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Title: Kathy Yamaguchi Interview  
Narrator: Kathy Yamaguchi  
Interviewer: Naoko Wake  
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**<Begin Segment 1>**

NW: Hopefully this is working [laugh]. So probably you can begin by telling me a little bit about your history of engagement with the group of survivors. Geri told me that you were going to be a very busy person in the coming few days.

KY: Right, right. I got started in, I can't remember what year it was. So it was probably '83?

NW: It's a long time ago.

KY: Yeah, in the late, I think from 1979, '80, I was involved in a group. It was an informal study group of. We called ourselves the East Bay Socialist Doctors Group. And we were a group of progressive doctors who were working in, mostly in public sector clinics in the East Bay, and we used to get together and talk about things. And through that there was a, a doctor, who had heard about these, the A-bomb survivor exams, the medical exams, that had been done at the public health service hospital but since that closed, they were looking for some people to organize it outside of the public health service hospital, so, that's how I learned about it. [...] and at the same time, through the Physicians for Social Responsibility, you know that group? Because of that group, Richard Fleming was, they found Richard Fleming. And I knew Richard a little bit because he was one year behind me in medical school. We went to the same medical school.

NW: Where did you go?

KY: UCSF [University of California, San Francisco]

NW: USCF, mmhmm.

KY: So somehow, we got together, and we're working on helping organize the 1983 medical exams; we did it at UC.

NW: Hmm, I see.

KY: So that's how it started, and I think I must have met Geri, I don't know this was too long ago, I must have met Geri that way

NW: She was just, just around the same time, getting involved in Friends of Hibakusha as I understand it.

KY: Yeah, right, so it was right around that time, um, so I got involved with the East Bay Socialist Doctors Group and then we just, you know, we did it. Oh, I must have missed. Maybe I just did it once? And then I moved to New York temporarily, so I was not here from '84 to '86, I was in New York, so I probably was gone, and then when I came back in '87, um, I helped out at one of the exams. I didn't organize it but I helped out, and then somehow I think Geri probably got me. I somehow joined Friends of Hibakusha.

NW: Hmm, I see.

KY: So somehow, and I can't even remember when I started getting so that, um, I and Richard were the main people organizing the volunteers. I don't remember – I don't remember when that started.

NW: But when you say then first, survivors in the States were getting treatment in public health care system but then they were not eligible anymore?

KY: The, no the hospital closed.

NW: Hospital closed. Okay.

KY: The hospital closed, so there were some public health, doctors, I guess. US Public Health Service doctors who were organizing it, and because the hospital closed down. It was totally closed.

NW: There was no . . .

KY: They had totally closed.

NW: . . . future for that

KY: Yeah, so that we took over, and yeah. I don't even know how long they had been doing it.

NW: Right. Well, my understanding was that, well, there was no American hibakusha medical, free check-ups, that they can have an access to in the States, whereas in Japan, obviously, . . .

KY: Right,

NW: . . . they are getting free medical care.

KY: This one's supposed to be the 18<sup>th</sup>. The one we're doing, now

NW: Yeah it is, it is,

KY: the 18<sup>th</sup>, so that means it's been happening for like 36 years.

NW: That's right, that's right, that's a long time.

KY: So 36 years, it's been going on since when? The 60's?

NW: '77, I think that . . .

KY: '77?

NW: Yeah.

KY: Ahhh. Okay. Okay

NW: Yeah.

KY: So it happened a few times, then we started doing it.

**<End Segment 1> - Copyright © 2011 Densho and Naoko Wake. All Rights Reserved.**