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Title: Lisa Doi Interview
Narrator: Lisa Doi
Interviewer: Anna Takada
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- LD: 01:09:28 Do you, maybe could we talk about the Kansha Project a little bit? Sure. Yeah. Um, so I've mentioned a few times that I uh the summer between my junior and senior year of college, I participated in JACL Chicago's program called the Kansha Project, which was the first year of that program. So the Kansha Project is designed as a program for college age, which is now 18 to 25 year old Japanese Americans from Chicago or the Midwest to travel together to Little Tokyo in Los Angeles and then to Manzanar. And I also came back to Chicago the year that the Kansha Project transitioned from being a staff run program to being run by alumni of the program. And so I was fortunate to be able to lead the first alumni run trip, um, in 2015. Um, and I think in seeing both the Kansha Project and the alumni leadership board, to me that's a really inspirational group where I, I recognized that I was very lucky to have felt like I grew up with a strong Japanese American community.
- LD: 01:10:37 Um, but I see so often that this is really the moment when, um, many young Japanese Americans are sort of feel that they are able to embrace that identity. Um, and so I'm, I just feel really fortunate to be able to sort of observe that and sort of watch that process. Um, and then to sort of see really the incredible things that people do when they come back from that, like this project. Um, where there are sort of tentacles all across the community of, um, what I like to consider Kansha culmination projects. We asked participants to do an art project right when they get back or an artistic reflection on their experience right when they get back. Um, but I really think that a lot of the Kansha culmination projects extend across multiple years and that they look, you know, they continue to grow and change, um, from some of those original conceptions. Um, so that's just, I, I think that that's like the original form of activism that I have engaged with in the Chicago community is, is being able to craft this experience for, for other Japanese Americans. And then I just recently, um, came back from Rohwer again with the Arab

American Action Network, um, where we took a group of high school students, Japanese American and Arab American high school students to Little Rock and Rohwer and really explored the history of the Japanese American incarceration, civil rights movement and post-911 anti-Arab and anti-Muslim sentiment. Um, as sort of three historical moments together.

AT: 01:12:13 Was that, um, was that with Kansha project specifically or was that J- who was running that?

LD: 01:12:18 Yeah, so it was a program of, uh, JACL Chicago. Um, we tentatively, and it's still a tentative title, had been calling it bridge builders a few years ago, a program called bridging communities, a very similar program called bridge and communities happened. Um, so didn't quite want to use the same name, but never really embraced bridge builders.

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