



JAPANESE AMERICAN CITIZENS LEAGUE / JACL

Headquarters: 1765 Sutter Street, San Francisco, CA 94115
DC Office: 1828 L Street NW, Suite 802 • Washington, DC • 20036
Phone: (202) 223-1240 • Fax: (202) 296-8082 • E-mail: natdir@jacl.org

PRESS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

CONTACT: Bill Yoshino, JACL Midwest Director

March 12, 2010

midwest@jacl.org

JACL CONNECTS TO COLLEGE STUDENTS

Chicago, IL -- Over the past two weekends, JACL staff presented workshops at two major college conferences on the East Coast. On February 27, Bill Yoshino and JACL Ford Program Fellow Christine Munteanu led a workshop on “Anti-Asian Sentiment” at the 5 College Pan Asian Network Conference at the University of Massachusetts at Amherst. The 5PAN is comprised of Hampshire College, Smith, Mt. Holyoke, Amherst and UMass. Yoshino and Patty Wada presented the same workshop at the East Coast Asian American Student Union Conference (ECAASU) at the University of Pennsylvania the following weekend on March 6.

The workshop titled “When Hate Hits You” covers the history and causes of hate crimes directed at Asian Americans. It draws distinctions between hate crimes and hate incidents and presents real life scenarios where the students take part in determining how to effectively respond. Another portion of the workshop allows students to share personal accounts where they have witnessed or been victimized in a hate related incident. The final segment of the workshop deals with stereotypes, media portrayals and negative perceptions about Asian Americans.

In commenting on various segments of the workshop, one participant responded, “The workshop raised topics I’ve never thought about and incidents I’ve never known about such as Vincent Chin.” Another responded, “I don’t usually hear about incidents or actual crimes that happen in my city or in other cities. It is shocking that it occurs, so learning the basis of what hate crimes are and how to deal with them is useful.”

Among the fifty-plus students attending the two JACL workshop sessions at the ECAASU Conference were nine Philadelphia students from Bodine and Central High School who were intent on learning more about hate crimes in the wake of recurring attacks on Asian American students at South Philadelphia High School. Several of these students invited the JACL to present its workshop at the Philadelphia Immigrants Cultural Conference in April.

In the coming months, the JACL will present workshops at Notre Dame and at the Midwest Asian American Student Union Conference at Ohio State University in April. JACL has also been invited to present workshops at the University of Arizona and Arizona State University in October.

###End###