

## Across Generations: An elder's reflection on her work with a budding project

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NBA Incubate Initiative Affiliate Ministry

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*The NBA Incubate Initiative strives to encourage and support the development of new and innovative health and social service ministries and organizations by Disciples. These ministries, in turn, inform and inspire fellow Disciples throughout our communities and across the life of the church. Together, we expand the church's understanding of and capacity for health and social service ministry as part of Christ's work in the world. JoAnne Kagiwada, the author of this blog post, is a volunteer at the Oakland Peace Center, one of our Incubate Partners. It is an emerging entrepreneurship nonprofit model of*

*ministry that brings together direct service, advocacy, youth empowerment, art and culture shift organizations to cross-pollinate.*

I'm a volunteer at the Oakland Peace Center (OPC). I stuff envelopes, take mailings to the post office, and now I'm writing a blog post for the NBA. Now retired from jobs, boards, committees, and most other commitments with the Disciples nationally, I enjoy doing things in my community. OPC is an amazing expression of support for social justice and service ministries in Oakland. It is a collective of over 40 partner organizations working to create peace in a whole spectrum of ways from direct service work, to helping people find inner peace, to disrupting cycles of poverty and injustice that lead to violence.

Bringing together folks who've struggled to work on their own, and sharing visions together for reaching the ever-compelling goal of a just peace for all people is a good thing to be a part of. Those conversations happen at OPC. We learn that church groups and non-religious organizations can be good partners doing work together. NBA's XPLOR Residency provides opportunities for our young adults to engage in these experiences too. Sometimes just coming to California is a new experience for

them, an additional new thing to learn about! And I always enjoy learning about their hopes and dreams for the future.

I met Rev. Sandhya Jha, who is the Executive Director of OPC, when she was a seminarian at the University of Chicago, and where I am a trustee of the Disciples Divinity House. I was delighted when she moved to California, and when she became director of OPC, I volunteered to be a volunteer. OPC offices are in the historic First Christian Church of Oakland, a 40,000 square foot Spanish Colonial building erected in 1929. An auspicious setting for an organization doing auspicious work.

*Despite her deep humility, JoAnne Kagiwada was one of the first women to receive a law degree in international human rights, and she helped found NAPAD, the North American Pacific and Asian Disciples, as well as working on capitol hill to establish restitution for Japanese concentration camp survivors in the 1990s. For more about JoAnne's inspiring legacy, read this profile about her in Inheritance Magazine. NOTE: the image in the article borrowed from said profile.*

**<https://www.inheritancemag.com/stories/the-extra-ordinary-case-of-joanne-kagiwada>**

*For a recent feature about FCC Oakland's journey into becoming the Oakland Peace Center, read this feature in Duke Divinity School's Faith and Leadership Journal.*

**<https://www.faithandleadership.com/tiny-congregation-big-building-resurrected-center-peace>**

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*The NBA incubates new ministries, supporting social entrepreneurs of faith who are serving their communities in a variety of innovative ways and empowering these Disciples-led health and social service projects to focus on growth, impact, and sustainability. Learn more at **[nbacares.org/incubate](https://nbacares.org/incubate)** or by contacting Rev. Ayanna Johnson Watkins, Director of the NBA Incubate Initiative, at **[awatkins@nbacares.org](mailto:awatkins@nbacares.org)**.*