



Okinawan Genealogical Society of Hawaii
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<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vV50KoFIY6Y>

e-Newsletter
 2020
 March

Donna's Word of the Month

"Chibariyo"
 Do your best.

Membership Meeting
 Saturday, March 21, 2020, **CANCELLED**
 Serikaku Chaya



Canceled

East-West Center, Visiting Scholar, Research Program -



Dr. Kaori Akiyama arrived at the Center on November 4, 2019 and will stay until March 21, 2020. During this time, she will be conducting research on "Okinawan POWs sent to Hawaii during WWII and their Experiences: Interaction with Immigrant Community of Hawaii". This is a continuation of her dissertation research on "Changes in Internment Camps and Camp-lives of Japanese Internees during the Pacific War in Hawaii (Japanese)". Mr. John Tasato will serve as liaison for her participation.

https://www.researchgate.net/profile/Kaori_Akiyama (photo)

Upcoming Activities

2020

- March 21 **Canceled** -OGSH Monthly Meeting
- May 14 Global WUB Board of Directors Meeting
- May 15 Nago Club 100th Anniversary
- May 16-17 **Canceled** -Ukaji Deebiru – Celebrating 120 Years of Uchinanchu in Hawaii, HOC
- Nov 21 Bonenkai

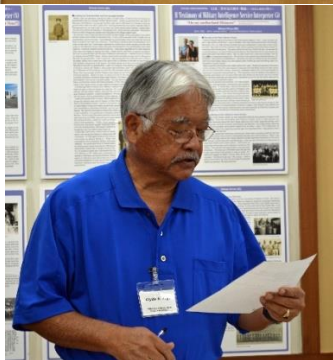
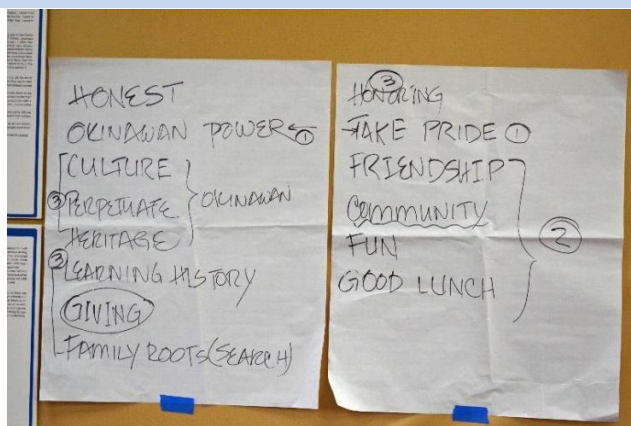
2021

- October 28-31 7th Worldwide Uchinanchi Festival
 Naha, Okinawa

Meeting Report

Saturday, February 15, 2020

- Attendance: 31
- Treasurer's Report: Income – membership dues, donations
- Expense: printing, DCCA, LooChoo Identity Summit
- Secretary's Report: Newsletter
- Secretary's Report: Transcribed by David R.
- OGSH Photos: Curtis S.



Ikigai

Speaker: Byrnes Yamashita



Donna and I had a discussion the other day to explain this concept of Ikigai. If you Google this term, there are many different explanations or writings that come up about it. But one that captured my attention was this graph that showed different orbs or spheres that you could try to obtain. I think this author is talking about your career. What career would give you the greatest satisfaction and reward. He had one sphere that said, “What you’re good at?” Another sphere was, “What would be of use to people?” Another sphere, “What would make you happy?” And the fourth sphere, “What can you be paid for?” The compilation of all those things is a sweet spot called Ikigai.

I started researching this when I was getting ready to retire from the Navy, a little over 10 years ago. I was trying to figure out what to do with my life. So, I was able to eliminate the “What can I be paid for?” So, the three areas I applied were: What am I good for? What is useful to people? and What would make me happy? For me, at that time,



as I have mentioned in previous meetings, I was getting involved with the Nisei veteran’s story. My father was a Nisei veteran of World War II. So, I was involved in perpetuating their legacy, especially to the younger generations. So, that was definitely something that I was able to do, even though I am not a historian. It was filling a need in the community for the awareness and it was making me feel good.

I’ve come to learn the other piece that really helps me is this interest in family. I think that is a common bond of the group in here is our interest in knowing about our families, which leads us to the historical aspect of genealogy of our families. Where did they come from? Who were they? Why did they come to

Hawaii? I am also in the midst in planning our family reunion this June at the Okinawan Center in the Legacy Ballroom. We’re expecting 190 to 200 people, coming from all over America and Okinawa. Our family tree, through research by other family members, I’ve discovered our family in Hawaii is so much bigger than what I was aware of. I knew a couple of branches of Itokazu from my mother’s side which was very big. There were 12 children of which 10 survived to adulthood. Those 10 had 45 children and those 45 had 150 children. But what I discovered through this research, a gentleman named Shinji “Barney” Higa had done over 20 years ago, we have 5 branches through marriage that immigrated from the Himeji area to Hawaii, primarily to west Kauai. So now we know we are related to Kishimotos, Miyashiros, Shimabukuros, and Higas. This family tree has just gone boom! My cousin and I are working on the reunion and have gotten so enthralled by this story. It’s like a detective story where we put pieces together and it has become an enjoyable thing for us, to find those family members, reach out, and connect with them. This has become our Ikigai.

For those of you who are long time members this is something that feeds you, this interest in our roots and finding out who our relatives are within the broader Okinawan community here in Hawaii. It’s a great way for us to link our own personal rewards to the mission of the genealogical society. I agree with Donna. There is tremendous overlaps as we reach our golden years to discover these things from the past. We need to find out what links us altogether. As the descendants of Okinawan immigrants, it is a wonderful thing. That’s my ideal. Thank you.



2020 U.S. Census

2020 US Census

David Arakawa and Rodney Kohagura
(emailed the below on March 9, 2020)



Rodney:

Coming up this year is the 2020 U.S. Census. It is a very important thing we should all participate in. When we respond to it, this will determine how much money will come to the state of Hawaii. The federal government has over 6 billion dollars to distribute to the 50 states. Hawaii's share is about 3 billion dollars. This year you may respond through the mail, go line, or call a number.

David:

The Census is very important. Some of you may already know this from OGS research. We were able to find from the 1920/1930 Census who were living in my grandparent's house, who the cousins were and the relationships to the people living in the house. It was interesting to find out which relatives from Okinawa were living at the house at that time. So, the Census is very important for the purpose of genealogical research. The other thing is the Census Bureau is working with HUOA. They are going to be a sponsor for some of the events for our 120th Anniversary. They will be one of our major sponsors.



There will be a blank on the bottom of the survey form that says 'Other' and you can fill in "Okinawan". If there is over 5,000 Okinawans, we will be listed as an official separate ethnic group. If we are listed as an ethnic group, there is a chance more will check that box and be might be able to get funding from the state or federal government for our 125th Anniversary in 2025. Tell your friends and families and that is very important.



あきさみよー: akisamiyoo

akisamiyoo, interj. A cry of distress; a cry for help; expression of great surprise or sadness. Heavens! Goodness! See aki:

1. An expression of surprise, wonder or bewilderment. My goodness!; Oh my gosh!; Oh my god!; Oh my!; Goodness gracious!; Holy cow!; Wow!; Damn!

aki, interj. Expression of surprise or sadness. Oh! Why! Goodness!

<https://www.jlect.com/entry/734/akisamiyoo/>

<https://books.google.com/books?id=8guTfpBkm5kC&pg=PA8&lpg=PA8&dq=akisamiyoo&source=bl&ots=tW-svzo4&sig=ACfU3U3hFsSaE7aUDi7NqMVOL651eMmA1Q&hl=en&sa=X&ved=2ahUKEwjnrmVxqnoAhVStz4KHR50A1gQ6AEwBXoECAoQAQ#v=onepage&q=akisamiyoo&f=false>

Are you looking for something to do while you protect yourself from COVID-19? Suggestion, click your word processing program, open a blank document, and write an akisamiyoo moment, a story, an event, or did you know. Read it, look at it, and decide if you would like to share it with the OGS Newsletter. If yes, please submit your writings to: ogshnews@gmail.com

Theresa shares a story with us.



THE UBI: A STORY TO TELL

As the 2019 Rainbow Wahine Volleyball Team was battling their way to the NCAA Volleyball Semi-Finals in Madison, Wisconsin, last December, I saw sitting in the stands of the University of Wisconsin Field House, one Hawaii fan and OGS member, by the name of Helen Yamauchi Yanamura.

The back story:

I got to know Helen when she and her husband became OGS members, and learned she was a Farrington High School graduate. I, being a fellow "Governor", along with my father, brother, uncle and 3 aunts, asked Helen if she knew my uncle, James Kakazu, and aunt, Doris Nakamura Kakazu, because they are all from the same graduating class. Eureka! She claimed she was very close friends with Doris, and ran in the same circles, together in high school and also knew my uncle.

When I learned Helen knew my uncle and aunt, I brought this to the attention another aunt, Ethel, right before James in sibling chronology. And, double eureka, Aunt Ethel claimed she too, knew Helen and Ken Yanamura!

So, while watching the game, Aunt Ethel and I watch all the UH vBall games together, I exclaimed, "Look, there's Helen Yanamura!"

And the back story continued:

After college, Aunt Ethel got her first teaching job on Molokai and met her future husband, Vic Fukuda from Kona. It was also his first teaching job. However, before the school year ended, Vic was drafted by the Army. The school principal and many students loved Vic, and wanted him to finish up their school year so much, they wrote to his draft board and pleaded to allow Vic stay to the end of the school year. Because finding a replacement with his credentials and to assign one to Molokai was crazy, they allowed him to complete the few weeks left in the school year.

As soon as the school year ended, Vic went into the Army, and Aunt Ethel ended up teaching in Waianae the following year and in Wahiawa, the year after that. After two years away in the Army, Vic was discharged and enrolled at UH to get his master's degree.

Aunt Ethel said, while teaching at Wahiawa Elementary School, a YMCA Choir from UH came to her school and gave a performance. Vic and his friend from Kona, Ken Yanamura, (Helen's future husband) were members of this choir and this is when Vic introduced Ken to Aunt Ethel.

A couple of days later, I shot an email to Helen: "Helen, I saw you in the stands of the volleyball game in Wisconsin!" And she replied with this subject line, "A story to tell". Here's the email she sent:

Aloha Theresa: Just returned home from Madison Wisconsin where we watched the Wahine's loss to Nebraska. Sat in the stands with a bunch of Hawaii fans and we passed out ti leaves brought from our back yard, horns and banners which were received enthusiastically and loudly. A young gentleman sat with us and we became friends; he lives in Chicago and drove two hours to watch the game. With lots of conversations and learning Ken served in the US Army, he told us about his uncle from Hawaii who was stationed at Tinker AFB in Oklahoma, retired there and found a government job; then moved to Texas. I told Ken sounds like James Kakazu and he said, yes, James is his uncle; so, I went on to tell him that James and Doris were my high school classmates. Ken mentioned that James was called Paper and Joe said "yes, he was always Uncle Paper to them."

So, this gentleman is Joe Miyamura - an aerospace engineer for Honeywell and is related to Doris' side of the family - and we gave him our address asking that we keep in touch and he promised when he comes to Hawaii to visit he may see us at one of the volleyball games! Hope it happens and hope you're able to relay this story to Doris. Mahalo, Helen Yanamura

Small world gets smaller doesn't it? I thought it was incredible.

Since Joe is not my cousin, I knew he had to be a nephew on my aunty's side of the family, so I contacted OGS member Nancy Tome to ask her the name of my Aunty Doris' sister, who is her friend from Aina Haina. I know they share hometown connections to Shuri, Okinawa as well. As soon as she told me, "Iris Miyamura", I knew he was a local boy from Hawaii and Iris is Joe's mother.

A few days later Nancy tells me she called Iris, and told her, her son Joe, drove to the volleyball game in Wisconsin, where he met Ken and Helen, her sister's classmate. After which, Nancy tells me, "this is funny!"

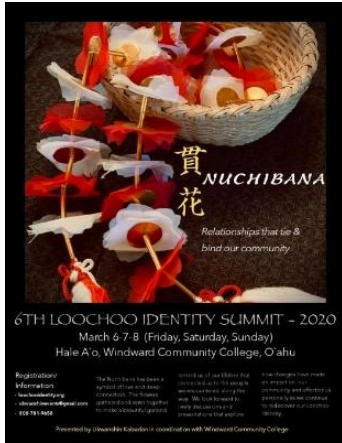
I then declare to Nancy, "Uh, no. I think this is way beyond funny!" A Honeywell engineer drives 2 hours, from Chicago, Illinois to Madison, Wisconsin, meets a Hawaii couple at a volleyball game. The engineer learns the man is from Hawaii was in the Army, and so the engineer tells him about his uncle who was in the Air Force. The man tells him it sounds like his friend James Kakazu. Amazed, the engineer tells him that's his uncle! Amazed, the woman from Hawaii tells him, "his aunty was her high school and college classmate!" She then emails me saying she met Doris's nephew. So I, wondering which of Doris' many sisters is Joe's mother, I asked Nancy what is her Aina Haina friend's name, to which she replies, "Miyamura", who later calls Iris to tell her what transpired, and now 6 people from Hawaii all know 1) the engineer's name; 2) what his job is; 3) where he lives; 4) what he was up to, on December 13, 2019, in Madison, Wisconsin, 5) what his mother's name is, 6) who went to high school and college with his aunty, and 7) what branch of military his uncle and a man he just met were in.

And I continue, "If this gentleman, Joe Miyamura, ever found out how many Hawaii Okinawans have tabs on him, and now know his 'back story', he would positively think twice before ever willingly "talk story" with another Uchinanchu from Hawaii again."

Unfortunately, the Wahine lost, and everyone had to return home shortly thereafter. Home, sweet, Hawaii!

UBI (Uchinanchu Bureau of Investigation),
Agent Theresa Kakazu Tom, reporting.





NUCHIBANA: 2020 LooChoo Identity Summit

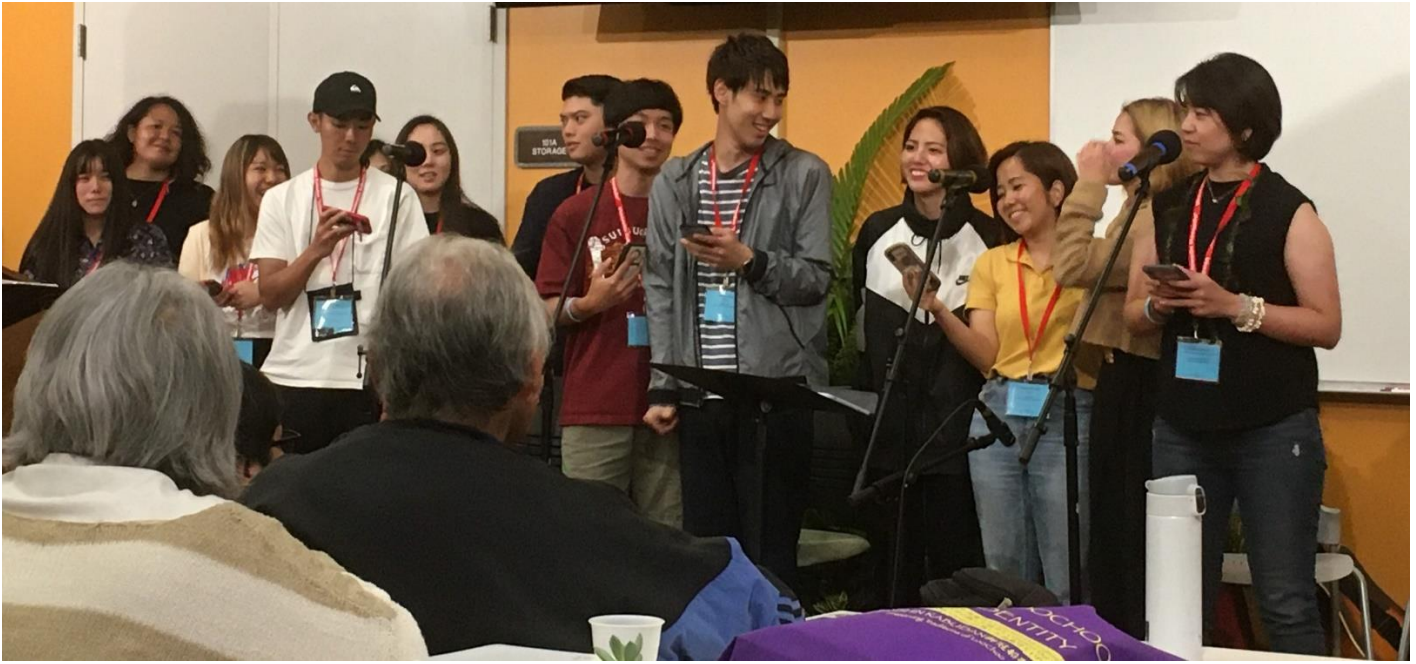
By Doreen Yamashiro

Using the *nuchibana* as the symbol of connections, the theme of the 6th annual **LooChoo Identity Summit** perfectly illustrated how relationships are intertwined. Connecting to our Okinawan heritage was explored from many different perspectives at the recent Summit held at the Windward Community College on March 6-8. Workshops and presentations that revealed our connections to our culture and ancestors; connections to place as a formation of our identity; and the benefits of connections to our community were some of the highlights of the summit. We also learned how memories and stories can reawaken and reconnect us to special people and places but also learned how the younger generation is reinventing connections through technology which allows us to connect to others in a very different way.

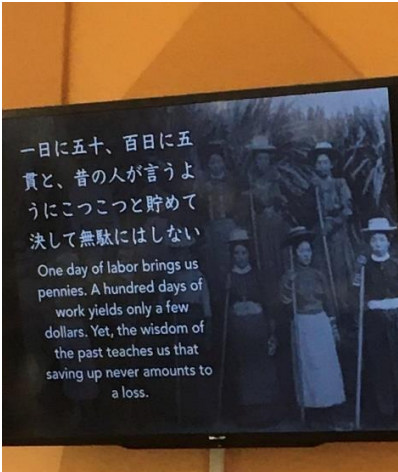
The Summit provided all participants opportunities to engage in animated discussions often resulting in discovering connections to each other. People found connections to distant relatives, school alumni, co-workers, common friends and acquaintances. When sharing information about themselves, they were often interrupted with someone asking, “Oh, you know so-and so?” Or “My ba-ban did the same thing!” These connections generated much warm feelings, laughter, and deeper appreciation of our shared identity as **‘LooChoo nu Kwa’ - Children of Ryukyu**.



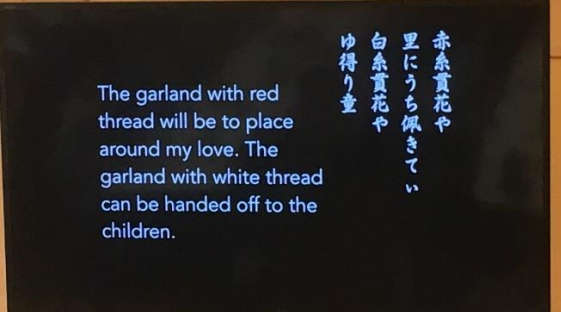
The impressive presenters and workshop leaders, home-grown in the local Okinawan community, were Norman Kaneshiro, Eric Wada, and Keith Nakaganeku, co-directors of **Ukwanshin Kabudan** which sponsored this summit; women of **Hui O Laulima** Wendy Yoshimoto, Jean Tsuda, and Gloria Kishi (also **OGSH** member), and **Young Okinawans of Hawaii** President Brandon Ufugusuku Ing and Vice-President Collin Hoo. Just as outstanding was a creative workshop led by Kyle Kajihiro, who we enjoyed as an **OGSH** guest speaker a few years ago.



Through the generosity of OGSB and member Steve Miyashiro, three students from Okinawa currently enrolled at UH Manoa received sponsorship to attend the Summit. They, along with a contingent of ten college students from Okinawa Christian University, constantly remarked on how impressed they were by the interest and knowledge that Hawaii people had about Okinawa; in many ways, much more than what they learned in their own island home. These students became very energized to be advocates of their own culture and to perpetuate the beauty of the language, express gratitude to their ancestors and show respect for their history and precious land.



The Summit closed with a deeply moving music concert by Ukwanshin Kabudan. Selected songs and narrative prelude of the story and meaning behind the songs shared by Eric and Norman served to connect the audience to the history and the thoughts and feelings of the Okinawan people as they experienced different events in their lives.





The LooChoo Identity Summit is usually held in mid-March. It is an unique experience that affects participants in different and personal ways. However, the LooChoo Identity Summit does prove true that “to know who you are, you need to know where you come from.” dy

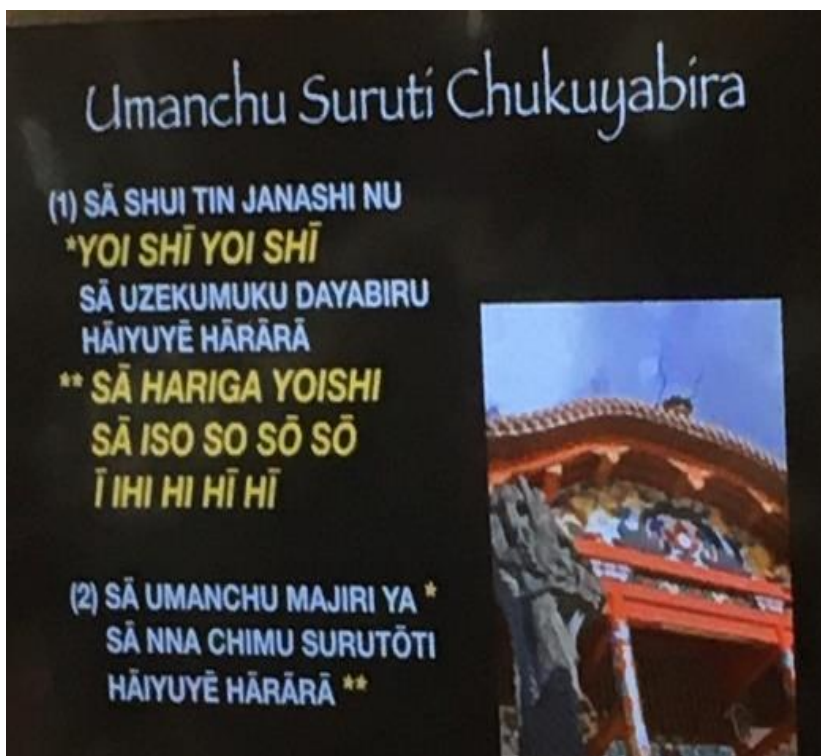




Photo by Keila Y. Santaella-Umukaji



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Photo by Keila Y. Santaella-Umukaji



Photo by Keila Y. Santaella-Umukaji

Notes:

This year the LooChoo Summit was held at the Hale A`o Building on the campus of the Windward Community College. The main structure was built in 1929 and was used as a doctor’s residence. Since 2013 the building is the home for the Hawaiian Studies Program. The conference used the two secondary buildings that were added, Hale A`o- Ōpio Kākela and Hale A`o -Ōpio Kelakela.



https://cramp.wcc.hawaii.edu/About_WCC/Ao_Kakela/
Hale A`o- Ōpio Kākela



https://imua.wcc.hawaii.edu/About_WCC/Ao/
Hale A`o built in 1929.