



JAPANESE AMERICAN CITIZENS LEAGUE

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

PRESS RELEASE

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Contact: Floyd Mori, National Executive Director, JACL

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JACL ANNOUNCES SENATOR AKAKA AS AWARDEE FOR GALA

Washington, D.C. -- The Japanese American Citizens League (JACL), the oldest and largest Asian American civil and human rights organization in the nation, will honor Japanese American veterans at its Third National JACL Gala to be held in Washington, D.C. on Thursday, September 17, 2009. The event will be a Salute to Veterans and will recognize veterans' organizations which have been serving veterans well. An award will also be presented to Senator Daniel K. Akaka, who has been diligently working in the United States Senate for the good of veterans for many years.

Senator Daniel Kahikina Akaka is America's first senator of Native Hawaiian ancestry and the only Chinese American member of the United States Senate. Upon graduation from high school, he served as a civilian worker and then on active duty in the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers from 1943 to 1947. He returned to school after the war, enrolling at the University of Hawaii. He became a teacher and principal in the State of Hawaii. He was elected to the U.S. House of Representatives in 1976 and was appointed to the Senate when Senator Spark Matsunaga passed away. He then won election to the Senate in 1990 and has served in Congress for thirty two years.

Besides being a veteran himself, Senator Akaka has tirelessly served veterans and others for decades. He is Chairman of the Veterans' Affairs Committee and the Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs Subcommittee on Oversight of Government Management of the Federal Workforce and the District of Columbia. He also serves on the Armed Services, Indian Affairs, and Banking, Housing and Urban Affairs Committees.

Senator Akaka and his wife Millie are the parents of four sons and a daughter. They have fourteen grandchildren and ten great-grandchildren. Millie is usually at work in her husband's office.

National Executive Director of the JACL, Floyd Mori, said, "Senator Akaka's dedication to the legacy of veterans is legend. Veterans owe much to the Senator's steadfast efforts to assure good care and keeping for those who gave so much for our liberties, including his support for the Filipino Veterans Equity Act that was recently signed into law."

The Gala will also be commemorating the eightieth anniversary of the founding of the JACL, which was organized in 1929 by Nisei leaders.

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Photo of Senator Akaka taken from his official website.

Other photos are on the website.