



## Maintaining Strong Social Ties

**Studies show low levels of social interaction can be as dangerous as smoking 15 cigarettes a day and can be TWICE as harmful as obesity.**

**Social isolation** can also lead to conditions such as depression and dementia, and it is a serious threat to the overall health of older adults. Some factors that can increase the risk of becoming socially isolated include living alone, speaking a

language other than English, and/or belonging to a minority group, according to the AARP Foundation. On the positive front: maintaining social ties can improve the odds of survival by 50%. Social isolation has become a prominent and pressing issue for our aging population and a shared concern of many health care providers and community organizations, including Keiro. In this issue, we feature organizations that are keeping people tied to their community.

*Continued on P.3*



# Keiro Connecting with the Community...

Welcome to Keiro Connect: Spring 2018 Edition!

As temperatures outside slowly rise and our Southern California winter draws to a close, thoughts turn to planting calendars, baseball season openers, and warm weather pursuits. But before flipping the calendar to April, I want to share a glance at snapshots from the start of 2018, showing how some integrate older adults into activities shared with younger generations.

*Shinnenkai* signifies a special time of year, when we reconnect to celebrate the New Year, honor traditions, and recognize our senior community members. At the events hosted by the Venice Japanese Community Center, Seinan Senior Citizens' Club, and the Japanese Community Pioneer Center, among others, it was heartening to see

our older adults celebrating and being celebrated, dining among hundreds, thrilling to raffle drawings, and enjoying performances.

At Keiro, we realize not every day is a party. But every day should bring ways for older adults to stay active and engaged, as they do at these wonderful community celebrations. This edition features some ways Keiro is striving to expand these opportunities. And we thank the individuals and community partners who continue to help us serve our older adults. Happy Spring!



Leona Hiraoka  
President and Chief Executive Officer, Keiro

暖冬が終わりをつげ、ここ南カリフォルニアでも春の訪れを感じるこの季節。日系パイオニアセンター様はじめロサンゼルス各地で行われた多くの新年会に参加させていただきましたが、特に元気で健康な人生の先輩方が、賞品が当たるかもしれない抽選チケットを片手に和気藹々と過ごされている姿がとてほほえましく強く印象に残りました。

高齢者の方及びコミュニティ全体が集うイベントも含め、いかに高齢者の方に元気で生き生きとした毎日を送っていただける

かをKeiroは考えながら活動しております。本号ではその取り組みを少しご紹介させていただきます。また、高齢者の生活の質の向上というミッションに貢献して下さるコミュニティパートナーそしてボランティアの皆様へ深く感謝申し上げます。

皆様にとってすばらしい春の訪れとなりますように。

レオナ・ヒラオカ  
Keiro代表兼最高経営責任者 (CEO)

## Photos in the Community:



With James Yamamoto, President of the Seinan Senior Citizens' Club, at their New Year's Party



Traditional odori dance performed at Japanese Community Pioneer Center Shinnenkai



A big smile with Kihei Otani at the Ehime Kenjinkai New Year's Luncheon



Honoring the older adults at VJCC Shinnen Kai and Keiro Kai (photo courtesy: VJCC)

## IYASHI 癒 CARE

The Keiro-Providence Iyashi Care program provides culturally sensitive palliative care to Japanese American and Japanese older adults.

For more information, please call Iyashi Care at 213.873.5791 or visit [www.keiro.org/iyashi-care/](http://www.keiro.org/iyashi-care/).



## Congratulations to Dr. Komatsu

for being honored with the Thousand Crane Endowed Chair. Keiro is honored to be working with you!

Maintaining Social Ties (continued)

## Go For Broke National Education Center

Navigating Southern California freeways and construction zones can prove to be a daunting task for many. As an older adult, undertaking this task to meet up with friends or participate in an event presents an overwhelming and intimidating barrier. As they age, they may decide to avoid the risks and stay at home, gradually becoming more isolated and disconnected from their social circles. According to the AARP Foundation, a lack of reliable transportation is one risk factor that contributes to social isolation. Go For Broke National Education Center is one among many of Keiro's Grants Program recipients that are combatting social isolation. Through the grant, they can now provide a van service for these honorable veterans and their families to participate regularly in programs and events, socializing with others who understand and have shared history and experiences.



## East San Gabriel Valley Japanese Community Center

Alongside their twice-a-week Senior Wellness Program supported by Keiro's grants program to keep older adults active through different social and exercise activities, East San Gabriel Valley Japanese Community Center teaches older adults how to communicate with their children and grandchildren using the latest technology such as FaceTime, text messaging, and email. They may not be together in person with their family, but they can maintain strong social ties with their loved ones.

For more stories about Keiro's Grant recipients, visit [www.keiro.org/grants/](http://www.keiro.org/grants/).



## Little Tokyo Nutrition Services

Little Tokyo Nutrition Services provides nutritious Japanese lunch every weekday to the residents of Little Tokyo Towers as well as homebound older adults living in the area. With declining governmental funding for similar nutrition programs, the Keiro grant provides vital support for the program's operational costs. Providing a place to gather as well as having regular visitors delivering food helps older adults living in urban areas stay connected with their local communities.

## 2017 Grants Program

We are pleased to announce the recipients of the 2017 Grants Program cycle, awarding 41 non-profit organizations who support Japanese American and Japanese older adults in our community in various ways:

- AIA Abide In Awareness
- Alzheimer's Greater Los Angeles
- Asian Traditional Dance & Music Foundation
- Continuing Education for the Nikkei Widowed, Inc.
- East San Gabriel Valley Japanese Community Center
- ESGVJCC Leisure Club
- First Presbyterian Church, Altadena
- Gardena Valley Japanese Cultural Institute
- GIVE Urban Farms
- Go for Broke National Education Center
- Grateful Crane Ensemble
- Japanese American Cultural & Community Center
- Japanese American National Museum
- Japanese American Optimist Club
- Japanese Christian Church Federation of Southern California
- Japanese Community Pioneer Center
- Little Tokyo Nutrition Services
- Little Tokyo Service Center
- Long Beach Japanese Cultural Center/ Long Beach Pioneer Project
- Los Angeles Holiness Church
- Los Angeles Homba Hongwanji Buddhist Temple - Buddhist Women's Association
- Los Angeles Men's Glee Club
- Martial Arts History Museum Inc.
- Mission Valley Free Methodist Church
- Newport Beach Higashi Honganji Buddhist Temple
- Nikkei Senior Gardens
- Okinawa Association of America
- OPICA Adult Day Care Center Inc.
- Orange County Buddhist Church
- Orange County Friendship Choir
- Orange County Japanese American Association
- Pacific Theatre Production Corp.
- Pasadena Nikkei Seniors
- Sakura Chorus
- San Fernando Valley Hongwanji Buddhist Temple
- San Fernando Valley Japanese American Community Center
- Seinan Senior Citizens' Club
- South Bay Singers
- Venice Hongwanji Buddhist Temple
- West Covina Christian Church
- Zenshuji Soto Mission

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### Upcoming Events:

**May 12, 2018**  
Keiro Caregiver Conference at  
Orange County Buddhist Church

**September 16, 2018**  
Keiro and Japanese American  
Cultural & Community Center's  
Keiro no Hi Celebration in  
Little Tokyo

**SEE YOU THERE!**