

SUMMER 2025

KeiroConnect

We
Thrive
Together





Beverly Ito

Beverly Ito
President & CEO

Welcome!

A MESSAGE FROM KEIRO PRESIDENT & CEO

Nat King Cole famously sang, “Roll out those lazy, hazy, crazy days of summer...” However, here at Keiro, there is no time to rest as we eagerly immerse ourselves in building upon our legacy of enhancing the quality of life for older adults and caregivers in Our Community. Our team has been diligently working on the ongoing development of our first board and care home while continuing to collaborate with organizations to create a strong community where we can thrive together. The past few months have been a season of vibrant energy, reaffirming our mission and steady progress.

This year, we have been deeply committed to increasing our presence in the community by personally engaging with our constituents to provide essential resources, funding, and programs, particularly for those affected by the wildfires earlier this year. In everything we do, we aim to improve the aging experience and celebrate the abundant joy we can achieve by uplifting one another. As you read this edition of KeiroConnect, I hope our impact inspires you to join us in creating a healthier community for everyone.

Keiro Board of Directors

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Gerald Iseda, MBA
Teiji Kawana, Esq.
Chris Komai
Yukari Roberts
Ron Takasugi
Susan Uchiyama
Beverly Ito, President & CEO

ナット・キング・コールが「夏ののんびり、ぼんやり、クレイジーな日々を...」と歌ったように、今は休息の季節かもしれません。しかしKeiroは今、コミュニティの高齢者や介護者の方々の生活の質をより高めるため、日々尽力しています。共に暮らし、支え合う強いコミュニティを築くために、さまざまな団体との連携を継続する一方で、現在、私たちのチームは、初のボード&ケアホームの開設に向けた準備を着実に進めています。この数か月は、まさに活気に満ちた前進の季節でした。Keiroのミッションを改めて胸に刻みながら、確かな歩みを続けています。

今年、私たちはこれまで以上に、コミュニティの皆さまと直接かかわることに力を注いできました。年初の山火事で被害を受けた方々をはじめ、支援を必要とされている皆さまに、必要な情報やリソース、そしてプログラムをお届けできるよう努めてまいりました。私たちのすべての活動の根底にあるのは、高齢者の皆さまがより前向きに、そして豊かに人生を歩んでいけるように、という強い思いです。互いに支え合い、励まし合う中で生まれる喜びを、皆さまと共に分かち合っていけることを心より願っております。この『Keiroコネクト』を通じて、私たちの取り組みが少しでも皆さまの心に届き、誰もが安心して暮らせる、より健康的なコミュニティづくりにご一緒いただけたら幸いです。

ベバリ・イトウ
Keiro代表兼CEO



GENKI LIVING

— WORKSHOPS —

On May 1, 2025, Keiro hosted *Genki Living Workshops: Walking* at the Los Angeles County Arboretum and Botanic Gardens, led by Beverly Ito, president and CEO of Keiro. Walking is a popular stress-relieving activity for many people, and the goal of this workshop was to explore how to make walking a fun, social, and sustainable part of your routine.

The event started with a breakfast for attendees to mingle with each other, followed by a group exercise and stretch. There were three different routes led by Keiro staff: a leisurely 1-mile stroll, a moderate 2-mile walk around the gardens, and a fast-paced 3-mile trek touring the whole arboretum. Attendees were able to explore the arboretum with its abundance of peacocks and foliage while making connections with one another along the route. Here are a few voices of participants:



Deena

I participated because it was a different event for Keiro. I thought walking around the arboretum was a nice opportunity to see it again in the daytime. I did the two-mile walk, and Makoto led us through the gardens. I think one of the nicest things [about the workshop] is that you connect with different people and have the opportunity to talk and meet with people the whole time. From the beginning, when we just gathered for some coffee and refreshments, to even during the walk. It's really nice that Keiro put this together to bring different people from different parts of Los Angeles County.



Jonathan

[This walking workshop] was very enjoyable! The theme was “*genki*,” and so this event was definitely *genki*.

My favorite part was seeing the baby owl in the tree. Overall, it was a cool day, and the walk was really nice. I got to meet a lot of new people, some that live far from me and even some that are pretty close. It was nice to meet everyone and talk to them on the walk. I enjoyed the weather and getting some exercise in at the same time.



Linda & Susie

Susie: It is my first time here at the arboretum, and I really enjoyed the walk here. It was very peaceful.

Linda: The weather was great, and the Keiro staff was wonderful. We enjoyed it.

Susie: We loved the detours, and we ended up learning about seeds from one of the arboretum staff, so that was a pleasant surprise.



Upcoming Genki Living Workshops

Golf - Thursday, June 26, 2025 | Pasadena
Yoga - Tuesday, July 22, 2025 | Los Angeles

Registration is required to attend.

This walking workshop was the first of three installments in the *Genki Living Workshops* series. To learn more and view photos, visit keiro.org/glw.

New Leadership Announced for Keiro's Board and Care Home

One of the many milestones towards the development of Keiro's board and care home is to establish strong leadership to help navigate the complexities of regulatory requirements, project management, and building a successful business plan. As Keiro continues to make steady progress on renovations and licensing, we are pleased to announce that Desiree Kitagawa has joined the team as the Executive Director of the board and care, which has been named Keiro Kikyo Home.

Desiree has extensive experience in aging services and a passion for senior living. She worked in various roles at Nikkei Senior Gardens for 15 years, such as Memory Care Supervisor, Director of Life Enrichment, and Associate Executive Director, eventually serving as the Executive Director for three years. Most recently, Desiree was the Executive Director at an assisted living facility in the South Bay.

Desiree shared, "I look forward to helping carve a new path for future board and care homes that support our seniors and the community. Keiro Kikyo Home will be a place of compassion, offering person-centered care grounded in dignity and respect where individuals can enjoy the highest quality of life. Additionally, we aim to comfort families by providing dependable, heartfelt care."

Keiro Kikyo Home has elected its own Board of Directors to provide governance oversight and support for the board and care home. These board members, each serving on a voluntary basis, include Lynn Miyamoto as the Board Chair, Karl Kim, Yoshie LeSieur, Yukari Roberts, Margaret Shimada, Ron Takasugi, and Beverly Ito. These members have diverse and extensive backgrounds in the aging and senior living industries, a commitment to expanding upon Keiro's existing support-based initiatives, and expertise across fields that blend professional experience with passion for the community.

Creating a Home

Desiree has been working with the Board of Directors on redefining what the board and care experience will be at Keiro Kikyo Home. "Senior living is always evolving. Our goal is to continue adapting to meet the changing needs of our residents and family members, while ensuring we create a culturally sensitive environment that honors Japanese traditions and values in everyday life at home," she said.



Keiro Kikyo Home

At this stage, the board and care licensing application has been submitted to the Department of Social Services, Community Care Licensing. Meanwhile, Desiree has been working with an architect and the City of Torrance to obtain building and safety clearance permits for the planned renovations.

What's Next?

Contractor proposals have been reviewed, and once the necessary permits are obtained, renovations can begin. As the status of the licensing application and renovations are monitored, a more defined timeline for accepting applications for admission to Keiro Kikyo Home will be established. With the completion of each milestone on the journey towards the grand opening, Desiree hopes that the community feels supported, and she is looking forward to creating a warm and welcoming home to fit the unique needs and preferences of the residents.

"We have been working hard with the Keiro team to strategize what we will need moving forward and ensure that in everything we do, we are honoring Keiro's founders and mission," Desiree shared.

Keiro is committed to providing Our Community with updates as we achieve significant milestones in the development of Keiro Kikyo Home. Like many in Our Community, we are looking forward to announcing the grand opening and welcoming our first residents. Stay connected with Keiro to learn more about our programs and resources to promote aging with confidence and living with vitality.

For more information, email contact@keiro.org.

こちらの記事の日本語版は keiro.org/jp/news よりご覧ください。

A Decade of Impact: The Keiro Grants Program Through the Years

Community centers, churches, temples, performing arts groups, sports leagues, and others make up the core infrastructure of Our Community. As the Japanese American and Japanese population continues to spread across Southern California, these organizations provide an invaluable connection to and a sense of purpose for the community.

Since its inception in 2016, the Keiro Grants Program has distributed over \$3 million in funding to more than 80 organizations, to support programs, services, and projects benefiting older adults and caregivers. The organizations who have received the grants have often innovated and expanded their programs for older adults throughout the years. Here are a few examples of what they accomplished with the support of the Keiro Grants Program:

- In-person meal programs have grown from only serving lunch to providing activities, exercise, and entertainment before and/or after the meal.
- Exercise programs now include pickleball, hiking, and other activities popular among the Baby Boomer generation.
- Improved building spaces, such as bathrooms, for the safety of older adults with mobility challenges and other limitations.

- Pivoting to home-delivered meals and care packages during the COVID-19 pandemic. Although most organizations have gone back to in-person meal programs, the need for delivering meals to homebound older adults is still relevant.
- Support for Japanese choir and performing arts groups, whose members practice weekly and are mostly older adults.
- Encouraging younger volunteers to help with senior programs and activities, fostering intergenerational connection.
- Increased number of social and support programs for specific groups within the community, such as widows/widowers, Vietnam War veterans, and farmers.

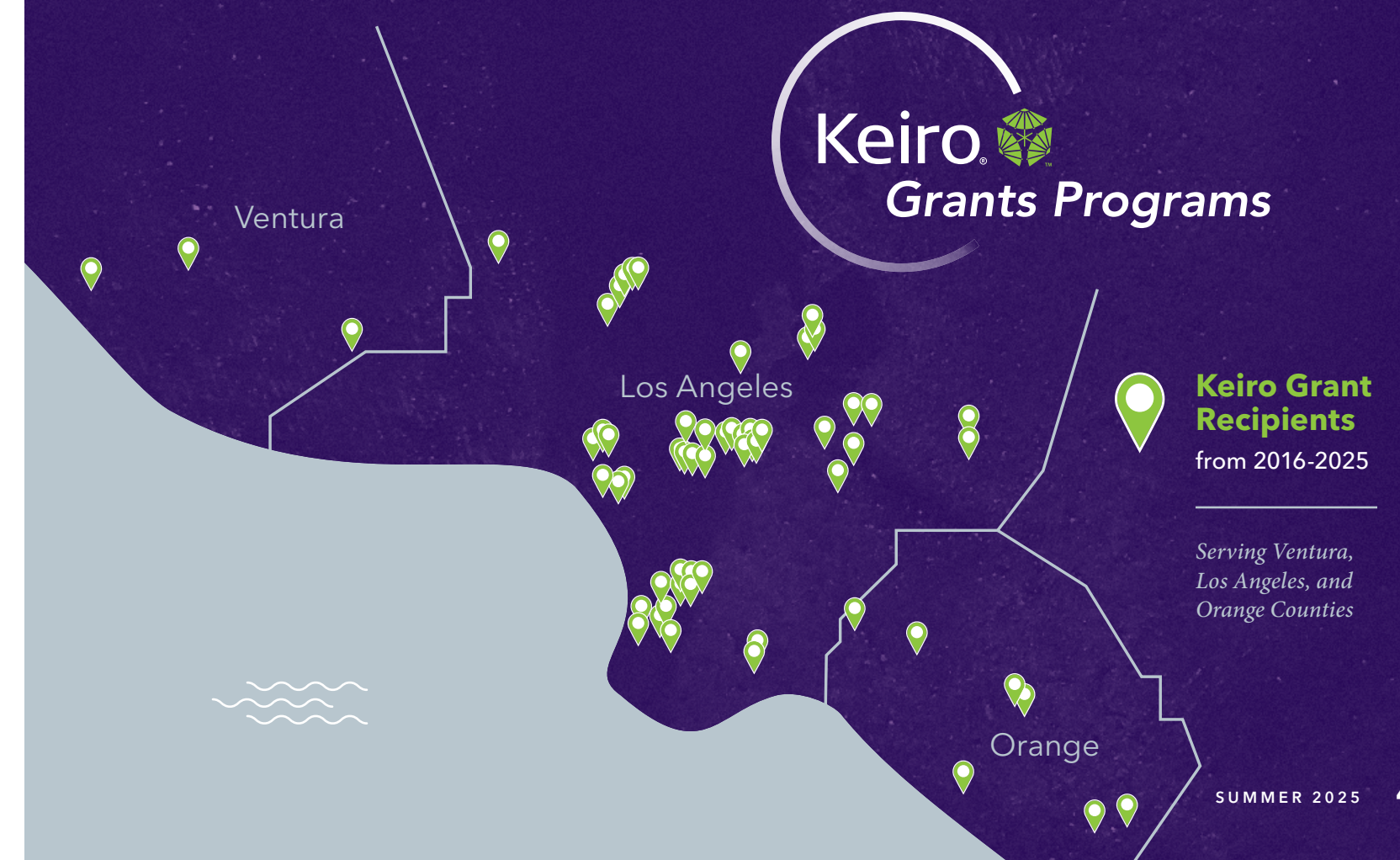
The regular schedule and social nature of these grant-funded programs are key to decreasing social isolation and loneliness among older adults. To some, a bento may just be food. However, for others, it is much more than that — it is a nutritious meal, a chance to see old friends and make new ones, an opportunity to get outside their home, and something to look forward to.

As Keiro opens the 10th cycle of its Grants Program, we look forward to continuing support of the great work Our Community does in enhancing the quality of life for both older adults and their loved ones through these grants and beyond.

The 2026 Keiro Grants Program Cycle is open!

For more information about how to apply and upcoming workshops, visit keiro.org/grants.

Application Deadline: Friday, August 1, 2025



**Keiro Grant
Recipients**
from 2016-2025

*Serving Ventura,
Los Angeles, and
Orange Counties*

From Rubble to Renewal

The Power of Community



On Tuesday, January 7, 2025, many residents of Altadena and Pasadena received a fire alert to evacuate. Families scrambled to grab what they could as they fled into the night, hoping that they could come back to their homes. The Eaton Fire raged for 24 days and burned over 14,000 acres, making it one of the deadliest fires in California history, according to the New York Times. Hundreds of homes were either burned down or damaged by the fires, and many families were displaced.

It was easy to see the flames and think of only devastation. However, the Pasadena and Altadena Japanese American and Japanese communities banded together and showed the strength of a community when tragedy strikes.

It All Started with a Call

Almost immediately after the fires started, June, from Pasadena Japanese Cultural Institute (PJCI), received a call from community activist, Mike, to discuss updates and ways to help. Following a long discussion, they decided to immediately provide meals to those affected by the fires. June then called Dorothy, from First Presbyterian Church Altadena (FPCA), and Shelley, from Pasadena Buddhist Temple (PBT), to join forces and start a meal program.

Little Tokyo Strong

Several local restaurants and organizations, such as the Japanese American Cultural & Community Center (JACCC), Yama Seafood, Azay, and Far Bar, opened up their kitchens and/or donated meals. June, Shelley, and Dorothy organized a list of people who were displaced and contacted them about the meal program and donated items.

“At the beginning, [one of the fire victims] was sobbing when he received the meals and some donated goods because he was not only in mourning, but also so grateful to have this kind of support. It made you realize that this was needed for those who lost everything,” Dorothy said.

Supporting the Future

Initially, the Pasadena and Altadena organizations planned to keep the meal program going until March 2025. However, five months

“We already knew each other before the fires since our members overlap, so it was natural for us to work together. If anything, this experience has made our relationship stronger.”

- June

after the fire, many residents were still displaced and living with their loved ones or moving from one hotel to another. Many older adults are wondering if they should rebuild their homes, which could take years, or sell the land and move elsewhere.

Since the fires began in January, Keiro had conversations with the Pasadena and Altadena organizations and Little Tokyo Service Center (LTSC) on ways to support impacted older adults and their families. After ongoing discussion, Keiro established a Disaster Recovery Fund supporting:

- FPCA, PBT, and Pasadena Nikkei Seniors (PNS) as they collaborate to provide meals, activities, educational workshops, and other opportunities to connect for older adults and their loved ones.
- LTSC to provide mental health counseling, case management, and other client assistance to those impacted by the wildfires.

At the end of May 2025, FPCA, PBT, and PNS co-hosted a luncheon at PJCI, supported in part by the Disaster Recovery Fund. The event featured The Grateful Crane Ensemble and brought together the local community. “The community wanted to do something so people would come together and not worry about the fires. It is for people to have a meal together and listen to great music,” Shelley explained.

Although the recovery period will be long and ongoing, one thing is for certain: the Japanese American and Japanese community is resilient and will look out for one another in times of need.

For the full article, visit keiro.org/news.



What is Social Prescription?

Many factors—including physical, mental, social, and environmental—can impact a person’s health and wellbeing. When an older adult has a serious or chronic illness or other debilitating symptoms, oftentimes non-medical treatments, activities, and social connections can be just as important as medication and clinical therapies.

According to the American Medical Association, social prescribing addresses a patient’s social needs that negatively impact their health. The Iyashi Care team often uses this whole-person approach. They recognize that by understanding what is most important to the patient and their loved ones, they can make recommendations best suited to that person’s needs and to address their goals of care. The team shared some examples of how they have utilized social prescribing:

- Gardening, with modifications to lower fall risk
- Attending grandchildren’s sports games, while managing incontinence
- Regularly volunteering at church, after reliable transportation has been arranged
- Going to a big reunion out of state, with family members knowing how to best support their health issues

Being able to do what older adults enjoy most improves their quality of life, often in ways that medication and clinical therapies alone cannot.

For the list of citations, visit keiro.org/news.

IYASHI 癒 CARE®

For more information about Iyashi Care, contact us at **213.873.5791** or programs@keiro.org.

Upcoming Quality of Life Classes

Discover a range of educational wellness programs designed to enhance the quality of life for older adults through engaging classes, interactive discussions, and expert guest speakers. As we wrap up our focus on the element of security in July, starting in August, we will highlight connectedness. Join us as we hear from voices of the community and make lasting connections.

All classes will be hosted virtually through Zoom. To register, visit keiro.org/qol.

July

How to Properly Title Accounts
Tuesday, July 8, 2025 @ 9:00 a.m.

Financial Planning for Long-Term Care
with US Bank’s Yuji Chao, Hosted by Takeshi Yamada, US Bank Senior Vice President, Wealth Management
Thursday, July 17, 2025 @ 2:00 p.m.

August

Cerebral Power Hour: Brain Games
Thursday, August 28, 2025 @ 11:00 a.m.

September

Deal Me In: Talking About Death
Thursday, September 4, 2025 @ 11:00 a.m.

Finding Home in Our Histories
with the National Japanese American Historical Society
Thursday, September 23, 2025 @ 11:00 a.m.



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Keiro no Hi FESTIVAL

敬老の日フェスティバル

Saturday, September 13, 2025

10:00 a.m. - 3:00 p.m.

Los Angeles Homba Hongwanji Buddhist Temple (Nishi)
815 E 1st St, Los Angeles, CA 90012

Gather with us for live entertainment, activities,
crafts, and food as we celebrate the older adults in
Our Community who continue to inspire us!

Registration opens July 9, 2025.

More information: keiro.org/knh

詳細は: keiro.org/jp-knh



Caregiver Conference

SOUTH BAY

Saturday, October 25, 2025

10:00 a.m. - 2:00 p.m.

Gardena Valley Japanese Cultural Institute
1964 W 162nd St., Gardena, CA 90247

Centered on Building a Strong Care Foundation through
advance care planning, this event will offer valuable
insights, practical strategies, and expert guidance to
empower caregivers to secure not only their loved ones'
futures, but also their own.

Registration opens August 18, 2025.

More information: keiro.org/CC25