

Japan America Society 2011 Annual Report

(December 27, 2011)

Please visit our website at: <http://jasstl.wordpress.com/>

The Japan-America Society of Saint Louis (JAS) was founded in 1967 with the mission to promote the exchange and understanding between the people of Japan and the United States. The Society is a 501(c) (3) non-profit, non-partisan, educational and cultural organization. It offers information about Japan and provides variety of public education programs about Japan and U.S.-Japan relations. It also serves as an umbrella organizations involving the Japanese Activities Committee (Dave Lowry, Chair), Japan America Society Women's Association (Aya Kawasaki, President; Dolores Krapfl, President Elect) and Seinen-kai [Association of Young Men and Women] (Steve Masaki, President). The Society also supports the St. Louis Japanese Language School for Children in St. Louis.

The leadership for the Society is provided by the board of directors, including 22 elected members, and six elected officers. All of the work of the Society is done by volunteers. The Office of International Studies and Programs at University of Missouri-St. Louis (Dr. Joel Glassman, ISP Director & Associate Provost of Academic Affairs at UMSL) provides office space and operational support.

The Japan America Society of St. Louis receives and answers 150 inquiries in a given year on anything and everything about Japan. In addition, the Society receives requests for lectures and demonstrations from local libraries, schools and other organizations in the St. Louis region. The Society annually provides its members and general public a dozen educational and social programs.

Our largest community engagement is Annual Japanese Festival, held at the Missouri Botanical Garden (MBG). The Japanese Activities Committee of the Japan America Society of St. Louis coordinates production of the festival events. The festival originated in the 1960s when the first and second generation Japanese Americans and Japanese residing in the St. Louis area produced the festival every year. They raised seed money for construction of a Japanese garden in St. Louis and approached Dr. Peter Raven, then MBG President. The result of these efforts led to the dedication of the Japanese Garden, Seiwa-en (meaning the garden of harmony and peace) on a 14 acres land in 1977. Since then the Society and MBG have developed a unique partnership in hosting the annual Japanese festival. The Japanese Activity Committee works with all Japan-related organizations in St. Louis in bringing authentic Japanese programs and festival events to the community. The festival has become one of the largest and oldest Japanese Festivals in North America. Each year, 30,000 to 50,000 people come and enjoyed the festival.

The Japan America Society of St. Louis is also unique with its close relations with the International Studies and Programs (ISP) and the Shibusawa-Arai Endowed Professorship of Japanese Studies at UMSL. In 1999, Mr. Seigo Arai, businessman and friend of the Japan America Society of St. Louis, made a gift (\$550,000) to UMSL to

establish the Ei'ichi Shibusawa-Seigo Arai Professorship in Japanese Studies. Together with ISP and Shibusawa-Arai Japanese Professorship at UMSL, Japan America Society of St. Louis provides lectures and events about Japan. Currently, the position is held by Dr. Laura Miller, a Professor of Anthropology. Her research focuses on Japanese culture, language and gender, and linguistic anthropology.

In response to the mega disaster that struck Japan on March 11, the Society organized the Japan Earthquake and Tsunami Relief Fund and collected \$13, 2170.01. Following the JAS Board resolution of April 2011, the collected funds were sent to Japan Society of New York in October 2011, which in turn dispersed collected donations directly to NPOs in Japan.

Respectively submitted,

Chikako Usui
President
Japan America Society of St. Louis
Center for International Studies, 366 SSB
UMSL
One University Blvd
St. Louis, MO 63121-4400
(314) 516-5754; Email: cisjas@umsl.edu

Board of Directors

Jim Alexander	RCGA
Bruce S. Buckland	Honorary Consul General of Japan, St. Louis
Jack Coad	Parsons Brinkerhoff
Graham Filean	U. S. Military
Thomas F. George	University of Missouri-St. Louis
Larry Holyoke	
Aya Kawasaki	President, Japan America Society Women's Association
Mike Kimzey	St. Louis Country Office
James Luzecky	Erst & Young
Marvin Marcus	Washington University in St. Louis
Dr. Laura Miller	University of Missouri-St. Louis
Steve Masaki	
James McHugh	
Laura McLaughlin	Logan College of Chiropractic
Thad Simons	Novus International Inc.
Yoshiaki Shibusawa	University of Missouri-St. Louis
Dr. Chikako Usui	University of Missouri-St. Louis
Bud Yanker	
Jim Zygmunt	

Officers

Honorary Chairman:	The Honorable Jay Nixon	Governor of Missouri
Honorary President:	Ichiro Fujisaki	Ambassador of Japan
Honorary Vice President:	Yoshifumi Okamura	Consul General of Japan at Chicago
President:	Dr. Chikako Usui	University of Missouri-St. Louis
Chairman:	Henry W. "BUD" Yanker	
Vice President	Graham Filean	U. S. Military
Executive Director:	Dr. Joel Glassman	University of Missouri-St. Louis
Assistant Director:	Elizabeth Shabani	University of Missouri-St. Louis
Student Assistant:	Kayla Strauss	University of Missouri-St. Louis

Japan America Society of St. Louis 2011 Summary of Achievements

- Raised \$13, 170.01 for Japan Earthquake and Tsunami Relief Fund.
- Strengthened the working relationship with other Japan-related organizations and colleges/universities and promoted JAS events for the community.
- Organized and co-sponsored monthly educational, cultural, and social programs.
- Coordinated the production of programs for the annual Japanese festival with over 37,000 visitors in 3 days.
- Established the Sushi Club and Kimono Club, offering new cultural/educational experiences.
- Strengthened the JAS website with new web designs (still on-going).
- Added new social media and focus to publicize our events and reach new audience, including an addition of the "Japan Meetup".

Japan America Society of St. Louis: 2011 Events

February 20	Sushi Club debut (Seki's Restaurant)
March 6	Sushi Club (Wasabi Five Sushi Bar)
March 20	Taste of Japan Series Luncheon (JASWA & JAS social event)
April 13	Sushi Club (Sushi Sen)
April 30	Japanese Speech Meet (Beginner, Intermediate, and Advanced college level)
May 1	Sushi Club (Nobu's Japanese Restaurant)

- May 10 **Special Lecture by Harrison Cook** on Japan's Pharmaceutical Market (with NAJAS, RCGA, JASWA, ISP, and JASA):
- June 5 Sushi Club (Wasabi Five Sushi Bar)
- July 10 Sushi Club (Blue Ocean Sushi)
- August 9 Sushi Club (Sushi Sen)
- September 3-5 Japanese Festival, Missouri Botanical Garden
September 15 **Fund Raising Golf** for the Japanese Language School for Children, Pevely Farms
- September 21 Sushi Club (Wasabi Six Sushi Bar)
September 28 **Fall lecture by Dr. Nathaniel Smith on Uncivil Society and Right Wing Activism in Japan** (with Shibusawa-Arai Professorship of Japanese Studies at UMSL)
- October 9 Film: **442-LIVE WITH HONOR; DIE WITH DIGNITY** with Introduction by Dr. Marvin Marcus at Missouri History Museum (with JASWA and JASA)
- October 12 **Japan: Road to Recovery-Challenges and Opportunities** (with JETRO Chicago, World Trade Center St. Louis, and ISP)
- October 19 Sushi Club (Kampai Sushi Bar)
- November 17 **JAS** Annual Dinner (Wasabi Five Sushi Bar)
- December 22 **JAS Night with the Ballet:** the Nutcracker at Touhill Performing Arts Center (with St. Louis Ballet Co.)

 INSERT PHOTOS HERE
