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# Guide to the Miyakawa Family Collection circa 1940s-1954



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## **Descriptive Summary**

**Identifier** ICU.SPCL.MIYAKAWA

**Title** Miyakawa Family Collection

**Date** circa 1940s-1954

**Size** .5 linear feet (1 box)

**Repository** Hanna Holborn Gray Special Collections Research Center  
University of Chicago Library  
1100 East 57th Street  
Chicago, Illinois 60637 U.S.A.

**Abstract** The Miyakawa Family Collection contains materials related to Japanese American incarceration during the Second World War as well as Japanese American social, cultural, and economic life in Chicago. Documents date from the early 1940s to 1954, with the bulk of items dating from 1945 to 1952. Materials include Hyde Park High School yearbook and ephemera, photographs of Japanese cultural institutions and activities in Hyde Park, and a New Testament pocket bible from the Grenada War Relocation Center, an American concentration camp in Amache, Colorado.

## **Information on Use**

### **Access**

The collection is open for research.

### **Citation**

When quoting material from this collection, the preferred citation is: Miyakawa Family Collection, [Box #, Folder #], Hanna Holborn Gray Special Collections Research Center, University of Chicago Library.

### **Biographical Note**

Hiroko Azuma Miyakawa was born Hiroko Frances Azuma in Los Angeles, California in 1934. Her father, Hideo Azuma (1905-1989), was born in Marugame in Kagawa, Japan and worked as an auto mechanic. Her mother, Fusayo Shoda Azuma (1909-1970), was born in Seattle, Washington and worked as a housewife and factory employee. Hiroko had two brothers, Robert (Bobby) Toworu Azuma (1937-2013) and Donald Akira Azuma (1939-2007). In 1940, the family lived at 1624 West 36th Place in Los Angeles.

When President Franklin D. Roosevelt issued Executive Order 9066 in February 1942, the Azuma family, alongside some 275,000 people of Japanese descent living in the United States,

were forcefully removed to an American concentration camp. The Azumas were incarcerated at the Grenada War Relocation Center in Amache, Colorado, where they lived in Block 6E, Building 7, Apartment B. The Amache concentration camp was open from August 1942 to October 1945, during which time about 10,000 people of Japanese descent were incarcerated on the premises.

Following their release from Amache in 1945, the Azuma family moved to Chicago. The city became a major hub for resettling Japanese Americans. Neighborhoods such as Oakland, Kenwood, Hyde Park, and Woodlawn saw the development of a robust Japanese and Japanese American community comprised of businesses, restaurants, cultural centers and clubs, and religious institutions. Throughout the 1950s, racist policies and practices such as redlining and restrictive covenants enacted under so-called urban renewal campaigns fueled segregation and white and Japanese American flight from the South Side.

During the late 1940s and early 1950s, the Azumas lived at 620 East Bowen Ave and 820 East Drexel Square. Hideo continued to work as a mechanic at an auto garage, while Fusayo worked as a packer in a plastic factory. Hiroko attended Oakenwald Elementary School, located at 4071 South Lake Park. In fifth grade, she met James (Jimmy) Miyakawa, whom she would later marry.

Throughout her tenure at Hyde Park High School, Hiroko became involved in the dancing group “Dawnelles” as well as the cheerleading team, student council, pep club, and Sigma Epsilon Scholarship Honor Society. She graduated in 1952 with several awards and honors.

Hiroko Azuma Miyakawa went on to earn an MA in Educational Leadership and Administration from New York University and a PhD in Educational Curriculum and Instruction from Fordham University in 1976. She served as the superintendent of schools in Hillside, New Jersey from 1999 to 2000 and an academic advisor at Northern Arizona University from 2006 to 2012. In 2022, Hiroko and Jimmy Miyakawa were living in Sedona, Arizona.

The Miyakawa Family Collection was donated to the University of Chicago Special Collections Research Center in 2021 to be used in the exhibition “Nikkei South Side: Japanese and Japanese Americans in Hyde Park and its Vicinity.”

### **Scope Note**

The Miyakawa Family Collection is organized into one box of seven folders. The collection contains materials dating from the early 1940s to 1954, with the bulk of items dating from 1945 to 1952. Materials include Hyde Park High School yearbook and ephemera, photographs of Japanese cultural institutions and activities in Hyde Park, and a New Testament pocket bible belonging to Robert Azuma from Amache, Colorado.

## **Related Resources**

“Nikkei South Side: Japanese and Japanese Americans in Hyde Park and its Vicinity,”  
Exhibition, Special Collections Research Center, 2021 (<https://www.lib.uchicago.edu/collex/exhibits/nikkei-south-side-japanese-and-japanese-americans-hyde-park-and-its-vicinity/>)

Rosalie Hankey Wax Papers

Joseph M. Kitagawa Papers

Robert Redfield Papers

Hyde Park High School Records

Hyde Park Historical Society Collection

Hyde Park-Kenwood Community Conference Records

Mildred Mead Photographs

American Civil Liberties Union Illinois Division Records

## **Subject Headings**

- Japanese American families
- Japanese American women
- Japanese Americans--California--Los Angeles--History
- Japanese Americans--Forced removal and internment, 1942-1945
- Granada Relocation Center
- Japanese Americans--Illinois--Chicago--History

## **INVENTORY**

### **Box 1**

#### **Folder 1**

Oakenwald Elementary School Memorabilia & Diploma, 1945-1948

### **Box 1**

#### **Folder 2**

Hyde Park Japanese Cultural Activities Photographs – Photocopies and Originals,  
1940s-1950s

### **Box 1**

#### **Folder 3**

Hyde Park High School Ephemera, Cards, and Report Card 1949-1954

### **Box 1**

#### **Folder 4**

Hyde Park High School Yearbook, 1952

### **Box 1**

#### **Folder 5**

Hyde Park High School Class Prophecy, 1952

**Box 1**

**Folder 6**

Hyde Park Japanese Business Advertisements – Photocopies, undated

**Box 1**

**Folder 7**

Bobby Azuma New Testament Pocket Bible, 1940s