

JASH NEWSFLASH

A Summary of JASH Recent Events

Winter 2023

Annual Bridge Awards Dinner & Silent Auction

President's Message



On Tuesday, October 3, 2023, the Japan-America Society of Hawaii (JASH) held our annual Bridge Awards Dinner & Silent Auction at the Alohilani Resort Grand Ballroom. This year's theme was, *Honoring Traditions*.

Each year, JASH presents the JASH Bridge Award to an outstanding individual, company, or organization. This prestigious award recognizes those who have promoted understanding and friendship between the people of Hawaii and Japan.



JASH was honored to present this year's Bridge Awards to Dr. Genshitsu Sen, Urasenke Grand Master, from the Urasenke Foundation and former *ozeki* sumo wrestler,



Hawaii-born Konishiki Yasokichi for their achievements and positive impacts on our community.

Guests were able to enjoy an exclusive Tea-Service provided by the Urasenke Hawai'i Association. The Tea-Service took place prior to the dinner and served to thank our many partners and sponsors at the event who make it possible for JASH to continue our important work fostering Hawaii-Japan relationships. Our sincere gratitude to the Urasenke Hawai'i Association and its volunteers who made this wonderful experience possible.



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2024 is the year of the Wood Dragon, and the sign of the Dragon is a symbol of power, strength and good fortune. The year 2024 is predicted to be an auspicious year.

In 2023 we saw much promise as we turned the corner on the COVID-19 pandemic and began meeting in person and socializing again. For us at JASH, we were no exception, having held **53** in person events and programs in 2023!

Our biggest and most notable project of 2023 was the highly successful Hawaii-Japan Sister State & Sister City Summit held in July. The magnitude and impact of this Summit reinvigorated long standing Sister relationships and provide a venue to start new ones.

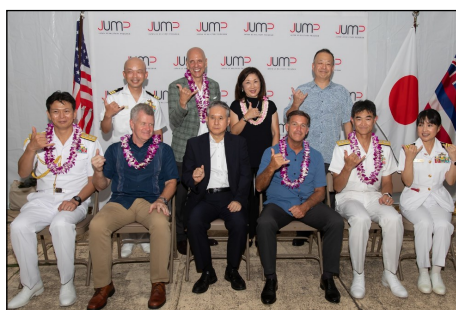
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Japan-U.S. Military Program (JUMP)



On October 4, 2023, JASH had the honor of hosting the Japan-U.S. Military Program (JUMP) at the official residence of the Consul General of Japan in Honolulu.

Newly-appointed Consul General Yoshinori Kodama arrived in Hawaii just days before the event on October 2, 2023. Consul General Kodama graciously opened his home to over 200 JUMP guests which included military service members, civilian government contractors who served in Japan and service members from the



Japan Maritime Self-Defense Force (JMSDF) ship the JS Kashima.

Being able to hold this exclusive event at the Official Residence of the Consul General of Japan in Honolulu exemplifies and reinforces the special relationship we have both locally and nationally between Japan and the U.S. After being at sea for five months

and visiting 11 ports before returning to Japan, Hawaii was the final port for the JS Kashima.

We were honored to welcome our distinguished speakers: Consul General Yoshinori Kodama - Consul General of Japan in Honolulu; Rear Admiral Yasushige Konno - Commanding Officer, Japan Training Squadron; Dr. Satoshiro Akimoto - Director, Japan-U.S. Military Program and Chairman and President of the Sasakawa Peace Foundation USA; Admiral John Aquilino - Commander, United States Indo-Pacific Command; Rear Admiral Takaaki Hayamizu - Defense and Naval Attache, Embassy of Japan in the United States of America; and Mr. Andrew Wylegala - President of

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Bridge Awards Dinner & Silent Auction

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Almost 400 guests, some dressed in Japanese-inspired outfits and traditional kimono captured the spirit and energy of our themed event – *Honoring Traditions*.

The evening was filled with lively entertainment starting with an invigorating performance by Mr. Kenny Endo and the Taiko Center of the



Pacific. Ms. Anju Madoka of Madoka no Kai continued with a captivating song as she played the shamisen. Ms. Madoka also paired up with Mr. Endo to perform an invigorating duet which also got the crowd involved.

Special thanks to our fantastic Emcee duo Ms. Gina Maeda, JASH NexGen Member and Mr. John Rankin, JASH Board Director and NexGen Member.

The dinner would not be possible without the help of our wonderful volunteers. Thank you to the Urasenke Hawai'i Association, the Junior Ambassadors of the Asian-Pacific Children's Conference and the Crown Prince Akihito Scholarship Foundation former scholars.

Japan-U.S. Military Program (JUMP)



JASH Directors Mr. Sal Miwa and Ms. Barbara Tanabe talk with one of the JMSDF members.

sushi prepared to order by the JS Kashima members! This was a very special treat for everyone. Japanese dishes were provided by Rinka Restaurant and American dishes by Tailor Made Custom Catering.



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the National Association of Japan-America Societies. The speakers spoke to the importance of the friendship between the U.S. and Japan and how programs like JUMP continue to strengthen the bonds between our countries. They also spoke about how grassroots people-to-people relationships are critical and the importance of keeping peace and stability within the regions is of upmost importance. JASH President, Ms. Reyna Kaneko served as the evening's Emcee.

Other highlights at the event were the opening performance by the JMSDF Training Squadron Band and a Taiko performance by the Japan Training Squadron. Guests enjoyed fresh

The JUMP program provides an opportunity to bring the Japanese and American military, civilian and business community together. JUMP is a very special and unique program and JASH is honored to have been selected as a recipient of this grant again for 2023. We would like to extend our sincere gratitude to the Sasakawa Peace Foundation USA, the National Association of Japan-America Societies, and the Embassy of Japan in Washington, D.C. for sponsoring the JUMP program.

Special thanks to Consul General Kodama and his staff for hosting this special event at the consulate. MAHALO NUI LOA!

President's Message

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These are exciting times for JASH, as you can read about the variety of activities that were held from October through December.

We thank you, our members, for your unwavering support so that together as the Japan-America Society of Hawaii, we are able to successfully accomplish the work of preserving the important ties that bind Hawaii and Japan and the U.S. and Japan.

With Aloha,
Reyna

2023 EPIC Students Visit Hawaii



From September 29-October 3, 2023, eight students from various Ehime high schools traveled to Hawaii to participate in a cultural exchange sponsored by the Ehime Prefectural International Center (EPIC).

EPIC promotes cultural understanding and international cooperation through various programs and exchanges. Since 2013, EPIC has organized this exchange program that annually sends students from Ehime to Hawaii. JASH was excited to help host and welcome back students from Ehime again this year.

Mr. Yasuoki Kosaka, Executive Director and Ms. Yukari Niyama, Counselor of Foreign Residents from
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Mahalo to America-Japan Societies in Japan for Supporting Maui Wildfire Victims



Our hearts go out to the many victims of the devastating wildfires that occurred in upcountry Maui and Lahaina on August 8, 2023. In a showing of loyal support from our friends in Japan, members of the National Association of America-Japan Societies (AJS) began coordinating a large-scale fundraising campaign in September 2023 to help the victims of the disaster.

Through the course of the next few months, over 6,783,000 yen (or the equivalent of \$46,075) was collected

from members of the America-Japan Society in Yokohama, Fukuoka, and Kumamoto, as well as members of the Tokyo American Club.

A majority of the funds collected (approximately \$36,300) was forwarded to the Hawaii Community Foundation's Maui Strong fundraising campaign. A small portion was also given to three Japanese temples in Lahaina which sustained damage: Honpa Hongwanji; Lahaina Jodo Mission; and Koyasan Shingon Mission of Hawaii.

This outpouring of support from our allies across the Pacific Ocean comes as no surprise as relations between



JASH Chair Alex Jampel and President Reyna Kaneko presenting the checks.

our two countries and our citizens continue to be very cordial and supportive. In this age of continuing natural disasters, it's comforting to know that a helping hand is always available when either of our countries need it. Mahalo to the AJS for your friendship and support!

Peace Cranes Take Flight at Pearl Harbor

Once a month, throughout the academic year, JASH in collaboration with Pacific Historic Parks (PHP), hosts the Sadako Peace Projects at the Pearl Harbor National Memorial.

For the fall 2023 semester, student and community volunteers joined JASH and PHP on October 28 and November 18 to share the story of Sadako Sasaki and her hope for world peace with memorial visitors.

Visitors not only get to learn how to fold their own peace cranes, but they can also take home cranes folded by students in Japan! These donated cranes are folded and sent to JASH as part of lessons on World History and Peace Studies and are coordinated by teachers in Japan.



For the October 28 workshop, we were joined by students from Pearl City High School, Kalani High School, the East-West Center, as well as community volunteers. Visitors who stopped by our booth came from all over the U.S., including Rhode Island, Florida, Michigan, and California. We also met families from China, England, Brazil, and even Japan!

On November 18, we were joined by students from Ohana Arts' production of "Peace on Your Wings," a youth musical about Sadako Sasaki. Over the summer, the cast traveled to

Hiroshima to perform the musical for an international audience.

Earlier in November, these students also performed the musical for local audiences at Moanalua High School. In addition to the "Peace on Your Wings" cast, we were also joined by 2023 Hiroshima Peace Scholar Reina Gammarino, as well as other students from Punahou School and Moanalua High School!

We shared peace cranes donated by Kodaira Nishi High School in Tokyo, Moka Hokuryo High School in Tochigi, and Satsukigaoka High School in Hiroshima.



EPIC Students Visit Hawaii

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EPIC and Mr. Kazuki Takemiya, English Teacher from Imabari West High School accompanied the students as they visited various sights on Oahu. The delegation visited sites such as the Ehime Maru Memorial, University of Hawai'i at Mānoa, and local high schools.



The Ehime students participated in a two-day homestay program with students from Punahou and St. Louis Schools over the weekend. On their last full day in Hawaii, the girls visited Punahou School and the boys visited St. Louis School. They experienced a sampling of school life in Hawaii and gave presentations regarding their hometowns, culture, and school activities.

After their presentations, they had some time to converse with local students in both English and Japanese. In the afternoon, they had an exchange with members of the Japanese Club at Moanalua High School.



JASH was happy to partner with EPIC to bring this cultural exchange program to Hawaii once again this year. We helped lay the foundation for interaction with students from Ehime and Hawaii and it is our hope that the friendships that they established will continue for many years to come.

Students Experience Japanese Culture at Fall Japan Day

On November 2, 2023, JASH held its Fall Japan Day program, sponsored by the McInerny Foundation and the Freeman Foundation. Approximately 200 students from Kalani High School; Kapaa High School; King Kekaulike High School; Konawaena High School; Pearl City High School; St. Joseph School; University Laboratory School; Waiakea High School; and Washington Middle School gathered at the Japanese Cultural Center of Hawaii's Generations Ballroom to enjoy the day's activities.

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 7,800 students from 67 different public and private schools have participated in this educational event.

Japan Day had been held virtually for the last few years due to the pandemic, so we were very excited to bring it back in-person for the first time since Fall 2019. Generous funding from the McInerny Foundation has enabled JASH to 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 as well.

The morning started out with a lively taiko demonstration by the Taiko Center of the Pacific. Following the Opening Ceremony, students attended four of the eight cultural sessions presented by nearly 40 volunteer-experts on Bon Dance, Calligraphy, Ikebana (flower arranging), Karate, Kendama, Origami, Soroban (Japanese abacus), and Tea Ceremony.

Following the Japan Day program, neighbor island students from the Big Island, Kauai, and Maui were

given private gallery tours of the Japanese Cultural Center of Hawaii's exhibit, *Okage Sama De: I am What I am Because of You*. Neighbor island schools also visited other areas on Oahu, including Stix Asia and Byodo-In Temple, before flying back to their respective islands.

Japan Day provides students with hands-on experience in traditional Japanese arts and culture while reinforcing and complementing what is taught in the classroom. A student from Pearl City High School wrote in the post-program survey, "I had a lot of fun! I got a chance to get a deep dive into aspects of Japanese culture that I likely never would've on my own, some of which I'd never even thought or heard of! Each lesson was engaging and informative..."

Japan Day also illustrates how art and culture in different societies can influence and enhance people's lives. A student from University Laboratory School commented, "It was a fun, interactive experience that taught me about the traditional art forms and activities in Japan. I enjoyed participating in the ones (activities) I

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Fall 2023 Japan Day

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was in, learning about the culture and history behind each one.”

JASH would like to thank the generous sponsors of Japan Day: McInerney Foundation and the Freeman Foundation for making this event possible. In addition, a big MAHALO to all the volunteer experts for their dedication to the program: Ms. Lydia Morikawa and members of Hawaii Shin Kobukai (Bon Dance); Ms. Hiromi Peterson, also known as Toka and members of Toka Shodo



Students practice Calligraphy strokes.

Calligraphy (Calligraphy); Ms. Dawn Kanno and family of MOA Hawaii (Ikebana); Mr. Scott Macri and members of Hawaii Origami Club (Origami); Mr. Hideaki Oshima from Araki Hiroya Soroban School (Soroban); Mr. Hitoshi Murata and members of the Urasenke Foundation (Tea Ceremony); and Mr. Jordan Silva and family of Japan International Karate Center (karate).

A special thanks to JASH staff, for leading the Kendama session. JASH would also like to thank the Japanese Cultural Center of Hawaii for providing the tours of the *Okage Sama De* gallery for the neighbor island students, and the Taiko Center of the Pacific for their inspirational taiko performance and demonstration.

Finally, we appreciate volunteers, Cathy Matsuzaki and Geri Cheng for assisting us that day.

Taste of JASH: Aloha Bento



On Thursday, November 2, 2023, JASH revived our beloved *Taste of JASH* food series at a hot new eatery in downtown Honolulu.

Aloha Bento by Aloha Beer is located at Tidepools Marketplace which is adjacent to Central Pacific’s Main Branch on the corner of South King Street and Alakea Street. Known simply as “Tidepools” or Tidepools@CPB, the venue is home to several small businesses featuring baked goods, flowers, and now, premium nigiri sushi!

Over 50 guests enjoyed superb sushi, Aloha Beer, and sake. The event was an enjoyable way to sample delicious regional dishes, learn about Japan, and make new friends.



The *Taste of JASH* food series was developed by our JASH NexGen group back in 2018. The initial



(L-R): Reyna Kaneko; Taylor Date; Jenna Nakagawa; Gina Maeda; and Delle Tanioka.

series featured our Sister States Ehime, Fukuoka, Hiroshima, Hokkaido, and Okinawa and highlighted regional cuisine and famous sightseeing locations.

Stay tuned for more *Taste of JASH* food events in 2024! *Aloha Bento*, presented by Aloha Beer aims to bring quality fish, exceptional flavors at reasonable prices to the community. Their goal is not only to become the top bento shop, but also to offer the best pau hana experience in Hawaii! Learn more about Aloha Bento on Instagram @alohabentoco.

Tomodachi Holiday Tea



On Wednesday, December 6, 2023 JASH members and guests gathered for our annual Tomodachi Holiday Tea at the Waioli Kitchen & Bake Shop. About 20 members, guests, and newcomers connected and enjoyed warm camaraderie while partaking on delicious baked goods and beverages.



After lunch, guests sang Christmas carols together and were led by Tomodachi Committee Chair and JASH Director,

Ms. Kazuko Love and JASH member Mr. Atsushi Takebayashi. Mr. Takebayashi led the group in a warm-up session with Kyu Sakamoto’s well-known song *Ue O Muite Arukou* or better known as *Sukiyaki* in English from 1963. He also taught the group sign language to accompany the song.

Thank you to Tomodachi Chair Kazuko Love and JASH member Atsushi Takebayashi for helping plan and organize the holiday program. Mahalo to JASH Lifetime Member Ms. Sandy Takeda for attending the event and also donating two *Kokedamas* for our Lucky Draw prize giveaways!

JASH Newsflash

The *JASH Newsflash* newsletter is published quarterly. Visit our website at www.jashawaii.org for more information.