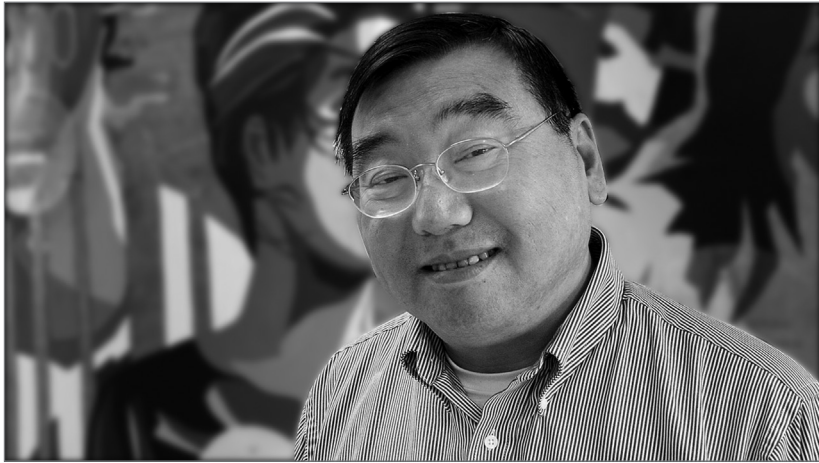


Special Dedication

## In Honor of Don T. Nakanishi (1949 – 2016)

Co-founder and Associate Editor, *AAPI Nexus Journal*



“Whether the Oklahoman all-you-can-eat Chinese buffet owner or an Asian Australian Cabinet Minister, an Issei grandparent in a World War II concentration camp, a fresh-off-the-plane Hmong refugee, a British Desi organizing in Southall, or a Korean Brazilian making a life in Sao Paolo, Don knew that our stories and experiences have the power to augment our perspectives of diversity, advance our ideals of equality, inclusion and justice, and place us in coalitions with scholars, practitioners, activists and students to do everything in our power to move our nations and the world to change. We are grateful his work lives on through the many colleagues, staff and students with whom he worked throughout his career and take comfort in knowing that when an intellectually curious student picks up a copy of *AAPI Nexus* and reads any of his writings that his spirit will continue to spread for generations to come.”

Marsha and Thomas Nakanishi, loving wife and son

“His work influenced and contributed to the rise of Asian American participation in all levels of government and politics in the later part of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. ... He was dedicated, insightful and compassionate, and I will always remember his incredible sense of humor, despite the seriousness of the many issues we had to face. Dr. Nakanishi was a devoted mentor to his students, a stalwart champion for Asian American scholars and activists, and a loving husband and father.”

Congresswoman Judy Chu, from Congressional Record

“Don combined a passionate belief in social justice and community empowerment anchored in his formative years in East L.A. with a masterful political skill as an agent of social change. He was an institutional transformer, fighting within the belly of the beast to expand Asian American Studies and Ethnic Studies within the ivory tower without compromising a commitment to the worn but so appropriate cliché ‘serve the people’. He gave unwavering moral and material support to bridging the gulf between town and gown, to making knowledge accessible to all, and to giving community a voice within the academy.”

Paul Ong, co-founder with Don Nakanishi of *AAPI Nexus Journal*

“I would like to honor Don’s fighter-social justice spirit. An important lesson Don taught me about research is that one of the shortcomings of quantitative analysis is to seek explanations only in relation to the data that were collected via a survey. There is very little attempt made to go beyond the collected data by drawing from other sources of knowledge, such as qualitative, historical, or voices from community leaders, etc., in order to offer fuller, more nuanced explanations. Don’s inclusive approach demonstrated how Asian American Studies is about theory, praxis, storytelling, community, *and* everything else in between.”

Melany De La Cruz-Viesca, Managing Editor of *AAPI Nexus Journal*

“While his life was immersed in public events, what I personally treasured most were the thoughtful, private conversations I had with him. He was a gifted listener. He gave you his undivided attention. He loved learning and knowledge. But he took all those peer-reviewed articles, all those paradigm-shifting concepts, and he brought them alive and made them real in politics, in programs, and in practices for real people. Don changed society one life at a

time, but he did that over and over and over again.”

Lowell Chun-Hoon, co-founder with Don Nakanishi of *Amerasia*

“He challenged theoretical understandings and empirical findings in both traditional American politics and International Relations as to the Asian American community’s multi-faceted political behaviors both in domestic and transnational contexts. Don’s scholarship emphasized the nexus between the ivory tower and community-based research for which the *AAPI Nexus*, which Don helped to establish, is an embodiment of this belief. Don’s legacy will continue to inspire current and future generations of scholars, practitioners, and community members who study and work in the Asian American community.”

James Lai, co-editor with Don Nakanishi of *Asian American Politics: Law, Participation, and Policy*

“Though Don’s scholarly contributions are substantial, he was a masterful change agent/gentle warrior—constantly mobilizing, raising awareness, nurturing movements, creating new intellectual spaces, fighting injustice, and speaking truths. Don sparked and propelled fundraising in ethnic studies, providing perpetual support for key areas of research and study. Even after retirement, Don continued to prod, provoke and encourage those of us still on watch to right wrongs and cultivate an institution that truly valued our diverse backgrounds and views. Don inspired, counseled, supported, challenged, and cared deeply. Our souls have been nourished by his extraordinary friendship.”

M. Belinda Tucker, Vice Provost, UCLA Institute of American Cultures

“A criterion by which something is evaluated—touchstone. Don’s lifelong mission of achieving social justice is reflective of all his personal and professional endeavors. Don once shared with me a bit of guiding advice that has become a daily reminder in my own work. “You can’t be simply a consumer of knowledge, you must also produce knowledge.” In this, and the many lasting friendships he created and nurtured, Don was a singular and prescient leader in Asian American Studies. He remains our touchstone.”

Tritia Toyota, Associate Adjunct Professor in UCLA Departments of Anthropology and Asian American Studies and award-winning broadcast journalist