



Japan America Society of St. Louis, Inc.  
c/o International Studies and Programs  
University of Missouri–St. Louis  
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## Japan America Society Annual Report 2016

The Japan-America Society of Saint Louis (JASSTL) was founded in 1967 with the mission **to promote friendship and mutual understanding between the peoples of Japan and the United States.** The Society is a 501 (c) 3 non-profit organization and is an all-volunteer society governed by 20+ elected members of the Board. The Office of International Studies and Programs (ISP) at University of Missouri-St. Louis provides operational support to the Society.

JASSTL is the major information clearing house in the St. Louis Metropolitan Community. The Society receives 150 inquiries about Japan in a given year and we answer them free of charge. The Society receives requests for translation services, lectures, authentic cultural activities, and demonstrations from local libraries, schools, and other organizations. In addition, JASSTL support the St. Louis Japanese Language School by hosting the annual fundraising golf tournament. JASSTL has made donations every year since 1998, totalling more than \$60,000.

During the past five years, the Society has recruited new board members and strengthened the annual business/economic and cultural programs by obtaining grants from various sources, including the Japan Foundation, Keizai Koho Center, Sasakawa Peace Foundation, and TOMODACHI (US-Japan Council). Of these, the largest grants have been from TOMODACHI for 2013-2017 (\$92,000), the Japan Initiative grant for 2015 (\$28,738) and 2016 (\$29,238), and the Japan Update grant for 2015-17 (\$40,000).

In 2015, with a grant from the Japan Foundation, JASSTL began a year-long strategic planning process. The process included the selection of a paid project manager, formation of a steering committee, hiring a consulting firm, conducting a community survey, holding a board retreat, establishing a strategic plan, forming specific task forces, and carrying out work in those task forces. We initially identified 6 Areas of Strategic Focus, agreed to concentrate on 3 of these areas, and formed a committee in each area. The 3 areas are Organization, Fundraising, and Recruitment.

In 2016 JASSTL entered the second year of the funded project, capacity building, focusing on the three areas. The **Organization** component included long-term financial planning, succession planning, marketing, and community partnerships. For **Fundraising**, the Society developed various fundraising plans to raise \$16,000, which is what we need to retain the Project Manager for 2017 (8 hours/week). The **Recruitment** component focused on corporate recruitment by developing unique business/corporate events.

The fruits of these endeavors have been very encouraging. For fundraising, we received our first award from the Boeing Community Fund (\$3,000). We recruited new corporate members, and increased investment from some existing members. Our top corporate member is now at the \$5,000 level (previously it was \$1,000). We met our fundraising goal of \$16,000 from several new fundraising plans we executed.

We also enhanced our community partnerships in delivering cultural and educational programs to reach different audiences in the community. JASSTL partnered with the St. Louis Art Museum to present Japanese calligraphy, children's story-telling, flower arrangement, tea ceremony, and traditional music and dance. JASSTL also developed a new kimono show ("Introduction to Kimono") at the annual Japanese Festival, thanks again to the grant from the Boeing Community Fund.

JASSTL built a new website on the Wild Apricot platform in 2015 and began using it to manage our events and memberships throughout 2016. The project manager has worked to take fuller advantage of its capabilities, including marketing emails, membership drives, and metric analysis. Learning these capabilities, designing the emails, planning the membership drives, and analyzing reports all require additional time. The project manager will continue to work on further improvement of the new website and the use of Wild Apricot in 2017.

All the above mentioned efforts are used in strengthening our **annual programs**. There are nine annual programs or events throughout the year (highlighted in bold below), providing business/economic, cultural, and social programs. In addition, over 120 individuals attended our monthly programs, such as Ikebana and tea ceremony in 2016. Below is a list of the events and programs we offered along with a short summary of how we are improving on each event/program.

## 2016 Events

### January 17 Shinnenkai 新年会 **New Year's Celebration**

The event featured Consul General Toshiyuki Iwado from Chicago, Dave Lowry's remarks about the Japanese New Year's celebration, kagami-biraki (sake opening ceremony), New Year's special meal, and fukubukuro raffle. The event was held at Sushi Sen Restaurant and sold out in advance with 65 attending.



January 10, 24, 31 Ikebana workshop (Japanese Flower Arrangement)

January 31 Chanoyu: Japanese Tea Ceremony

### February 17 **Spring Japan Update: Tradition & Innovation in Beer & Sake**

This business and social program presented a panel of experts on the History and Innovations in Beer and Sake at the Urban Chestnut Brewing Co. Adam McBrady

presented the history of beer-making in general and the Urban Chestnut Brewing Co.'s specific approach to craft brewing. Timothy Sullivan from New York, who teaches at the Sake School of America, delivered a lecture on Sake 101 and the global sake market. Katsuhiko Miyasaka from Suwa, Japan, spoke about the evolution of sake-making processes and his family sake brewery business, which dates back to 1662. His presentation included the pasteurization of sake, the use of wood barrels in the Edo period, the science of sake-making supported by the Meiji government, and discoveries of sake yeast since 1906, including Yeast #7, which his family sake brewery discovered in 1946. The audience learned that this strain of yeast is still the most popular yeast used in sake-making in Japan!

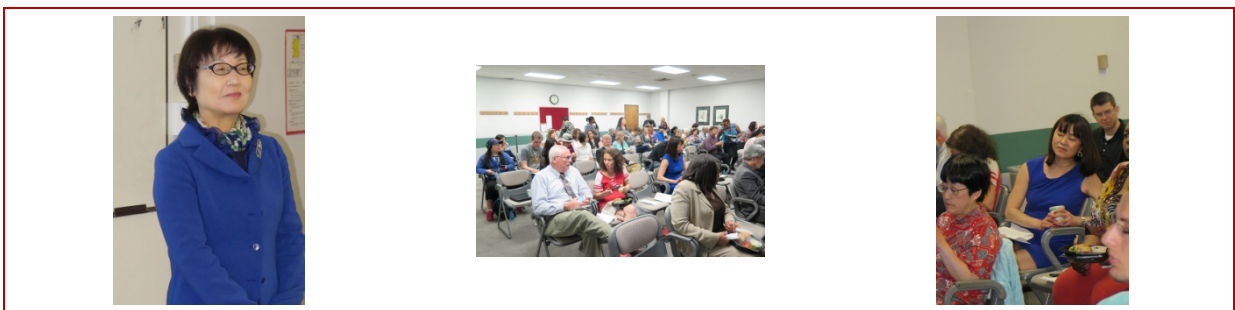


February 7, 21 Ikebana workshop (Japanese Flower Arrangement)  
February 28 Chanoyu: Japanese Tea Ceremony

March 6, 13, 20 Ikebana workshop (Japanese Flower Arrangement)  
March 27 Chanoyu: Japanese Tea Ceremony

April 28 Special Lecture on Women in the Japanese Work Force

Professor Mitsuko Horiuchi from Tokyo gave an informative talk on the current and future state of women in the Japanese workplace. The event was held at University of Missouri-St. Louis. Altogether, 80 people came to the event, including college students, local corporate representatives, and the general public. They engaged in lively discussions during the Q&A session with the speaker. Sasakawa Peace Foundation USA funded the program with free admission and provided lunch to attendees.



April 10, 24 Ikebana workshop (Japanese Flower Arrangement)  
April 17 Chanoyu: Japanese Tea Ceremony

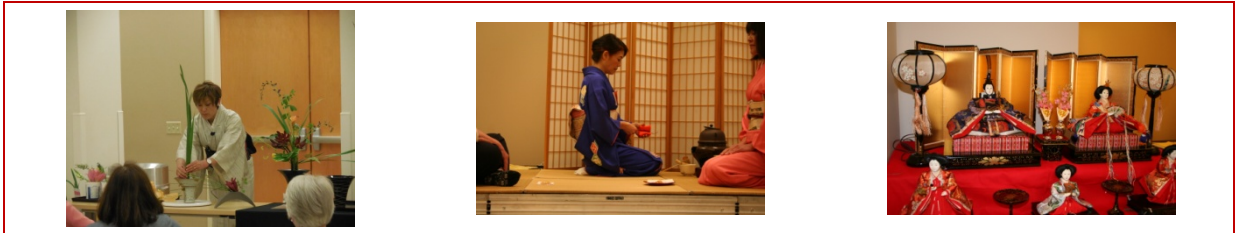
May 19 The Boeing Culture Day

The Japan America Society of St. Louis participated in the Boeing Culture Day. More than 100 Boeing employees visited our tables while Dr. Usui (JAS President) made

various ikebana arrangements and Chip Meyer (Project Manager) talked to the individuals about JAS activities and events.

### **May 22 A Celebration of Japanese Culture**

This mini-Japanese festival at the Missouri History Museum has gained popularity each year since we began offering it in 2013. In 2016, we presented 7 performances to 120 attendees. We promote young talented students of Japanese arts and culture to nurture the next generation of cultural performers.



June 5, 26 Ikebana workshop (Japanese Flower Arrangement)

June 26 Chanoyu: Japanese Tea Ceremony

July 3, 10, 17 Ikebana workshop (Japanese Flower Arrangement)

July 24 Chanoyu: Japanese Tea Ceremony

### **July 21-August 4 St. Louis-Ishinomaki Friendship Program (Ishinomaki, Japan)**

In 2016 we successfully concluded the 4<sup>th</sup> year of the student exchange, taking five young American students from St. Louis to Ishinomaki. The 2016 program was 2 weeks in duration and included the homestay with Japanese families for the first time. This homestay experience was the most important feature of the 2016 exchange. We were impressed with the continued participation of previous Japanese participants, chaperons, and coordinators in this program. They carry forward the mission of building grassroots relationships between Japan and the United States. Some portions of the 2016 trip felt very much like a reunion with old friends.



August 7, 14, 28 Ikebana workshop (Japanese Flower Arrangement)

August 28 Chanoyu: Japanese Tea Ceremony

### **September 3-5 Annual Japanese Festival**

JASSTL implemented new ways to increase our income based on strategies identified in our board workshops. For example, we expanded our tee-shirt sales at the festival, offering different designs and partnering with corporations to produce custom festival shirts for them. We raffled a pair of airline tickets to Japan at the festival for the first time. This fundraising was a huge success, yielding more than \$5,000 in net income.

JASSTL also presented a very successful new kimono show (“Introduction to Kimono”) at the annual Japanese Festival, thanks again to the grant from the Boeing Community Fund. The kimono show was an introduction to Japanese culture through kimono, focusing on different types of kimono, from very formal to very contemporary. The program involved a stage director, three script writers, one professional hair dresser, two assistants, three narrators, and 10 models.

### **September 22 Fund Raising Golf Outing (Pevely Farms)**

This annual fundraising for the St. Louis Japanese Language School produced a net income of \$3,694.29, thanks to our corporate members, in particular Novus International. JASSTL donated \$3,000 to the Language School.

September 18, 25 Ikebana workshop (Japanese Flower Arrangement)

September 18 Chanoyu: Japanese Tea Ceremony

### **October 11 Fall Japan Update**

Nidec Motor Corporation, one of our corporate members, initiated this business event and JASSTL co-sponsored it featuring Ambassador Kenichro Sasae and Congressman Billy Long. It was a unique VIP event and was held at NIDEC. The event was designed to strengthen JASSTL’s visibility in the St. Louis business community and expand our networks with potential new members.



October 16 Passport to Japan (St. Louis Art Museum)

October 22 Japanese Art after Dark (St. Louis Art Museum)

October 28 Urban Underground (St. Louis Art Museum)

JASSTL partnered with the St. Louis Art Museum to present Japanese traditional music and dance, calligraphy, children’s story-telling, Ikebana (flower arrangement), tea ceremony, and taiko music.

October 2, 23, 30 Ikebana workshop (Japanese Flower Arrangement)

October 23 Chanoyu: Japanese Tea Ceremony

### **November 10 JAS Annual Dinner/Annual Meeting with live auctions**

The event included a special report by the young students who visited Ishinomaki in the TOMODACHI exchange this year and the election of the officers and board of directors for 2017. The venue was moved to Oishi Sushi Restaurant (from Wasabi) with Chef Hamamura in charge of the dinner. As part of our new fundraising efforts, the program included a live auction. As in previous years, the event sold out in advance with 70 attending.



November 6, 13 Ikebana workshop (Japanese Flower Arrangement)  
 November 6 Chanoyu: Japanese Tea Ceremony

**December 16-23 JAS Night at the Ballet: The Nutcracker**  
 December 4, 11, 18 Ikebana workshop (Japanese Flower Arrangement)

**2016 Board of Directors**

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Linda Austin	Moonbridge Publications
Bruce S. Buckland	Retired Honorary Consul General of Japan
Jack Coad	Retired from Parsons Brinckerhoff
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Dr. Joel Glassman	University of Missouri-St. Louis
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Yoshiaki Shibusawa	St. Louis Japan Society
Kenichi Kitajima	Novus International, Inc.
Dr. Chikako Usui	University of Missouri-St. Louis
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