

# Keiro | Connect



## *Stronger Together:* *Collaboration in the Community*



# Welcome to Keiro Connect: Fall 2021 Edition!

Last month, Keiro celebrated our 60th anniversary—our *kanreki*. This milestone year commemorated six decades of innovation and high-quality care for older adults in Our Community. It was also our opportunity to share Keiro’s vision on how aging will continue to evolve, impacting those we serve. As we look toward the future of aging, one thing remains the same—the necessity to partner and collaborate with others.

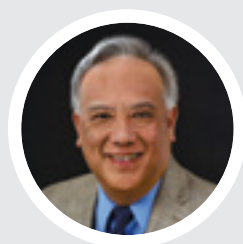
Keiro and the Japanese American community would not be what we are today without working together. After these tumultuous two years, we have learned that collaboration continues to be essential for our existence as a community, especially when serving and supporting older adults. Now that things are starting to return “back to normal,” it is the time to find common ground and collaborate. After all, we are stronger together!

In this issue of *Keiro Connect*, we highlight our long-standing relationships with other community groups working collectively to improve the lives of older adults and caregivers wherever they call home.

It takes a community to care for older adults, and we thank you for your partnership and ongoing support!



Gene S. Kanamori  
President & CEO



先日、Keiroは還暦を迎え、60年の革新的な歩みと高齢者への高い質のケアの提供をバーチャルで振り返りました。また同時に今後もニーズと共に変化し、高齢化に順応していくKeiroのビジョンを共有させていただく機会でもありました。高齢化の未来を見据える時、必ず必要になるのが、周りの方々との協力・連携です。

Keiroと日系コミュニティは協力・連携無しでは今日に至ることはなかったと言っても過言ではありません。特にこのパンデミックの二年はその大きさを痛切に感じる機会でもありました。高齢者へのサービス提供、コミュニティの存続は一緒に協力しあうことで成し遂げるのだと感じます。再び平常に戻り始めるにあたり共有、協力が欠かせません。一緒に頑張る方が強くなれるのです。

今回は長年続く様々なコミュニティ団体とのパートナーシップや連携、協力のもとに実現している、様々なプロジェクトを掲載させていただきました。高齢者への支援はコミュニティが一体となって協力しなければ実現できません。いつもご支援いただきありがとうございます。

ジーン・カナモリ  
代表兼CEO

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## Thank you for joining us for our 60<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Celebration!

We enjoyed looking back at our history of evolution, innovation, care, and forward-thinking vision with you and our special guests. We look forward to what the future has in store for Our Community! To view the full 60<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Celebration video program, visit [keiro.org/60](http://keiro.org/60).



## Community Building at the Keiro no Hi Festival

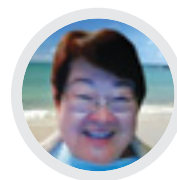
Keiro and Japanese American Cultural & Community Center (JACCC) proudly presented their fourth annual Keiro no Hi Festival, virtually, on Saturday, September 18, 2021. This event brought Our Community together through an exciting online video premiere, the fine arts showcase, bento pick up at community centers, and special gift packages. Here are a few voices from community members about the event!



### Jolyn Brookes

Board of Directors, Venice Japanese Community Center

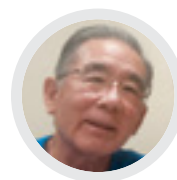
*“The Keiro no Hi Festival was a wonderful way for the community to unite even though we can’t be together physically. In times where we really have to help our neighbors, there is no greater example than something like this. I think we make a much more powerful, stronger group when we work together. The VJCC would love to continue working together with Keiro. It has been a really great experience from top to bottom and we really can’t wait to do it again.”*



### Chisato Kanagi

Keiro no Hi Festival Participant

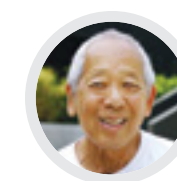
*“The handy gift bag was filled with useful and thoughtful items and will be a reminder of Keiro throughout the year! The festival was enjoyable to watch from the comfort of our home. What I enjoyed the most was that the whole program was memorable and uplifting, and it emphasized our shared culture and connection to each other and the community no matter our age!”*



### Roy Onishi

Keiro no Hi Festival Participant

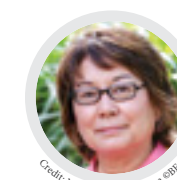
*“While it was nice to be able to watch the Keiro No Hi program at home, I must admit it just wasn’t the same as being at the festival in person. The most enjoyable part of the program was seeing the various artistic displays that the seniors created. Thank you for providing us seniors with all the activities you do.”*



### Art Ishii

Keiro no Hi Festival Presenter, Matsubayashi-Ryu Karate-Do of Little Tokyo

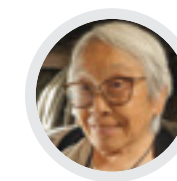
*“Partnerships and collaboration within our community are necessary to complement the skill sets and services that each group brings to the table. While one group specializes in certain areas of service, they may need to cooperate with others to fully serve the needs of our senior community. As a senior myself, I’m hoping that my presence adds credibility to the message of well-being, exercise, awareness, martial arts, and cultural appreciation in our unique Nikkei community.”*



### Patricia M. Wyatt

President & CEO, JACCC

*“It’s with great excitement that JACCC joins Keiro for the fourth annual Keiro no Hi Festival! We know that the vitality and wisdom of older adults are such a special part of what makes culture and community come alive at JACCC. I want to thank Keiro for partnering with us to bring you a special program.”*



### Margaret Zumwinkle

Arts Showcase Participant

*“I felt honored to be included in the Arts Showcase and have my work displayed. During this pandemic period, I’ve been experimenting with collage materials and pens and paint. To be allowed to share our work is a good comfortable feeling of community, and we enjoyed watching the presentations too!”*

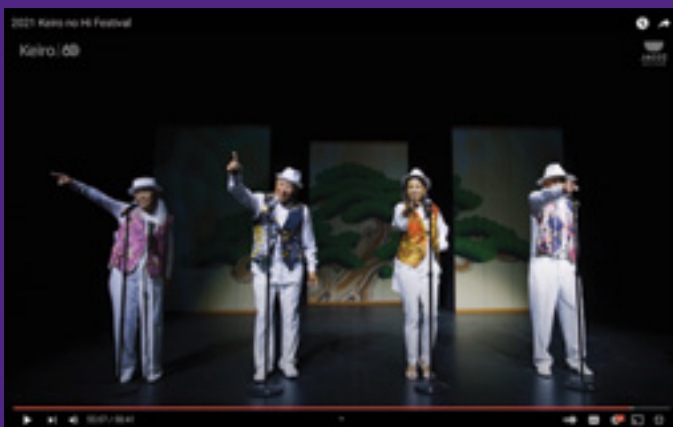
For the full article, visit [keiro.org/news](http://keiro.org/news).



## Fine Arts Showcase

Theme: Celebration

In honor of Keiro no Hi, we hosted the second annual Fine Arts Showcase! We invited everyone in Our Community, age 60 and above, to create and express their talent through different forms of art. Enjoy their artwork!



To watch the Keiro no Hi Festival program, visit [keiro.org/knh](http://keiro.org/knh).



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My dad was an engineer, craftsman, woodworker, and handyman. He passed away in October 2020 at the age of 94. My brother and I have been going through the garage workshop, and put together well-used pieces with my dad's high school senior pictures. It's a tribute to his creative "maker" ethic.

- Marian Kobata Sunabe



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We lost my father in July 2020. My mother and father were married for over 60 years. To fill that void to keep her busy, we took her to ikebana class at VJCC. Although my mother suffers from mild dementia, she looks forward to classes, and we all enjoy having the beautiful arrangements in the house.

- Tokimi Okamura's Daughter

My life has been busy and hectic. Therefore, I decided to celebrate the fact that I will be spending more quiet and peaceful moments in my later life.

- Grace Mayeda



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Pictured is Kozue Yamamoto with a cross-stitch of a wedding announcement for her granddaughter's wedding made when she was 90 years old. She has been an avid cross-stitch enthusiast since her retirement.

- Kozue Yamamoto's Daughter



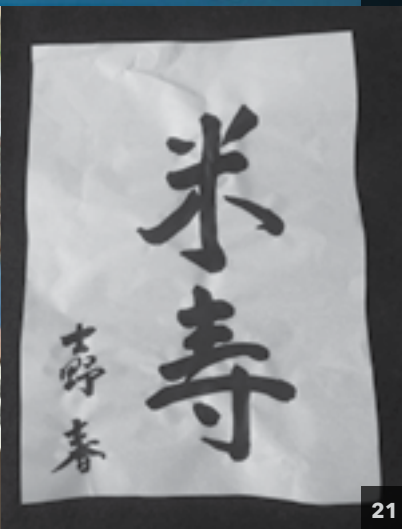
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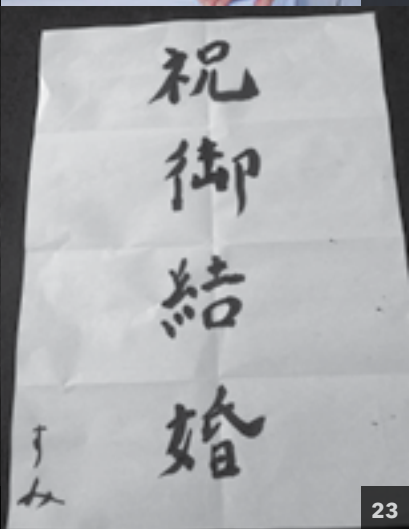
Sakura Gardens Calligraphy Class



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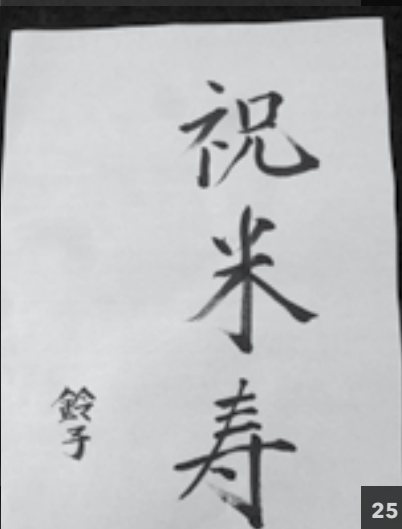
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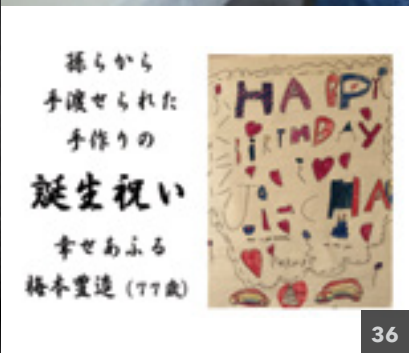
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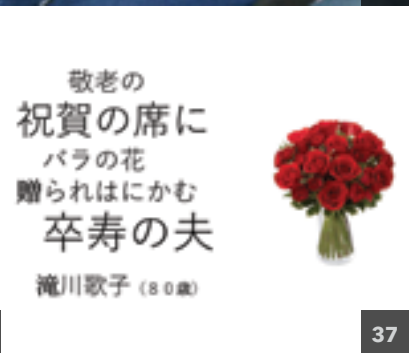
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Artists:

- Alice Hirota (79)
- Marian Kobata Sunabe (62)
- Setsuko Hayashi (85)
- Karl Tani (81)
- Keiko Asada (73)
- Yoko O'Malley (81)
- Margaret Zumwinkle (91)
- Wendy Lew Toda (61)
- Helen Fukuhara (73)
- Ralph Ichikawa (85)
- Rick Osaka (67)
- Ritsuko Sono (60)
- Carol Miura (83)
- Tsutako Anne Isomoto (99)
- Tokimi Okamura (87)
- Grace Mayeda (86)
- Yoko Maruta & Kei-Ai Craft Volunteer Hanadan
- Yosh Nakamura (96)
- Virginia Suzuki (88)
- Kozue Yamamoto (95)

Sakura Gardens Calligraphy Class

- Haru Shino (94)
- Sally Toshiko Yoshikawa (97)
- Sumi Takahashi (83)
- Sumiko Takase (84)
- Suzuko Alimento (89)
- Suzuko Watkins (91)
- Takako Taenaka (82)

Sakura Gardens Ceramics Class

- Violet Kuroki (86)
- Tomiyo Hatago (83)
- Mas Itano (89)
- Ben Tsuchida (90)
- Yoshi Komaki (100)
- Satoko Komaki (92)

Shikinami Tanka Team

- Kimiko Hasegawa (88)
- Michiko Matsunaga (73)
- Toyozo Umemoto (77)
- Utako Takigawa (80)
- Yuko Hashimoto (60)

To view all the artists' titles and artwork in detail, please visit [keiro.org/arts-showcase](http://keiro.org/arts-showcase).



## The Importance of Mental Health Support

Mental health support can come in many forms. Counseling services and medication are the most common, but other types of support services can ease symptoms as well. As part of the Keiro-Little Tokyo Service Center Partnership Initiative, Keiro subsidizes funding for LTSC's critically needed mental health services for Japanese American older adults who have limited financial resources.

Sakura, a LTSC client, shared her experience of how mental health counseling and other services helped her manage several serious health issues.

In 2017, Sakura was diagnosed with stage IV cancer, which had spread to her lymph nodes and her bones. Eventually, Sakura went into remission, but she continued to face effects from the cancer treatment. Three years after her diagnosis, she became paralyzed in the lower half of her body due to the radiotherapy treatment.

As she was finishing cancer treatment, Sakura began experiencing anxiety, particularly around her fear of death. Her symptoms seemed to worsen daily, and she developed a severe anxiety disorder in 2018. Around that time, Sakura learned about LTSC's mental health counseling services.

"I had no hesitation. It was such an incredible help to be able to speak to someone in Japanese." Ever since then, Sakura has been working with an LTSC social worker, Namiko Chinen, to find strategies to resolve her anxiety through psychotherapy.

This ongoing therapy service has been invaluable to Sakura, as her journey with cancer brought other challenges for her, including pain arising from postoperative syndrome and the cost she incurred from emergency hospitalizations. While it has been incredibly daunting, Sakura's strength has helped her face these challenges, one by one, with support from multiple programs offered by Keiro and LTSC. So far, she has received support from Keiro's Iyashi Care program, along with LTSC's client assistance fund and the Little Tokyo Eats program.

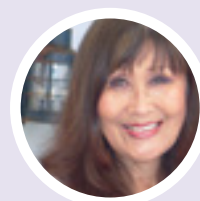
Sakura believes that mental health is just as important as physical health, and people should not be afraid to accept help. "It feels as if she [Namiko] held my hand tightly and pulled me up from the edge of a cliff. I have been helped in so many ways by counseling, social services, and the support of Iyashi Care. To those who are doubtful about mental health counseling or other support services, it's worth giving it a try."

For the full article, visit [keiro.org/news](https://keiro.org/news).  
この記事の日本語版は[keiro.org/jp/news](https://keiro.org/jp/news)よりご覧ください。



Photos Courtesy of Long Beach Japanese Cultural Center.

## Connection and Resilience Through the Pandemic



By: Carolyn Yano  
Program Volunteer,  
Long Beach Japanese  
Cultural Center

The quarantine and the closing of the Long Beach Japanese Cultural Center — imposed by the pandemic in 2020 — resulted in a temporary suspension of our center-based senior meal, social/recreation program. Three months into our Keiro-funded grant year and the outset of the pandemic, we made the decision to utilize all funds to bring meals to our members' homes. We negotiated with several Japanese restaurants to prepare and begin deliveries in April 2020. Fiscal support from the Keiro grant enabled us to actually expand our services to twice weekly deliveries, each week of the month.

*"We were in awe of the spirit and resilience of our senior participants; their concern for others' needs before their own — despite the isolation they were experiencing and the ever-present health risks."*

We faced additional challenges such as rebuilding social connections with modifications, maintaining personal interactions, and providing overall support without in-person contact and being able to utilize social media or virtual assists. Each of our eight volunteers was assigned a number of older adults to call weekly. We began to send out handwritten birthday and special occasion cards to observe their special events; created COVID-19 kits and arranged for delivery with their meals; created an illustrated exercise manual in English and Japanese — based partly on Keiro's fall prevention class and AARP exercises; and have begun to publish a quarterly newsletter to disseminate information, update, and further enhance our communication within the group.

We were in awe of the spirit and resilience of our senior participants; their concern for others' needs before their own — despite the isolation they were experiencing and the ever-present health risks. We hope that our support contributed to keeping up their morale, and assisted them in coping as well.

The success and continuity of our meal delivery program is the result of the commitment and dedication of eight volunteers. The pandemic has required that we adapt and modify; however, it has also had the positive effect of strengthening our resolve to serve those community residents who may be most vulnerable. It is inspiring to observe all the Japanese American churches and organizations rise to the challenge of overcoming the social isolation and limitations imposed by the pandemic — in the spirit of community unity and service.

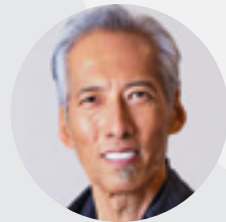
For the full article, visit [keiro.org/news](https://keiro.org/news).



# IYASHI CARE

For more information about Iyashi Care, contact us at

213.873.5791  
[programs@keiro.org](mailto:programs@keiro.org)



*"The person is not just a collection of medical diagnoses. It's not just their body. They have emotions, feelings, and their wellbeing."*

- DR. GLEN KOMATSU

## Iyashi Care Partnership: Continuing the Legacy of Whole Person Care

Keiro's Iyashi Care program, a community-based palliative care partnership with Providence, first launched in fall 2017. However, the program's inception goes back to a small social gathering, where Dr. Glen Komatsu, a nationally-renowned palliative care physician, approached Keiro's leadership.

Iyashi Care emphasizes Keiro and Providence's shared vision of whole person care, a concept that focuses on the preferences and values of each patient and their loved ones. Dr. Komatsu explained, "The person is not just a collection of medical diagnoses. They have emotions, feelings, and their wellbeing."

This is a familiar concept to Keiro as well. At the former facilities, each resident was treated with this type of care in mind. Understanding that quality of life encompasses physical, emotional, social, and spiritual wellbeing, Keiro sought to provide that through efforts like consistent assignment of caregivers and culturally-sensitive activities and food. And as Keiro shifted from facility-based to community-based care, the legacy of peace-of-mind and the emphasis on whole person care for older adults live on through unique programs like Iyashi Care.

Iyashi Care is a partnership between a community organization and a health care system. Partnerships like these are on the rise around the United States, with research and case studies noting that this type of collaboration can extend an organization's

reach and increase its service capacity beyond what a single organization could do alone. The Association of State and Territorial Health Officials report shares, "Community partnerships allow health systems to create connections with under-resourced populations who may not be engaged with the health system."

Keiro and Providence each bring unique contributions to the partnership, resulting in a program that serves older adults aging at home and in their local communities. Providence, with their extensive knowledge and leadership in palliative care, brought together a culturally competent team that serves both Japanese and English-speaking members of the community. Keiro, with its 60-year history of serving the Japanese American community, provides education, community outreach, and funding.

Since 2017, Iyashi Care has provided whole person care and peace-of-mind to hundreds of older adults facing serious illness and their families, wherever they call home. "The need for Iyashi Care is only going to grow as the community ages," said Dr. Komatsu. "We are extremely grateful for Keiro's trust and confidence in us to build this program together."

#### Sources:

The Association of State and Territorial Health Officials (2020). Collaborations Between Health Systems and Community-Based Organizations. Retrieved from: <https://astho.org/ASTHOREports/Collaborations-Between-Health-Systems-Community-Based-Organizations/01-31-20/>



## Keiro Superstar: Yae Aihara (95)

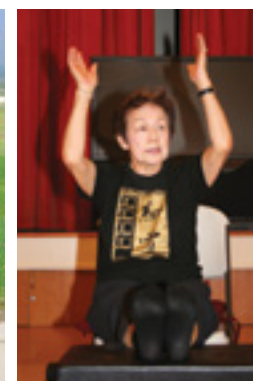
Keiro Superstar Yae Aihara is a three-time skydiver, a former museum docent, and a proud great-grandmother. At 95 years old, she shared with us her life experiences and views on aging that continue to make each day fulfilling.

For Yae, a good attitude and a healthy lifestyle have been key to maintaining a superstar quality of life. Before the pandemic, Yae led exercise classes for close to 50 years, and also brought these classes to Keiro's former facilities.

Yae enhances her quality of life by keeping up with a positive mindset. She said, "Essentially, I'm a happy person. 'Never think negative,' that's been my motto."

Yae continues to seek out new adventures as she has grown older. She decided to go skydiving on her 80th, 85th, and 90th birthdays. At 95, Yae says she doesn't plan to make any more skydiving trips. However, she has other important goals to focus on. "I want to stay healthy," she shared. "I also want to live today—and each day—to the fullest."

For the full article, visit [keiro.org/news](https://keiro.org/news).



## What Should I Keep in Mind if I am Assisting or Want to Assist a Friend or Neighbor?

Many of us provide support to older friends and neighbors, some of whom may live alone or don't have family around. Though being a part of someone's support network provides invaluable assistance, without legal designation and documentation, there are some limits on how you can help.

### Things you cannot do without legal designation:

- Manage their finances or make payments using their funds on their behalf
- Be privy to their medical condition, if they are admitted to a hospital or other health care facility
- Make medical, legal, or financial decisions on their behalf

### However, you can still do many things to help your friends such as:

- Running errands for them (it is preferable that they pay for the items or services)
- Helping with technology (setting up email, mobile devices, etc.)
- Check-in regularly
- Pick up medication
- Drive them to appointments
- Interpretation and translation when appropriate

Having official documentation is important. Encourage your friend or neighbor to ensure their legal, financial, and medical documents are in order.

For the full resources, visit [keiro.org/resources](https://keiro.org/resources) under "Resources for a Friend Living Alone."

Thank you to Little Tokyo Service Center, Staci Toji, Esq., and Iyashi Care for their assistance with these articles.



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## UPCOMING EVENTS:

**Wednesday, December 15, 2021**  
5:30-6:30 p.m. PST

### SPEAKER SERIES:

*The Road Yet Taken: Disrupting Aging Through Travel*

Virtual Webinar

**March 2022**

## 2022 KEIRO CAREGIVER CONFERENCE

Series of Webinars with Keynote Presentation

For more information on Keiro's upcoming events, visit [keiro.org/events](http://keiro.org/events).

## Answer the Survey on Arthritis for a Cause!

Approximately 40% of Japanese (all ages) in California have arthritis. Keiro is partnering with the Arthritis Foundation and we need your help collecting valuable data.

Your participation in this survey, **regardless of age or whether you have arthritis currently or not**, will lead to more effective care for adults living with arthritis.

SURVEY LINK:

<https://qrco.de/Keiro>



Your survey will solely be used by the Arthritis Foundation and arthritis health care providers to inform improvements in many services received by the arthritis community.