

### 2018 OCA-WHV Dynamic Achiever Award Recipient

Suki Terada Ports

Vice President, Japanese American Association of New York  
Co-Founder of Asian Pacific Islander Coalition on HIV/AIDS



Suki Terada Ports, a champion of civil rights including minority education and health advocacy was born and lived in New York City most of her life. Suki was the only America-born woman of color in her Smith College Class of 1956. She taught one year at the Community School of Robert College, Istanbul, Turkey, where she met her husband, Horace (Hotz) Ports, Jr., Williams College, '56. Their interracial marriage was illegal in segregated Georgia when Hotz served his army service. Upon their return to NYC, Hotz taught at Edgemont High School. Suki was appointed to the Harlem School Board and was instrumental in their creating NYC's first early childhood school, designed in a cluster building with movable furniture, children's toilets in each room, and small, age-appropriate playgrounds.

To support their children Lyn (12), Terry (10), and Sumi (2) upon Hotz's death in 1971, Suki held several jobs, including a Community Conference Program of the Community Resource Exchange at Wave Hill. After attending an NYC Council of Churches conference, Suki was inspired to devote herself to minority HIV/AIDS education, which led to the creation of organizations such as Minority Task Force on AIDS, the Asian and Pacific Islander Coalition on HIV/AIDS, Iris House, and the National Minority AIDS Coalition. She helped to end the designation of "Others" in CDC data and the misconception that AIDS was a disease of white men and drug addicts only. In addition, Suki helped 15 Asian organizations launch Project Charge, by winning a Kellogg Foundation multi-year grant competition for eight cities in the U.S. to improve the health of Asians, while she directed her Family Health Project.

Having served on the boards of New York Women's Foundation and Asian American for Equality, Suki is currently the Secretary for the Aaron Diamond AIDS Research Center and Vice President of the Japanese American Association of New York. Suki received the Order of the Rising Sun, Gold and Silver Rays, from the Government of Japan in 2015 for her outstanding contribution to the betterment of welfare for the Japanese American community in the United States. She was also one of five Asian Americans honored by New York Governor Andrew Cuomo in the "Asian Americans in New York" Exhibit at the State Capitol in 2017 for her leadership in improving access to quality health care related to AIDS in low-income and minority communities.