

Most Honored Elders



VENERABLE WOMEN. The Asian Reporter Foundation's Most Honored Elders for 2016 are Vicki Nakashima (left) and Marisa Newnam (right). (AR Photos/Eugene Wong)

Vicki Nakashima

Vicki Nakashima, a third-generation Japanese American (*sansei*), was born August 1, 1947 in Spokane, Washington. Her grandfather emigrated from Tottori, Japan around 1900 and her grandmother was one of the first "Picture Brides." Much of Vicki's family was interned during World War II at Minidoka, while her parents were sent to Tule Lake due to her father's activism. Vicki, now retired, worked as the director of multicultural health for the Oregon Department of Human Services. She was an American Leadership Forum Senior Fellow (Class XIII) and has been the recipient of many accolades, including the Portland State University Center for Women, Politics & Policy 2010 Women Leaders of Oregon Award, the Herm Gilliam Spirit Award (2011), the World Arts Foundation Lifetime Achievement Award, and the Vancouver Avenue First Baptist Church Coretta Scott King Award. Vicki has a son, Lloyd, daughter-in-law, Bethany, and a two-year-old grandson, Jalen. Her many volunteer activities include the Partners in Diversity Leadership Council, including serving as its first executive director; the Marylhurst University Board of Trustees; the City of Portland Golf Advisory Committee; the Oregon-Toyama sister-state relationship; and the Western States Golf Association. She is an avid golfer and often officiates golf tournaments for youth and adults. She also enjoys shopping at thrift stores and being an extra on film sets for movies and television.

Marisa Newnam

Marisa Newnam was born November 25, 1944 in Manila, the Philippines to Dr. Florencio and Pacifica Price Barrios. She earned an Associates in Arts degree from Maryknoll College, then pursued a bachelor's degree in nursing from the University of Santo Tomas, graduating in 1966. After graduation, Marisa served in the United States Air Force as a lieutenant in the Nurse Corps. She was assigned to Brookley Air Force Base in Mobile, Alabama, where she met her future husband, the dashing Lt. Albert Newnam. In 1968 they were assigned to Clark Air Force Base in the Philippines where Marisa resigned her commission when she became pregnant with their first child. The family later returned to the U.S. and Marisa pursued her career as a nurse. Before her retirement in 2000, Marisa worked at several facilities, including Houston Hospital Southwest, the Klamath Falls Family Practice Clinic, and Kaiser Permanente in Salem. She and her husband have three children, Philip, Christina, and MaryAnn, and five grandchildren, Stryder, Emory, Malia, Anchor, and Ari. She currently volunteers extensively with the Salem Multicultural Institute, where she is a board member and cultural advisor, and is a great contributor to its World Beat Festival. In addition, she serves as an individual trustee for the Council of Filipino American Associations, is a member of the Filipino American National Historical Society, and a board member for the Marion Cultural Development Corporation. In her spare time, Marisa enjoys reading, travelling, dancing, teaching Philippine folk dances, and participating in cultural outreach.

Exemplary Community Volunteers

Filipino-American Association of Vancouver, Washington

The Filipino-American Association of Vancouver, Washington (FAAV) — formerly known as the Filipino American Association of Clark County and Vicinity (FAACCV) — was founded in the early 1980s to preserve the Filipino culture and promote camaraderie among Filipino Americans in the Vancouver, Washington area. The organization, led by



18 officers and board members, maintains a list of *barkadas* (friends) from Vancouver, Portland, and other areas of the Pacific Northwest to aid in its mission to engage in humanitarian, civic, educational, cul-

tural, and charitable activities that preserve, promote, and share the customs, values, and heritage of the Filipino culture. In the past year, FAAV's activities have included sponsoring Philippine Consular outreach in Portland, the Fil-Am Vancouver basketball team, and Filipino cultural events; awarding a college scholarship to a Filipino-American student; supporting a social business conference; and more. The organization also maintains a newsletter listing Filipino-American community events in the Pacific Northwest. To learn more, visit <www.filamvancouver.org>.

Salem Multicultural Institute & World Beat Festival

The Salem Multicultural Institute (SMI) was founded in 1997 by two moms with young daughters who wished to respond to growing concern about racial tensions in Salem, Oregon. The organization, which is assisted by 1,000 volunteers, seeks to collaborate with public and private organizations to promote harmony and understanding through innovative, educational cultural programs and activities. In 1998, SMI hosted its first World Beat Festival (WBF), an annual celebration of the many cultures that are found in Oregon, and in 2006, the organization opened the World Beat Gallery at the Reed Opera House, which hosts cultural exhibits. SMI's programs serve more than 25,000 people of all ethnic backgrounds. The 2015 festival welcomed community members representing 65 cultures, while the gallery included educational exhibits highlighting Vietnam and the Philippines. In addition, the organization's volunteers have served the community in the areas of cultural programming, referrals, and committee work. To learn more, visit <www.worldbeatfestival.org>.



Vietnamese Community of Oregon

The Vietnamese Community of Oregon (VNCO) was established in 1995 to unite and support the voices of Vietnamese people in Oregon. The organization, which seeks to represent the more than 29,000 Vietnamese living in the state, advocates for community members, supports youth, and preserves and nourishes the traditions of Vietnamese



culture. Among its many activities in the past year, VNCO offered free tax service for low-income Vietnamese families; served meals to the homeless at Potluck in the Park and breakfast to senior citizens at the Hollywood Senior Center; entered a float in the Rose Festival Parade (winning the "Rose Festival Court" award); organized the Memorial of the Fall of Sai

Gon event; sent members to Washington, D.C. to advocate for human rights in Vietnam with U.S congresspersons; and hosted its two annual cultural events — the Mid-Autumn Festival and *Tet*, the Vietnamese New Year. In addition, the organization reaches out to Sunday Vietnamese schools to encourage volunteer teachers and to advocate for academic support for students. To learn more, visit <www.vnco.org>.

(AR Photos/Jan Landis)

Nomination forms for the 2017 Exemplary Community Volunteer awards will be available January 1, 2017 and will cover volunteer efforts performed between April 1, 2016 and March 31, 2017. For more information, visit <www.ARFoundation.net> or <www.asianreporter.com>.

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