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Title: Jane Kaihatsu Interview
Narrator: Jane Kaihatsu
Interviewer: Anna Takada
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<Begin Segment 16>

AT: 01:12:13 Oh, well thank you so much for coming.

JK: 01:12:16 You're welcome.

AT: 01:12:16 And sharing. Um, before we wrap up, is there anything that you'd like to add or that I might have missed?

JK: 01:12:24 Umm. Um, well I do have a detailed um, memory. I, I also was the chapter president of the Chicago Japanese American Citizen League. So that put me in a lot of contact with, with people. So I guess I was in kind of a, I was the youngest Sansei and first Sansei, a woman president, at the time, and I was the youngest uh at the time. I was 25 when I became the chapter president of JACL, 1982.

AT: 01:13:00 And, and what, um, I mean, I apologize, cause, I, I have a lot more questions, but I know

JK: 01:13:11 Oh, okay. No, it's alright.

AT: 01:13:12 Cause we're short on time.

JK: 01:13:12 Sure.

AT: 01:13:12 Um

JK: 01:13:15 I'm okay.

AT: 01:13:15 But I guess, quickly before we wrapped up, um, what, since you brought up your position, what inspired you to to go for that position?

JK: 01:13:26 Um, well, my father, Omar had been on the board. So that's how I got in involved in, in JACL. And, um, nobody else would do

it. I remember we came to that point, we are at a board meeting, so who's going to be the president? Jane, why don't you be the president. I don't know how to be the president?! And he said, well, why don't you be the? I don't. We'll support you. That's what the Nisei said. And so I said, okay. I'll be the president. And that again, kind of makes me an outlier about, uh, you know, being a typical Japanese American. Okay, fine, I'll do it. You know, so, and they did the Nisei did support me here at the, at the local level. And when I went to, um, a national convention in Gardena later that year, everybody was stunned when they heard a Jane Kaihatsu, they thought I was a Nisei, woman. And they could not believe that a Sansei young woman was the president of Chicago. And I was not the first Sansei, however, but, um, and that's a huge difference between the communities on the West Coast and in, you know, east of the Mississippi. They were willing to take that chance and it was a great opportunity. I have to thank them, you know, became a poised person. I got to meet the Mayor of Chicago, Jane Byrne at the time. I sat right next to her and cause our names were Jane and uh, she was, she's was very intimidating, you know, cause she's running this big city. But what a great opportunity. Um, and to work with different generations. Prior to that I had the Nisei were always, you know, are my parents' friends. But when I worked in, um, when I was president, JACL really gave me a unique chance to relate to them as adults and peers. And that made me grow up really fast. It was also, uh, an exciting time too, cause they had started the commission on wartime relocation and internment of civilians and they were holding hearings all over. And I was, I was the president. I was wasn't really involved in setting up the hearings, but it was really fascinating to watch the Nisei and some of the older Sansei prep witnesses and get organized for it. It was a great learning experience for me to see that kind of process.

- AT: 01:15:49 So I guess what you're saying is, we'll have to get you back in for a whole other
- JK: 01:15:50 I forget.
- AT: 01:15:55 About those experiences.
- JK: 01:15:55 Uhuh
- AT: 01:15:58 Yeah, thank you so much.
- JK: 01:16:00 Oh, you're quite welcome.

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