



## JAPANESE BENEVOLENT SOCIETY OF CALIFORNIA

1765 Sutter Street, 2<sup>nd</sup> Floor

San Francisco, CA 94115

(415) 771-3440

JBENS1300@gmail.com

May 2021

To Members and Supporters of the Japanese Benevolent Society of California (JIKEIKAI) and the Historic Japanese Cemetery in Colma:

As we emerge from a difficult year full of hardships and pain, we extend our gratitude for the sacrifices of the countless heroes who helped get us here. The past year has been a very unsettling time for all of us. We have all had to change the way we live, the way we work, the way we interact. We have lost family, friends, and co-workers. In 2020, we lost one of our most ardent supporters and our President Emeritus, Eddie Moriguchi. Hopefully, with the arrival of the vaccines, we will be able to return to a more "normal" lifestyle.

Fortunately, we have been able to keep the cemetery open. Our caretaker, Mr. Fujita, has been working extra hard to keep the facilities clean and sanitized for the safety of all of our visitors. We have recently installed sanitation stations in the columbarium and the restroom areas. Our Executive Director, Seiko Fujimoto, has been diligently keeping the "office" running despite not having full access to our office and its files or our business phone line as she has been working from home. We had to cancel our annual Memorial Day Service Program last year due to the Covid-19 pandemic and CDC, State and County directives, and had to curtail most services, activities and projects. We appreciate the cooperative efforts of our members and visitors to adhere to the Covid-19 protocols: wearing a mask and maintaining safe distancing, especially in the columbarium. We are all looking forward to trying to normalize our lives in 2021.

2021, marks the 120<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the establishment of the Japanese Cemetery. We have introduced a new website for our organization at <https://www.japanesecemetery.org> and are moving forward with plans to upgrade our computer systems.

We will be hosting a virtual Memorial Day Service Program on May 31, 2021, with the participation of JARF. If you are interested in joining us virtually, please register at <http://bit.ly/JapaneseCemeteryMemorialDayRegistration>. We will post links on our website and on our JARF affiliates' and other Japantown organizations' websites. If you have any questions or need assistance, please call or email us at [JBENS1300@gmail.com](mailto:JBENS1300@gmail.com).

We are launching our eighteenth (18<sup>th</sup>) annual "SONKEI" [RESPECT] Campaign to raise funds to help maintain the Historic Japanese Cemetery at Colma and to keep our offices open. Our last Campaign in 2019 raised \$40,000, which allowed us to cover about 60% of our expenses for 2019. Because of the pandemic, we decided to forego any fundraising in 2020. Our goal this year is to raise \$50,000 for 2020-2021 expenses.

Your generous support is again needed to supplement the income generated from our Endowment Fund, which has suffered because of the current low interest rates. We have minimized our overhead but need to continue to maintain the cemetery and need to make improvements to move forward in our office and file reorganization efforts. We hope you will continue to show your support for the cemetery by making a donation to the Sonkei Campaign.

---ARIGATO GOZAIMASU---

DEAN HEDANI

President, Board of Directors

JAPANESE BENEVOLENT SOCIETY OF CALIFORNIA