was incarcerated as a young child at Jerome, Arkansas, and later advocated for students of color to join fraternities on campus during his time as a student at San Jose State. He served as Student Body Vice President in 1955[9]. After earning his doctorate in Education from Michigan State University, he returned to his alma mater and served as Associate Dean of Students at SJSU. He is the first person of color to serve as a superintendent in the nation, and is also the first person of color to join Greek life at San José State.

WHEREAS: Mike Honda, a third generation Japanese American Sansei, who was sent to camps with his family to Camp Amache, before earning his Bachelors and Master's degree from San José State, served as SJSU Ombudsperson, and later served as a member of Congress from 2001 to 2017 representing in only Asian American majority district of the United States.

WHEREAS: Yoshihiro Uchida, who began classes at San Jose State just before being drafted into the United States Army during World War II instead of being sent to camps[10]. Uchida's parents and siblings were living in Southern California in Garden Grove, and were processed there before being sent to Poston, where his brothers, George, Henry, and Sam, became resisters and were sent to several Department of Justice camps. He returned to San Jose State to finish his degree and coached the judo team. He was the head judo coach at SJSU for over 70 years[11]. Uchida served as the first U.S. Judo team's coach in the 1964 Tokyo Olympics. In 1947, SPX West was formally renamed[12] to Uchida Hall, to honor his contributions to San Jose State.

[7] https://digitalcollections.sjsu.edu/islandora/object/islandora%3A231_5304
[8] https://www.jamsj.org/manabu/paul-sakamoto
[9] https://digitalcollections.sjsu.edu/islandora/object/islandora%3A231_9706#page/1/mode/2up
[10] https://www.jamsj.org/manabu/yosh-uchida
[11] https://www.sjsu.edu/senate/docs/SS-S18-1.pdf
[12] https://www.sjsu.edu/senate/docs/F96-10.pdf

WHEREAS: Vic Lee, the first Asian American to serve as San Jose State Student Body President during 1967-1968, at the time of the Third World Liberation Front Strike and campus protests led by Harry Edwards[13]. He was a Chinese American Journalism Student and spoke Japanese. He later became one of the first Asian Americans in the nation to appear on television and one of the most respected journalists in the Bay Area and nationwide.

WHEREAS: Claude Settles, a faculty member in the Social Sciences department, who in 1942 courageously protested the "poor treatment" of the Japanese community, and was subsequently fired by President MacQuarrie under pressure from an outraged California State Legislature.

WHEREAS: Maroa Kanemoto, a student of SJSC, whose poem, written in a camp, was published in the Spartan Daily on June 1, 1942, and reads as follows:

I know I am only a Japanese;
My skin is darker than yours;
But I still love the U.S.A.
Whatever our country endures
I'd fight for freedom and liberty.
I'd die with the best of you
But here behind this barbed wire fence
What can a patriot do?
I know no flag but the stars and stripes.
Your songs are the songs I sing.
My tongue knows only the words you speak.
But what do my loyalties bring?
I have full faith in most of you.
Most have full trust in me.
But some of you hold me in open scorn
In this land of the equal and free.
A citizen, loyal and true, am I;
Trust me, however you may;
But give me a chance to prove my worth
Please don't chuck me away!

WHEREAS: San José State University serves and educates Asian American Pacific Islander (AAPI) and Asian, Pacific Islander, and Desi-American (APIDS/EA/A) identified student populations of 11,346 - 34.4% of the student population[14]. Another 167 Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander students - 0.5% of the student population. This population includes first generation students, low-income students, native and transfer students; and[15]

[13] https://digitalcollections.sjsu.edu/islandora/object/islandora%3A77_262?solr_nav%5Bid%5D=810e2a72b992da423a5a&solr_nav%5Bpage%5D=1&solr_nav%5Boffset%5D=29

[14] Asian, Pacific Islander, Desi, South_East Asian _American (APIDS_EA_A) Resolution.docx

[15] https://analytics.sjsu.edu/t/IRPublic/views/student_quckfact/StudentQuickFacts?%3Aembed_code_version=3&%3Aembed=y&%3AloadOrderID=0&%3Adisplay_spinner=no&%3AshowAppBanner=false&%3Adisplay_count=n&%3AshowVizHome=n&%3Aorigin=viz_share_link

WHEREAS: San José State is also home to many international students. International students make up about 12.2% of the SJSU student body with 85% of the population coming from India, China, and Vietnam[16]. The population of International students has been increasing at an average rate of 15.7%;[17] and

WHEREAS: Day of Remembrance is a community ritual that emerged from the Redress Movement[18] as a grassroots means of uniting and mobilizing Japanese Americans to win reparations. It was a precedent-setting achievement which showed that reparations are possible; and therefore be it

RESOLVED: That in the adoption of this resolution, San José State University institutionalize an annual Day of Remembrance on February 19 to formally commemorate and condemn the injustice to the community, to never forget this moment of history, and draw lessons from the experiences of Japanese Americans on our campus.

RESOLVED: In the planning of the Day of Remembrance and educational programming and activities, there should be a collaboration with the University's Office of the President, SJSU Student Affairs Division, Center of Asian American Student Empowerment, and Associated Students of SJSU among local Japantown and community organizations to amplify and empower the advocacy, experiences, and voices of our local Japanese American communities.

RESOLVED: That the SJSU Academic Senate urge the University to design and construct a permanent mural at the site of Uchida Hall, depicting the history of the camps during Executive Order 9066, the Civil Rights Movements in the 1950s, the Third World Liberation Front Strike of 1968 at San Francisco State, the Redress/Reparations Movement of the 70s to the 90s, the implementation of Asian American Studies at San Jose State in the 1970s, the Anti-Asian Hate movement, and the institutionalization of Day of Remembrance in 2023 to educate and empower the San Jose community and to come to terms with and atone for its complicity with EO 9066 and its effects.

RESOLVED: That the SJSU Academic Senate urge the University to design and construct a permanent monument at or near the site of Uchida Hall, to come to terms with and atone for its complicity with EO 9066 and its effects.

Respectfully Submitted By:
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[16] Parinez, Z. (2021, April 18). *Office of International Student & Scholar Services (ISSS) College of Professional and Global Education (CPGE).*
[17] *San José State University International*. College Factual. (2021, April 15). https://www.collegefactual.com/colleges/san-José-state-university/student-life/international/#secCountryDeepDive.
[18] https://jacl.org/redress-movement

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Asian Law Alliance
Associated Students Inc., Cal State East Bay
Associated Students of Cal State Monterey Bay
Associated Students of San José State*
Cal State Student Association (CSSA)
Center for Asian Pacific Islander Student Empowerment (CAPISE)*
César E. Chávez Community Action Center*
Japanese American Citizens League, San José Chapter **
Japanese American Museum of San José **
Japantown Community Congress of San José **
Nihonmachi Outreach Committee **
San José Nikkei Resisters **
The SJSU Program for Asian American Studies*

*SJSU Affiliated
**San José Japantown Organizations

<u>SJSU Registered Student Organizations:</u>
Afghan Student Association
Ahlul-Bayt Student Association
Akbayan Pilipinx American Organization at SJSU
Alpha Kappa Psi
Alpha Omicron Pi
Alpha Phi Omega
Alpha Tau Delta
American Institute of Aeronautics and Astronautics (AIAA)
Biology Students Association
Burmese Myanmar Associated Students (BMAS)
COMM Students Association
Delta Sigma Phi
Diasporic Peoples Writing Collective (DPWC)
Game Development Club at SJSU
Humanities Honors Society

Interfraternity Council
Jewish Student Union
Nutrition and Food Science Club
Panhellenic Council
Pi Theta Epsilon
Public Health Student Association (PHSA)
Pi Kappa Phi
Queer and Asian SJSU
San Jose Consulting Group
Sigma Alpha Epsilon
SJSU Club Dancesport
SJSU Interfraternity Council
SJSU Marketing Association
SJSU Photography Guild
Society of Women Engineers
Software and Computer Engineering Society (SCE)
Spartan Automotive Enthusiast Club
Spartan Engineering in Advanced Rocketry (SPEAR)
Spartan Wushu
Student Homeless Alliance
Students for Justice in Palestine
Students Supporting Israel
Tau Beta Pi
The Banking and Investment Association (BIA)
The Japanese Student Society at SJSU
Vietnamese Students Association
Women in Business at SJSU
Women in Design
Women’s Club Volleyball SJSU