The Japan-America Society of Washington DC

Annual Program Report 2016

59th Anniversary Year

The Japan-America Society of Washington DC (JASWDC) presented a wide variety of programs in 2016 with topics ranging from current events, economics & policy to culture, public affairs and education. In addition to these monthly programs, JASWDC organized two signature events with a nationwide scope: **The National Japan Bowl ®**, a competition for high school students studying Japanese language and culture, and **Sakura Matsuri - Japanese Street Festival**, a one-day street festival exhibiting Japanese culture which attracted over **25,000 people in 2016**. During the National Cherry Blossom Festival, JASWDC once again highlighted different genres of Japanese cinema, called **CineMatsuri**. Through programs such as these, the Society continues to carry out its mission of promoting US-Japan relations in the Washington, DC metropolitan area.

Corporate & Public Affairs Programs

January
Japan in 2016: A Look at the Year Ahead

June
Brown Bag Talk with Lauren Zelek: Growing Up Global
Brown Bag Talk with James Doman: Shikoku Henro
Life Coaching Seminar with Yoshiko Kurisu
Networking Night in Tokyo

July
US-Japan Networking Night - Tanabata

September
US-Japan Networking Night with Japan Global Initiative (JGI)
DC Roundtable with Japan Global Initiative (JGI) Program

October
JASWDC - JETAADC Networking Night
Life Coaching Seminar with Yoshiko Kurisu
TOP New York - Job Seminar

November
Potential Flashpoints for the Northeast Asia Region: Japan, China, The Korean Peninsula, and US Perspectives (*JUMP* Event)

December
30th Annual Dinner & Silent Auction
with Special Guest Panel David Sanger, Jacob Schlesinger and Sheila Smith
US-Japan Networking Night: Bonenkai - End of the Year Party

Cultural & Educational Programs

January
Seijinshiki Photo Shoot

February
Sake and Washoku Paring 2016
Soroban: Japanese Abacus Workshop

March
3.11 Anniversary "Tegami for Tohoku" Project
Tidal Basin Cleanup
CineMatsuri - Japanese Film Festival

April
24th Annual National Japan Bowl
56th Sakura Matsuri - Japanese Street Festival

May
Asia Heritage Festival - Fiesta Asia Street Festival (Booth)
Chinatown Community Picnic
Sake vs. Shochu

June
Karuta Workshop: Let's Learn Karuta

July
Ekoji Obon Festival (Booth)
Izakaya Pub Quiz Night
Karaoke Contest
Brown Bag Talk with Joanna Reed Shelton: A Journey of Faith in Japan

August
Italian Sake Dinner
Movie Night @ Chinatown

September
Cross-Cultural Communication: A Look into Japan's Unique Regions
Haiku: Transcending Borders (at the JICC)

October
Otsukimi: Moon Viewing @ US National Arboretum

November
Opening Reception for Along the Eastern Road: Hiroshige's Fifty-Three Stations of the Tokaido
Japan 360°: Bonsai - Stories, Inspiration and Art
Shichigosan Photo Shoot
Haiku Contest with the JICC

JASWDC's Signature Programs Highlights

24th National Japan Bowl®

Created by JASWDC in 1992, the Japan Bowl is an academic competition that tests the achievements of high school students throughout the United States who are studying the Japanese language. However, Japan Bowl goes beyond language by also testing the student's knowledge of Japanese culture.

24th National Japan Bowl Facts:

- ☆ **221 students, 76 teams** competed at the National Japan Bowl
- ☆ **Level 4 Champions** visited Japan thanks to the **Mazda Foundation**
- ☆ **24 students** traveled to Japan as part of the **Kakehashi Project**, supported by the Japanese government
- ☆ Japanese performers and artists who joined the National Japan Bowl: **Tamagawa University Dance & Taiko Group**, professional Shogi player **Madoka Kitao**, artist and art director **Sebastian Masuda**, and J-Pop band **Kanadete sorou**

2016 National Japan Bowl, Kakehashi Project and Mazda Foundation participants meeting with HIH Princess Takamado.

Table For Two at the 56th Annual Sakura Matsuri - Japanese Street Festival

56th Annual Sakura Matsuri - Japanese Street Festival

First held in 1961, the Sakura Matsuri - Japanese Street Festival is now the largest one-day exhibition of Japanese culture in the United States. The Sakura Matsuri is a family-friendly festival. There are over 15 vendors of Japanese food, two beer gardens, 30 exhibitors of Japanese arts and culture, 15 vendors of Japanese products, and over 30 hours of live performances on multiple stages, including traditional and popular Japanese music and dance and martial arts demonstrations.

2016 Sakura Matsuri Facts:

- Over **25,000** attendees at **new Capitol Riverfront location** - JASWDC's largest outreach program!
- **Celebrity Chef Rika Yukimasa** from NHK WORLD and **Chef Naoko Moore or "Mrs. Donabe,"** demonstrated Japanese cooking at the **Culinary Arts Pavilion**
- **Highlights:** Sakura Science, Doraemon, NHK's Domo-kun, Hakutsuru Sake Tasting, Kirin Beer Gardens, JR Central, Japan WOW! Pavilion, and 4 stages .

Japan-in-a-Suitcase (JiS)

One of the JASWDC's most important missions is to reach out to the next generation of young Americans and interest them in Japan and the world beyond our shores. We strive to promote this intercultural understanding through our "Japan-in-a-Suitcase" program. **JiS** is a **free program** which packs a little bit of Japan in a suitcase and brings it to area children at schools, libraries and festivals. This program promotes understanding of Japan and Japanese culture to school children in Grades 3 and up through hands-on activities, games and demonstrations.

2016 Japan-in-a-Suitcase Facts:

- JASWDC visited 42 elementary schools, libraries, camps and festivals
- We reached out to over 1800 children through JiS in 2016
- 95 JiS volunteers have helped us strengthen the program

Photo by Jeff Song

JiS Staff and Volunteers visit Tuckahoe Elementary School in Summer 2016

Ohanashikai volunteers and staff celebrating Halloween.

Ongoing Programs

JASWDC strives to bring meaningful programs to the **Greater Washington DC** area. We have many programs that are weekly or monthly.

- Japanese Language School
- English Language School
- Ohanashikai - Japanese Story Time
- Yoga in Japanese
- Shodo Classes
- Tanaka & Green Academic Scholarship
- Networking Lunch in Japanese
- Poli-Sci & Economics in Japanese
- Japanese-English Toastmasters
- J-Book Club
- Monthly Kimono Workshop
- Cooking Classes