



JASH Newsflash

A Summary of Recent Events of the Japan-America Society of Hawaii

Summer 2022

Reconnecting at the Servco Hawaii Pau Hana



L-R: Mr. Paul Yonamine, Mr. Alexander Jampel, Ms. Reyna Kaneko, and Mr. Peter Dames greet attendees at the entrance.

Thanks to the generous sponsorship of Lexus Hawai'i by Servco, select members of the Japan-America Society of Hawaii (JASH) and the U.S.-Japan Council (USJC) met together on April 26,

2022 at the beautiful, newly-renovated, Servco Lexus Honolulu Showroom. The invitation-only event held exclusively for JASH Corporate and Lifetime Members and members of the USJC enabled us to see and talk with acquaintances whom we had not met since the start of the pandemic over two years ago.

A total of approximately 90 guests attended the event as they snacked on delicious appetizers prepared by Beni-Co Bento. The melodic sounds of a professional string quartet from the Hawaii Symphony Orchestra played in the background as joyful hugs and handshakes along with many exclamations of happiness abounded throughout the room.

Continued on Page 2

President's Message

This Summer 2022 issue of our newsletter focuses on CONNECTION—via in-person and virtual events.

We have gotten pretty adept at virtual programming as illustrated by our Japan Day virtual offerings which allow us to reach so many students across the state. Our Junior Ambassadors that participated in the Asian-Pacific Children's Convention had a rich hybrid experience of live and virtual events, connecting with each other and with youth from all over the Pan-Pacific Region.

JASH corporate and lifetime members enjoyed an evening of being together in-person along with members of the
Continued on Page 2

Japan Day Resiliency



Members of the Hawaii Shin Kobukai demonstrate bon dance moves.

Held twice a year, Japan Day is JASH's longest running educational program which is offered free to Hawaii's middle and high schools. Since its inception in 1993, over 7,600 students from 67 different public and private schools have participated in this educational event.

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, Japan Day program has been offered virtually since Fall 2020 so that students can experience Japanese culture and art remotely from their classrooms. Thanks to our volunteer instructors, we were able to expand the selection of Japanese cultural activities to

include bon dance and ikebana this time in addition to six video segments on calligraphy, karate, manga, Peace Studies/Sadako Sasaki Story, soroban (Japanese abacus) and tea ceremony we previously produced.

The links for these video segments were shared with the schools invited to participate in the Japan Day program. Generous funding from the McNerny Foundation has enabled JASH to produce high-quality videos of select Japanese cultural activities and expand the Japan Day program to include more schools, thereby impacting more students. Additional funding from the Freeman Foundation allowed more neighbor island schools to participate virtually as well.

Through virtual Japan Day, students are encouraged to follow the video lessons and get hands-on experience in Japanese arts and culture by participating in the activities while they watch.

Continued on Page 2

McInerny Foundation's Japan Day

With Additional Funding Provided
by Freeman Foundation

JASH held its Spring 2022 Japan Day program sponsored by the McNerny Foundation and the Freeman Foundation during the months of April through May 2022 via interactive video tutorials featuring bon dance, calligraphy, ikebana, karate, manga, Peace Studies/Sadako Sasaki Story, soroban, and tea ceremony.

Approximately 550 students from Asia Pacific International School, Castle High School, 'Iolani School, Kamehameha Schools Maui, King Kekaulike High School, Maui High School, Mililani High School, and Washington Middle School participated in the virtual Japan Day program this spring.

Reconnecting at the Servco Pau Hana Event

Continued from Page 1

In a scene reminiscent from the classic movie, "The Sound of Music", VIPs from JASH and USJC spoke from the second-floor balcony of the showroom's executive offices to the guests below. Ms. Reyna Kaneko,



JASH President, began with welcome remarks and she was followed by remarks from JASH Board Chairman Alex Jampel as well as USJC Board Chairman Paul Yonamine. We

concluded with Mr. Peter Dames, Executive Vice President of Servco Pacific, Hawai'i who invited the guests to partake in the abundant food and drinks while they visited with fellow attendees at the event.

In addition to the JASH Corporate and Lifetime Members who attended the affair, JASH administrators also invited a few representatives from the JASH NexGen group to attend. The purpose was to allow these young professionals a rare opportunity to mingle with our Corporate and Lifetime members. We could not pass up the chance to allow the multi-generations of JASH members who attended to get to know one another better.

It was truly a sight to behold and we would like to express our sincere gratitude to JASH Director and



L-R : Ms. Megun Leung; Ms. Delle Tanioka, NexGen Vice Chair; Ms. Reyna Kaneko, JASH President; Ms. Taylor Date, NexGen Recruitment Chair; Mr. David Hayashida, NexGen Secretary; and Mr. John Rankin, JASH Director.

USJC Council Leader Peter Dames and Lexus Hawaii for making this magical event happen. What a wonderful opportunity it was to reconnect with old friends as well as meet new ones.

Japan Day—Since 1993



Instructor Roy Goshi-Otaguro offers step-by-step instructions to "make flowers come alive."

Continued from Page 1

A student from King Kekaulike High School wrote in the post-program survey, "I liked how the history of each activity was included, and I felt like all of the instructors did a good job of explaining their activity. I also enjoyed getting to participate in parts of it and watch professionals do it too." Japan Day also illustrates how art and culture in different societies can influence and enhance people's lives, and how these cultural values are perpetuated by devotees of the arts. "I think Japan Day is meant to educate people on Japanese culture

and bring people of different generations together to learn from one another," a student from Castle High School commented.

JASH would like to thank the generous sponsors of Japan Day: The McNerny Foundation and the Freeman Foundation.

In addition, a big MAHALO to the volunteer experts for their dedication to the program: Mr. Jordan Silva from the Japan International Karate Center for the karate session; Mr. Kazuo Maekawa, professional manga artist for his manga drawing lesson; Mr. Hideaki Oshima from the Araki Hiroya Soroban School for the soroban tutorial; Mrs. Naomi Hirano-Omizo for Peace Studies/Sadako Sasaki Story segment; Mrs. Hiromi Peterson, Toka for the calligraphy lesson; Mr. Hitoshi Murata from the Urasenke Foundation for the tea ceremony session; Ms. Betty Dela Cuesta, Ms. Lynette Morikawa and members of the Hawaii Shin Kobukai for bon dance instructions; and Mr. Roy Goshi-Otaguro of MOA Hawaii for the ikebana workshop.

President's Message

Continued from Page 1

U.S.-Japan Council at JASH KIN-level Member Servco Pacific's newly renovated Lexus Showroom, and the Taste of JASH-Nomu Edition went from virtual to live with a bus tour to Hawaiian SHOCHU Company and Manoa Honey & Mead.

STAYING CONNECTED—we strive to keep connected to the youth who have enjoyed our programs, and to provide opportunities for them to stay in touch with their interest in Japan. We are thrilled to present the story of APCC Alumna Betsy Wo in this issue.

Nurturing the NexGen of JASH leaders passionate about doing their part to continue building bridges of friendship between the U.S. and Japan through the unique perspective of Hawaii serves our mission well. I hope to connect with everyone at our upcoming Bridge Awards Dinner & Silent Auction on October 10 at the Sheraton Waikiki!

With Aloha,
Reyna

Chozen-Ji
Zen Temple



APCC JAs Explore Chozen-Ji & 'Akahiao Nature Institute



The Asian-Pacific Children's Convention in FUJUKOKA

This summer, our four Junior Ambassadors (JAs) are

learning all about Japan and local Hawaii culture in preparation to represent Hawaii in this year's Asian-Pacific Children's Convention BRIDGE Virtual Summer Camp (APCC BVSC). Although the over 40 APCC delegations throughout Asia and the Pacific are still unable to convene in person in Japan, we are nonetheless excited for the virtual exchanges that will bridge students from around the world in July and August.

In preparation for the virtual summer camp, our 11-year-old JAs have been busy learning about Japan, Hawaii, and the other participating countries and cities through our monthly JASH Workshops which this year feature many hands-on activities. Kicking off their studies, JAs navigated their way around Don Quijote, searching for Japanese delicacies. With curious



Sehren, Kent and Jake with JASH Director of Educational Programs, Takako Miyazawa.

palates, they tried a variety of new foods, including *takoyaki*, *konbu maki*, and even *natto*!

Up next, on May 28, they visited Daihonzan Chozen-ji, an international zen dojo located in the back of Kalihi Valley. Under the guidance of Reverend Cristina Moon, JAs and their parents learned about the unique history of the dojo and challenged their bodies and minds in

a short *zazen* meditation session. Then, they got their blood pumping in an introduction to kendo led by Teshima-sensei, Ueno-sensei, Sayama Roshi, and Kangen Roshi. Domo Arigato Gozaimasu thank you very much to Chozen-ji for hosting us!



The JAs learn kendo basics from the sensei.

Most recently, the group flew to Kona from June 3-5 to learn about sustainability and *mālama 'āina* from the wonderful staff at the 'Akahiao Nature Institute (ANI).

Thanks to a generous donor, five recent APCC alumni, Kourtney Nishimura ('16), Joanna Sato ('18), Kalā Soares ('18), Ella Bosworth ('19), and Rhegen Villarimo ('20-21) joined the trip as mentors for this year's JAs. Although JASH has an active program alumni network through Bridge Club Hawaii (BCH), their usual activities have been paused due to the pandemic, and so we are grateful for the opportunity to reconnect with each other.

This trip was chaperoned by JASH Program Coordinator Christianne Ono, JASH NexGen Advisory Committee Secretary and 2022 APCC Chaperone David Hayashida, former BCH Co-President Haley Honda, and Japan Exchange and Teaching Alumni Association (JETAA) Hawaii Co-President Daniel Ichiyama.

During their time at ANI's Hu'eahu'e Ranch, the group unleashed their curiosity and *kilo* 'observation' skills as they walked through the forest, learned about environmental challenges and ANI's creative



ANI's Jeff Fuchs teaches the students about Hu'eahu'e

solutions, and harvested fresh produce directly from the garden. They also participated in a service project where they helped ANI's Landscape Artist & Permaculture Specialist Antonio as he and a local crew laid the foundation for a water catchment system. Under the watchful and patient guidance of the Let 'Um Fly Archery Club, the group experienced first-hand the strength and precision required to shoot recurve bows.

To end their time in Kona, our four JAs presented their Global Bridge Leader Reports. For these reports, they were each tasked with researching and presenting their findings on how pollution, recycling, GMOs, and global warming have affected life in our islands. Each presentation was followed by thoughtful discussion led by the alumni mentors. The JAs will revisit sustainability-focused topics such as these during the APCC Bridge Virtual Summer Camp later this summer, when they will brainstorm on various environmental issues facing the Asia-Pacific region with the other JAs.

Regardless of the range of ages in our group to Kona, our JAs, program alumni, and chaperones came home with new strengthened connections to the 'āina and more importantly, to each other.

Continued on Page 4

APCC Explorations

Continued from Page 3

Joanna Sato ('18) commented, "What surprised me the most was our ability to get along with each other, despite our age gap. I felt connected with the other kids through these free time activities because I used to play these games when I was a JA. Transitioning to high school, I realized that I can't remember the last time I played tag or group games since everyone around my age has been focused on studying."

Mahalo nui loa to ANI Executive Director Julie Rogers, Program Coordinator Jeff Fuchs, and Community Outreach Coordinator and Cultural Liaison Liana Macdonald-Kainoa for their guidance and expertise in crafting invigorating and inspiring programming for our group.



Back L-R: Kourtney ('16), Joanna ('18), Ella ('19), Rhegen ('20-21), and Kalā ('18)

Front L-R: Jake ('22), Kent ('22), Zoe ('22), and Sehren ('22)

Throughout the rest of the summer months, our JAs will learn more about Japanese culture, traditions, and daily life in their remaining JASH preparatory workshops. In addition to learning more about Japan, they will also brainstorm what makes their own lives here in Hawaii special, and what they'd like to share with the other JAs as representatives of Hawaii. To learn more about our JASH APCC Program, please contact Program Specialist Christianne Ono at cono@jashawaii.org.



APCC Alumna Betsy Wo Selected as Peace Ambassador

JASH is excited to announce Asian-Pacific Children's Convention (APCC) Alumna Betsy Wo has been selected to represent JASH and the Bridge Club of Hawaii (BCH) in the APCC's Special Peace Ambassador Program for 2022. Betsy originally participated in the APCC as a Junior Ambassador in 2011.



Introducing 2022 Peace Ambassador Betsy Wo (JA 2011)

and collaboratively develop action plans to build their local Bridge Clubs (APCC alumni organizations).

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the APCC has been unable to convene its annual JA and PA programs in Fukuoka, and instead connected youth through Zoom workshops. As international travel restrictions begin to ease, the APCC created a Special Peace Ambassador Program for 2022 to be held in Fukuoka in late October 2022. The aim of the Special PA Program is to enhance participants' skills to lead their local Bridge Clubs, with the ultimate goal in fostering them as Global BRIDGE Leaders.

Through a careful application

process, APCC Alumna Betsy Wo (2011) will represent JASH and BC Hawaii in the Special PA Program. In preparing for the program, Betsy would like to share the following message with all of our JASH supporters:

"In 2011, I was overjoyed when JASH selected me, 11-years old at the time, to represent Hawaii and share my culture with kids from all over the world. In my short time in Japan, I learned about creating and maintaining global connections.

That same year, a tragic disaster decimated the Tohoku Region of Japan. I was overwhelmed when I was selected for a special service trip through the TOMODACHI initiative program with the mission of connecting with the devastated survivors to help regain hope. Even though three years had passed since the disaster, upon arrival, I felt the distressed atmosphere as I witnessed crumbled buildings and gray harbors overflowing with garbage. I was grateful to have helped even a little, by joking with the survivors, teaching

Continued on Page 5



Betsy pictured second from right with the 2011 JASH APCC delegates, Peace Ambassador, and APCC alumni.

The APCC typically invites its alumni to return to Fukuoka as Peace Ambassadors (PAs) alongside their annual Junior Ambassador (JA) activities. PAs participate in leadership and teamwork training exercises, strengthen their connections with other youth leaders throughout the Asia-Pacific region,

2022 APCC Peace Ambassador—Betsy Wo

Continued from Page 4

hula, and cleaning up their beach with TSUNAGARI. The air was filled with smiles and laughter – my own spirit was uplifted through the depth of their resilience.

With this new awareness, I started creating a plan to immerse myself in different languages and cultures to impact communities in need. This year, I graduated from UCLA with a degree in Linguistics and Psychology, and a minor in Asian Languages, while also exploring my passions through volunteering, work, and travel. I will be furthering my studies at the University of Hawaii Manoa in



Connecting with Japanese students during the TOMODACHI Initiative service trip

communication sciences and disorders to pursue a degree in Speech Pathology, as I hope to make a difference through therapy.

Thanks to JASH and BCH, my dream has been to connect with and impact people from all over the world through my language and communication skills. I am thoroughly excited to continue growing as a global citizen through the special Peace Ambassador program to further international communication and understanding between different cultural groups.”

Please join us in congratulating Betsy for her selection as our 2022 Peace Ambassador! To learn more about our JASH APCC Program, please contact Program Specialist **C h r i s t i a n n e O n o** at cono@jashawaii.org.

Taste of JASH—Nomu Edition Ventures out to the North Shore

On June 11, 2022, program attendees excitedly boarded a colorful EV HiBus provided by TP Transportation as we started on a journey to the North Shore for an exclusive *Taste of JASH Nomu Edition Tasting Tour*.



rice are used per batch. It takes two months to fill the tank in which the shochu will rest. This results in approximately 3,000 bottles per batch twice a year. Source: <https://www.hawaiibevguide.com>

Attendees also had the opportunity to taste several different types of shochu. Email kaloimo@gmail.com to inquire about purchasing shochu.

Manoa Honey & Mead

Next was a visit to Manoa Honey & Mead in the neighboring-town of Wahiawa where owner Yuki Uzuhashi taught the group about their mead-making process. The company's motto is the “Golden Triangle”; the special relationship between plants, bees, and mankind. Their products range from raw honey and related products to Oahu’s only locally crafted mead. Source: <https://www.manoahoney.com/about>

Attendees enjoyed refreshing samples of mead that are tailored to the local taste of Hawaii with flavors such as Lilikoi and Hawaiian Fruit Punch. The group also had a tasting of a variety of honey which are all available online at <https://www.manoahoney.com/shopmead-hawaii-japan>.



Both Ken Hirata from Hawaiian SHOCHU Company and Yuki Uzuhashi from Manoa Honey & Mead are originally from Japan and have now made Hawaii their home. To learn more about their journey to Hawaii and their fascinating stories behind their successful businesses, please check out the recordings of our virtual Taste of JASH Nomu Edition episodes.

[Hawaiian SHOCHU Company](#)
[Manoa Honey & Mead](#)

Hawaiian SHOCHU Company

Our first stop was the Hawaiian SHOCHU Company in Haleiwa where owner Ken Hirata shared how he sources local sweet potatoes, rice, *koji*, and distills shochu using traditional methods. *Koji* is a fungus used to produce sake or shochu and other culinary condiments such as miso, mirin, and shoyu. Source: <https://www.masterclass.com/articles/what-is-koji>.

Twelve distillation runs, consisting of 200 pounds of koji and 1,000 pounds of sweet potatoes, are made before bottling. In all, 12,000 pounds of sweet potatoes and 2,400 pounds of

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