Greetings All,

This year has gone by quickly, but not without the challenges and opportunities that PPALM experienced as the result of hard work by the Board and many of our members. Since my last update, we held the 5th Annual General Membership Meeting and Social on Sunday, October 21, 2012, at the Washington Convention Center in Washington, D.C. The event was attended by nearly 200 members and guests that far exceeded our expectations. Senior government leaders, corporate executives, community leaders, and cadets from the U.S. Military Academy and midshipmen from the U.S. Naval Academy led the list of attendees.

This year’s distinguished guest speaker was Lieutenant General David H. Huntoon, Jr., the Superintendent of the U.S. Military Academy (below), who delivered an impressive message on the value of mentoring in growing leaders. We presented the first PPALM Distinguished Lifetime Public Service Award to U.S. Senator Daniel K. Akaka for his 70 years of public service in the military, as an educator, and member of Congress. He will retire at the end of his term this year. We also presented the PPALM Corporate Sustaining Sponsor Award to General Gordon R. Sullivan, U.S. Army Retired, and President of the Association of the U.S. Army (AUSA) for AUSA’s sponsorship of PPALM since 2008. Lastly, the PPALM Distinguished Citizenship and Patriotism Award was presented to Mr. Terry Shima, a founding member of PPALM and a proud member of the highly decorated 442d Regimental Combat Team, when he served with them in Europe during World War II. He is currently the Chair, Education and Outreach, of the Japanese American Veterans Association.

In sum, this was an incredibly successful annual meeting and one we can ascribe as the standard for our future meetings. We hope to see many more of our PPALM members and guests to celebrate with us in October 2013.

It was on November 11, 2007, when PPALM was formally inaugurated at the National Japanese American Memorial in Washington, D.C., sponsored by the Japanese American Veterans Association. This year at the same site on the same day, our Executive Director Lt Col Mike Yaguchi, USAF (Ret), and several of our Board members represented PPALM on this most auspicious occasion to celebrate our 5th anniversary. It also marked the significance of our organization’s founding—of the thousands upon thousands of veterans who gave selflessly of their lives in the tradition of Service to Nation.

One of our key strategic objectives is to grow PPALM as a national leader in promoting leadership development and succession planning through the aspects of mentoring. This year has been fortuitous for us in promoting this key objective. I presented to the Equal Opportunity Employment Office (EEOC) and Office Personnel Management (OPM), where both agencies have now included us in their quarterly diversity meetings. We have pursued partnerships with the Asian American Government Executives (AAGEN) and the Who’s Who in Asian America Community (WWAAC) Foundation to share mutual support of our programs. We have engaged in discussions with the American Association of Retired Persons (AARP) toward a long term corporate sponsorship for PPALM. In addition, PPALM will actively pursue corporate sponsorships to help sustain operations and financial needs for growing requirements in the future.

In October 3-4, a group of PPALM members attended the U.S. Military Academy Diversity Conference at West Point, New York. Dr. Tina Carroll-Garrison was the keynote speaker at the conference in addressing the topic of incivility to the plebe (freshmen) class. We will continue to represent PPALM at this annual conference in the future.

Recently, I traveled to Los Angeles on September 30, 2012, where I introduced PPALM to a group of civilian and military leaders who were interested in forming an interest group in their community. This followed my [continued on page 2]
Aloha,

The 5th Annual PPALM General Membership Meeting and Social was held on October 21, 2012 at the Washington Convention Center in Washington, DC. There were 21 cadets from West Point and 25 midshipmen from the Naval Academy among the nearly 200 attendees.

Each cadet and midshipman was provided a PPALM membership/mentorship application which resulted in 20 new applications for membership and 19 applications for mentors. More specifically, there were 12 requests for mentors from the cadets and 7 requests for mentors from the midshipmen. After receiving each cadet/midshipman’s area of interest (for example, Intelligence, Aviation, Medical, Submarines, etc.), I am pleased to announce that we were able to assign PPALM mentors to all of the cadets and midshipmen. I would like to express my appreciation to those PPALM mentors and members who agreed to serve as their mentors: Mike Yaguchi, Paul Shelton, Pete Tan, Stan Fujii, Sam Lin, Philipp Carabuena, Alan Ueoka, Sanjay Krishnaswamy, Mark Nakagawa, Paul Ung, Wade Ishimoto, Becky Samson, Mieke Eoyang, and Tony Taguba.

We will track the progress of these mentor/mentee relationships and provide you their feedback in future newsletters. I’m sure you join me in wishing each mentor and mentee all the best as they put the words of the PPALM motto into action: “Tradition of Service. Strengthened in Community.” We are indeed serving the mentoring needs of our future leaders!

If you are interested in becoming a PPALM mentor or mentee, please visit the PPALM website at www.ppalm.org and click on the Mentorship Tab.

Ed Haraguchi
Colonel, U.S. Army (Retired)
Vice President for Mentorship
Greetings All,

It has been quite a busy time for PPALM since my last report. Our Fifth Annual General Membership Meeting and Social was held on October 21, 2012. The Association of U.S. Army (AUSA) provided PPALM use of one of their hospitality suites. Thank you AUSA for four consecutive years of support. Attendance nearly tripled from last year. LTG Huntoon, Superintendent of the United States Military Academy, our keynote speaker, shared his leadership and mentorship views coupled with the power of diversity. This was an incredible message that was enthusiastically received by all.

On November 9, 2012, I participated in Federal Asia Pacific American Council's (FAPAC) One-day Seminar “Striving for Excellence in Leadership, Diversity, and Inclusion.” My remarks focused on preparing for the responsibilities associated with leadership positions and the benefits that effective mentoring brings to developing and sustaining effective leadership skills.

The Japanese American Veterans Association (JAVA) asked PPALM and the National Japanese American Memorial Foundation (NJAMF) to co-sponsor their Tenth Annual Veterans Day Ceremony at the National Japanese American Memorial to Patriotism (NJAMP) located in Washington, DC. COL Michael Cardarelli, USA (Ret), currently the Principal Deputy Under Secretary for Benefits, Veterans Administration and PPALM member, was the keynote speaker. We were happy to accommodate JAVA's special request because five years ago, at this very event, JAVA whole-heartedly endorsed our request to formally announce PPALM's stand-up. JAVA has been one of our most ardent supporters, and we thank them for their partnership.

We produced and filmed our first six minute film “Why We Exist and Why We're Needed,” which isn't the official title, but it captures the essence of the video. We showed it at the Annual Meeting and Social, and the response was overwhelmingly positive. We'll tweak it a bit more and post in on PPALM's web page early next year.

Four Board of Director positions are opening up, and I will make an announcement in January 2013. The Board will begin to work on the next version of the Strategic Plan. Finally, we are working very hard to fully automate the administrative aspects of our organization—one of those quests to work smarter not harder. You should see some fairly significant changes in the early part of next year. Happy Holidays, and please keep those who are serving our Nation at overseas posts in your thoughts and prayers.

Michael J. Yaguchi
Lieutenant Colonel, U.S. Air Force (Retired)
Executive Director
Photos from PPALM Annual Meeting and Social

MG(r) Taguba presents a PPALM gift to LTG Huntoon, USA.

L-R: Col Shirley Raguindin, USAF; Secretary of Veterans Affairs Eric Shinseki; 2LT Suzanne Riopel, ARNG; CPT/DM Jeana Cho, ARNG.

L-R: COL(P)/Dr. John Cho, USA; Kathy Cho; Ms. Bel Leong-Hong, President & CEO of KAI, Honorary Board Mbr PPALM; BG(P)/Dr. Joe Caravalho, USA.

L-R: Dr. Kin Wong, Chair of FAPAC; Lt Lorna Devera, USN; MG(r) Tony Taguba.

Hawaiian music entertainment provided by Dr. Ernie Takafuji, Carol Takafuji and their band.

CSM(R) Thomas, AUSA, accepts the PPALM Corporate Sustaining Award for GEN(R) Gordon R. Sullivan, President, AUSA.

L-R: CAPT/Dr. Joannie Shen, USPHS; MG(R) Taguba, USA; Dr. Frederick Cheng, USDA.

L-R: Mr. Terry Shima and LTG David Huntoon, USA.

Cadets from the U.S. Military Academy at West Point enjoying the program. CPT (P) John and Dana Abella accompanied the cadets.
Shima receives Excellence in Citizenship and Patriotism Award

Mr. Terry Shima, a distinguished WWII veteran of the famed all-Nisei 442d Regimental Combat Team, and long serving official of the Japanese American Veterans Association, was recognized with PPALM’s Excellence in Citizenship and Patriotism award, for his enduring efforts to honor the wartime contributions of Asian Pacific American soldiers.

PPALM Executive Director, Lt Col Mike Yaguchi, USAF (Ret), described the evening as “a successful attempt to bring together current and new members through camaraderie, plentiful food, and lively music. Thanks to our sponsors and many volunteers, the event succeed beyond our expectations.” MG (Ret.) Tony Taguba, PPALM Chairman and the driving force behind the event and the organization, concluded, “I was proud to see so many people, from all walks of life, from so many different levels of leadership, attend our event. It was indeed a unique opportunity to become part of PPALM’s mission to support the development, retention, and advancement of APA leaders, uniformed and civilian, in the military.”

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* The following is the acceptance speech by Terry Shima as he accepted the PPALM award on behalf of JAVA:

The US Army, more than any other government entity, was responsible for restoring Japanese American credibility. During the darkest days of Japanese American history during WW II, when our loyalty was questioned and enlistments were prohibited, we petitioned the government to allow us to serve in combat to prove our loyalty. The Army responded by deploying the 100th Battalion to the Italian combat front, including Monte Cassino, and activated the 442d Regimental Combat Team, a segregated Nisei unit. The Army gave us tough assignments in Italy and France, including the rescue of the trapped Texas Battalion is the Vosges forests of northeastern France in which the 442d sustained huge casualties to save 211 Texans who were doomed for annihilation. As GEN Odierno said last November at the Congressional Gold Medal Award ceremony the 442d was true to the Army dictum: Don’t leave your buddy behind.

When the war was over America turned its attention to re-building the nation and the world. GEN Marshall reminded Washington there was still one issue to resolve, the “Japanese issue,” i.e. how to integrate the ethnic Japanese into the American society. The Army called on the 442d. In the summer of 1946 the 442d was returned from Italy, marched down Constitution Avenue, and was reviewed by President Truman at the Ellipse. Truman confirmed Japanese American loyalty by telling them, “You fought the enemy abroad and prejudice at home – and you won.” That affirmation resonated across the land endorsed by editorials, one of which won the Pulitzer.

The Army did not stop there. Supported by the combat performance record of the 442d and the Tuskegee airmen, you reformed the armed forces thereby leveling the playing field for any minority to compete for any position and rank. During WW II Japanese American assignments were limited mostly to the infantry and the highest rank of a Japanese American was major and there were only four. Fast forward to the Vietnam War. Japanese Americans were found in every branch of service, in the most sensitive war planning positions, in the cockpits of fighters and bombers as pilots and navigators with ranks of major, lieutenant colonel and colonel. Following the Vietnam War some 35 Japanese Americans would be promoted to generals and admirals, with one serving as the 34th Chief of Staff of the US Army wearing four stars. GEN Shinseki, thank you. Another 60 Asian Pacific Americans would achieve flag rank. MG Taguba, MG Regua, BG Caravalho, thank you. You are our heroes. There were reforms on the civilian side as well, such as the Civil Liberties Act of 1988 when President Reagan offered the government formal apology for the incarceration of 120,000 ethnic Japanese. A few years ago the US senate selected from among them a Japanese American to serve as President Pro Tempore of the US Senate, a position that puts him third in line for the presidency. Only 70 years ago this same Nisei senator was classified 4-C, enemy alien unfit for military duty. Ladies and Gentlemen, the Japanese American story speaks of the Greatness of America. God Bless the United States of America.
PPALM-JAVA Partnership and You

I was there five years ago on Veteran’s Day in November 11, 2007 at the National Japanese American Memorial to Patriotism near the Capitol Building in the Washington, DC. It was then that PPALM and the Japanese American Veterans Association (JAVA) established a link and began its long-time partnership. That day JAVA’s 7th Annual Veteran’s Day Program served as a springboard for retired US Army MG Antonio Taguba, and a group of retired, active duty and reserve officers and volunteers, to launch PPALM’s formation. The timing and location of PPALM’s official announcement was no accident and couldn’t have been more fitting for it was a symbolic representation of PPALM’s essence in its newly found existence: give service to the nation, respond to the call of duty, and assist the Army Strong Campaign (the Army’s recruiting program) as it aims to mentor and promote professional development of Asian American Pacific Islander leaders in the Department of Defense.

That afternoon Lt Col Michael Yaguchi, USAF (Ret), Chair of the Veteran’s Day Committee, warmly welcomed and introduced Mr. George “Joe” Sakato, a Medal of Honor recipient, who was also the principal speaker for JAVA’s Veteran’s Day Program. I listened intently as he said, “In our hearts we never doubted our loyalty and love of our country even though the government put our families in internment camps…On Veteran’s Day it is right to remember all who fought, those who were at home suffering the indignities of the times, and especially those who did not return.” I was deeply touched with his words… for here was a man, a true American hero—typical of a humble soldier who does not see himself as such—who served his country and answered the call to duty, even under the most difficult and challenging circumstances. While there were many who responded as he did, “Joe” Sakato lived to tell his story. His message is one that resonates and should cause us to take heed. We need to remember for it is on the shoulders of Mr. Sakato’s generation and those of others like him in the past, on which we stand. Their sacrifices helped to open doors for many of us.

To enter those opened doors, we have to look back, reflect and have a purpose-driven march forward. There are support systems that can be instrumental to facilitate that. Two that come to mind are JAVA and PPALM. Their goals are directly linked in assisting Asian American Pacific Islanders to enter those opened doors. JAVA can help us look back and reflect. One of JAVA’s purposes as a patriotic and a historical organization is to perpetuate the memory and history of those who paid the ultimate price in defending the United States of America. PPALM, on the other hand, can help fine tune that purpose-driven march forward. It aims to build active support for diversity in the Army and in the Department of Defense. PPALM’s all-volunteer military and civilian professionals are committed to mentoring its members. Mentorship is a primary mission and core value of PPALM. Volunteers encourage and instill the professional values and attributes associated with being a successful leader (military or civilian) and contributor to society.

On this 5th year anniversary of PPALM and JAVA partnership as well as the formation of PPALM, I encourage all to actively engage and check out what these organizations have to offer. Once you enter those opened doors, you may find yourself compelled to help open more doors for others. It is only through your active participation that we can continue the legacy of selfless service. See www.ppalm.org and www.javadc.org for more information.

Rebecca C. Samson
Colonel, U.S. Army (Retired)
On the Horizon:

January 2013: PPALM Board of Directors Strategic Planning 2013-2015 Off Site

March 2013: Board of Directors Election for open positions

May 2013: National Asian American Pacific Islander Heritage Month

June 2013: Asian American Government Executive Network (AAGEN) Leadership and Education Training (with PPALM support).

June 2013: PPALM Update to the Honorary Chair and Board of Directors

September 2013: Who's Who in Asian American Community Foundation Awards Gala

October 2013: PPALM 6th Annual General Membership Meeting and Reception; Annual Association of the U.S. Army Conference; Army 10 Miler Run.