

# Japan America Society of Minnesota



# 通信

The Tsūshin is a membership publication of the Japan America Society of Minnesota

January 2022 Vol. 31, No. 1

## Happy New Year 2022 謹賀新年



Wishing you all a wonderful new year!

JASM Team

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## Upcoming: A Tale of Two Friends: A Brief History of Minnesota-Japan Relations (Online)

We are delighted to announce a webinar: *A Tale of Two Friends: A Brief History of Minnesota-Japan Relations*, presented by Professor David Schultz Hamline University Distinguished Professor of Political Science and University of Minnesota Professor of Law, on **Thursday, January 27, 2022 at 6 p.m.**



Please register today by clicking [here](#).

Minnesota and Japan have a long history together with some good and not so good times. This talk reviews and introduces the story of how Japan and Minnesota have forged a strong bond and friendship. Those curious about the path Minnesotans and Japanese people have taken together will find this a fun and engaging talk.

**David Schultz** is Hamline University Distinguished Professor of Political Science and a University of Minnesota Professor of Law. A three-time Fulbright Scholar who has taught extensively in Europe and Asia, Professor Schultz is the author of more than 40 books and 200 articles.

**\$8: Non-Member**

**\$0: JASM Members**

*Fee is not refundable but is transferable. Please become a member to support JASM.*

## Upcoming: Digital J-Quiz 2022



On **Saturday, February 12th** high school students from across Minnesota and Wisconsin will be gathering for J-Quiz 2022 online, due to the COVID 19 pandemic.



Despite the pandemic, our goal for J-Quiz hasn't changed: namely, to increase cultural awareness and understanding and to bring

together students who have an interest in Japan. The high school students will compete using their knowledge of Japanese language and culture.

## Letter from the JASM President



Dear JASM friends and family,

Welcome to 2022 and the Year of the Tiger! While the weather has been waffling a bit with regard to whether or not we'll get a "real" winter, the Minnesota forecast seems to finally be settling into a more typical pattern of teens and single digit temperatures and some bouts of snow. Time to bundle up, everyone!

Now, down to business. First: in May of this year, JASM will turn 50 years old! What started as an informal lunchtime get-together with friends (so I'm told) has grown and persevered over the years to reach this impressive milestone. We owe our longevity to the many, many people who have believed in and invested in the Japan-Minnesota relationship in ways big and small. We have some exciting events planned to celebrate this special anniversary, so stay tuned for more details as May approaches.

Next, we are heading into our 23rd month of the COVID-19 pandemic here in the United States. Several news articles published in late 2021 predict that, given current trends, this particular virus may reach endemic status rather than being eradicated, meaning it would continue to circulate in the population and follow more predictable, routine patterns. JASM is still committed to following local, state, and federal coronavirus guidelines to ensure the health and safety of our community, and we will continue to provide programming opportunities accordingly. One of the benefits of being forced into a virtual environment is the increased accessibility of content creators to content consumers, and it has enabled us to provide you with some unique opportunities. We will endeavor to enable remote participation whenever and wherever possible from now on to keep our events and other resources available to the widest possible audience, regardless of the pandemic.

Finally, this is my last letter to you as President of the Board. After three years in the role, I am handing the reins over to a new slate of officers at the January board meeting. If I attempted to thank everyone who I would like to thank individually, I would surely forget someone, so please just know that I am deeply grateful to everyone who has had a hand in keeping this community going.

It's been an interesting journey for us these past few years—both as an organization and as individuals—but I can say without hesitation that it has been an honor to serve you all. JASM has a bright future ahead of it and dedicated, skilled individuals leading the way.

Thank you and best wishes for 2022,

Elizabeth Fehrmann  
JASM President

## Recap: Annual Meeting 2021

JASM held its Annual Meeting on Tuesday evening December 15th online.



After previewing the agenda, JASM President Elizabeth Fehrmann discussed some of this year's organizational highlights such as our strengthened desire to deepen relationships, membership growth status, and a look at JASM's 50th Anniversary year, 2022. Next, as Treasurer Yoko Torigoe was unfortunately absent, President Fehrmann read this year's financial report summary. Executive Director Rio Saito reviewed some 2021 event highlights.

The election of officers was conducted next. Motoko Hioki, Bob Luck, and Michiko Smith were re-elected, and Kat Dalager, Saiko McIvor, and Sukanya Momsen were newly elected to the JASM board. After the election, we honored outgoing JASM board members Masako Yoshida (who served on the board for two three-year terms and one year as secretary) and Clint Conner (who resigned to run for public office) for their hard work with JASM. President Fehrmann announced that new officer elections will be held at the first board meeting in January, so look for an announcement of new officers via e-mail and/or on Tsushin.

We thank everyone who attended our Annual Meeting 2021. JASM is ending 2021 on strong financial footing despite the turbulence of the past two years. We thank our members, donors, sponsors, and various grant givers. Your generosity, resourcefulness, and flexibility made all the difference.



### Membership News (11/21-12/20, 2021)

Thanks to the following new JASM members:

Mary Deschamp, Sukanya Momsen

Thanks to the following renewing JASM members:

Elizabeth Fehrmann, Briana Johnson, Brett Kaminski, Akiko Kilau, Nancy Lunning, Karl Reinhard, Richard Ryan, Kate Thersleff



# The Consul General Grassroots Caravan: Sawai Pharmaceutical Co., Ltd./Upsher-Smith Laboratories, LLC

This article and the pictures are provided by *Sarah M Brouillard, Upsher-Smith Laboratories, LLC.*



*Consul-General of Japan Hiroshi Tajima*



*Director of JETRO Ralph Inforzato*



*Minnesota House Representatives Kristin Bahner (left) and Kristin Robbins (right)*



The rich relationship between Japan and the U.S.—particularly Minnesota—was on display on Monday, Dec. 13 during an event celebrating a visit from Consul-General of Japan Hiroshi Tajima and Chief Executive Director of the Japan External Trade Organization (JETRO) Ralph Inforzato. The two men, who are based in Chicago, spoke on the topic of government and trade relationships between the Midwest and Japan. Their presentation was attended by a large group of local and state politicians and policymakers, including Minnesota State Representatives Kristin Bahner and Kristin Robbins, Maple Grove Mayor Mark Steffenson, and staff members from the offices of U.S. Senators Tina Smith, Amy Klobuchar, and U.S. Rep. Dean Phillips. The event was hosted by and at Upsher-Smith Laboratories, a Maple Grove, Minn.-based pharmaceutical company that was acquired by Osaka-based pharmaceutical company Sawai Pharmaceutical Co., Ltd. in 2017.

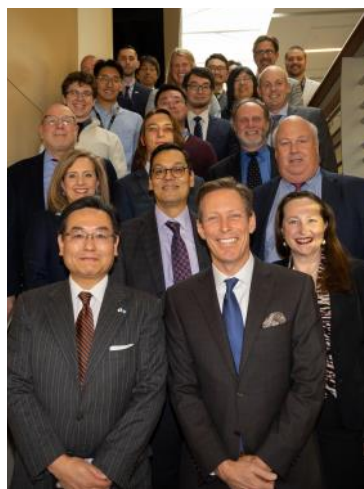


*Mayor Steffenson, the City of Maple Grove*

During opening remarks, Mayor Steffenson talked about the significant role that the City of Maple Grove—home of Upsher-Smith—plays as a hub of medical technology companies. “Companies like Upsher-Smith offer a symbiotic relationship, as they provide great jobs for our citizens, and in turn, Maple Grove provides great employees who provide great services,” he said. Rep. Robbins spoke about Japan being Minnesota’s fourth largest export market, totaling \$1.36 billion in 2020, which was actually down 11% from the year before due to the pandemic. “We know that this is just the beginning of a thriving relationship,” she said.

In his keynote presentation, Consul-General Tajima shared how in the ten Midwest states his Consulate covers, there are a total of 1,637 Japanese business facilities—105 in Minnesota alone—supporting more than 150,000 jobs. He also described how Japan has responded to the pandemic and its plan for dealing with the virus going forward. “COVID-19 has challenged many traditional ways in which we’ve nurtured our cooperative international relationships,” he observed. Closing out his comments, he invited everyone to attend the 2025 Expo in Osaka, which already has 64 countries, including the United States, that have announced their participation. The theme of the expo will be *Designing a Future Society for Our Lives.*

JETRO Chief Executive Director Inforzato expanded on the topic of Japan-U.S. business relations, first explaining how his organization serves as the official trade and investment promotion agency of the government of Japan. He described how Japanese direct investment in the U.S. economy has grown steadily, with its total investment at the end of 2020 being \$679 billion—ranking first among all investor countries, ahead of Canada, Germany, and the U.K. As far as manufacturing—the sector that host Upsher-Smith occupies—Japanese companies employ 527,500 Americans, the highest among all investor countries. And Japan’s employment growth was similarly the largest among major investor countries.



*...continued on page 4.*

*Please thank our members with your support!*

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UMN Department of Asian and Middle Eastern Studies  
University of North Dakota—Grand Forks  
Winona State University Global Studies Dept.



## Foreign Minister Commendations

This is from the post on Facebook of Consulate General of Chicago on Dec. 17, 2021 ([Consulate-General of Japan in Chicago 在シカゴ日本国総領事館 | Facebook](#))



<https://www.facebook.com/photo?fbid=282177237282546&set=pcb.282177277282542>

On Dec. 13, Consul-General Tajima awarded Foreign Minister Commendations to the Minneapolis Ibaraki Sister City Association and the Saint Paul-Nagasaki Sister City Committee. Many thanks to these committees for their continuous efforts in fostering lasting relationships between Japan & the U.S!

## The Consul General Grassroots Caravan: Sawai Pharmaceutical Co., Ltd./Upsher-Smith Laboratories, LLC continues...

Inforzato illustrated his points by sharing anecdotes about several Midwest towns and their close relationships with Japanese companies that own businesses within their communities. He included the example of Winona, Minn. and its support of Peerless Industrial Group, a maker of heavy lift chains, which is owned by Japanese company KITO. “What I want you to take away is that local and state governments offer a very important element in the whole U.S.-Japan economic relationship,” he said.



Rusty Field,  
President & CEO of  
Upsher-Smith

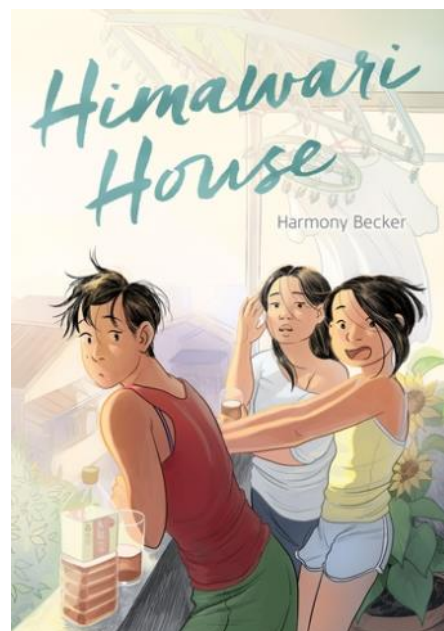
Rusty Field, President & CEO of Upsher-Smith, offered an overview of the company, its capabilities, and its relationship with Japan via its owner, Sawai Group Holdings, Ltd. “What was great about Sawai’s acquisition was how consistent our corporate philosophies were—we share a ‘Patients First’ mindset and we similarly prioritize quality—which made the differences between our countries seem a little bit smaller. We also learned an immense amount from each other,” he said.

Following the presentations was a brief Q&A and then a tour of Upsher-Smith’s newly constructed 300,000 sq.-ft. manufacturing addition, which is due to open sometime next year.

Sarah M Brouillard, Upsher-Smith Laboratories, LLC

## Tom Haeg’s Book Review

*Himawari House*; Harmony Becker, First Second Books, 2021, 384 pp.



The eponymous venue for this graphic novel is a residence hall in a Tokyo Japanese language institute (read: cram school). Our protagonists are five young adult students embarking on an academic career to learn Japanese language and culture (the macro) while finding their own identities (the micro). Their backgrounds are diverse: American (Nao), Singaporean (Tina), Korean (Hyejung), and two Japanese brothers, Shinichi the extrovert and Masaki the introvert. They seamlessly bond while experiencing their common throes during meals, excursions, theater, and never-ending conversations in this coming-of-age story wrapped in a one-year time frame.

Becker cleverly adopts bilingual dialogue balloons to enliven the conversations. While the language used tends to be monosyllabic and somewhat uncomplicated (perfect for a graphic novel) the effect showcases the characters’ accents and dialects, making them more distinguishable and authenticating the charm of the foreign exchange experience.

The overall themes are reminiscent of identifiable urges also found in “The Paper Chase” movie or a “Friends” sitcom episode (e.g., ‘we’re all in this together’, ‘us against the world’, ‘isn’t it great we have each other’, etc.). While these leitmotifs are okay for a while, some may find the book a bit predictable and redundant. Fortunately, the entertaining storyline is redeeming.

Becker is both author and illustrator in this, her solo literary debut. She also was the illustrator in George Takei’s graphic novel *They Called Us Enemy*. She currently lives in Mexico City and, yes, you will be reading (and seeing) more of her work.

Tom Haeg

## 海外滞在者の運転免許証の更新に係る特例について

在シカゴ日本国総領事館からの海外在住者へのお知らせの転写です。

9月24日、「海外滞在者の運転免許証の更新に係る特例について」と題するメールをお送りしたところですが、そのうち一部が変更になりましたのでお知らせいたします。

具体的には、特例のうち、新型コロナウイルス感染症対策の一環として、有効な日本の運転免許証をお持ちの方が事前に郵送等で申請いただくことで、更新・運転可能期間を3か月間延長することを可能としていた措置について、令和3年12月28日をもって申出の受付（＝郵送の場合申請書類一式の到着日とする）を終了することとなりました。

詳細は、以下警察庁ホームページ「新型コロナウイルス感染症への対応について」をご確認ください。

[https://www.npa.go.jp/bureau/soumu/corona/index\\_corona\\_special.html](https://www.npa.go.jp/bureau/soumu/corona/index_corona_special.html)

なお、その他の下記の措置につきましては引き続き活用が可能です。

- ・日本の運転免許証を保持している海外滞在者の方は、更新期間前でも、一時帰国の際に更新することができます。
- ・期限内に更新できなかった場合でも、以下の2つのいずれかにより、帰国後スムーズに免許の再取得ができます。

(1) 日本の免許が失効して帰国した際も、外国で免許を取得しその後3か月以上滞在している方は、視力など簡単な検査のみで日本の免許を取得することが可能です。

(2) 外国で免許を取得していない方は、失効後3年以内でかつ帰国後1か月以内であれば、更新と同じ手続（適性検査＋講習）で免許を取得することが可能です。

・また、外国等で取得した国際運転免許証等を所持することによって、日本の免許を受けることなく（日本に上陸したときから1年間）、日本で運転することが可能です。

ご不明点等ございましたら、免許証を発行された都道府県の運転免許センターにお問い合わせください。

警察庁ホームページ「海外滞在者の運転免許証の更新等に係る特例について」[https://www.npa.go.jp/bureau/traffic/menkyo/kaigai\\_tokurei.html](https://www.npa.go.jp/bureau/traffic/menkyo/kaigai_tokurei.html)

当館連絡先

Tel: (312) 280-0400 (24時間対応) (注)

Fax: (312) 280-9568

Email: [ryojil@cg.mofa.go.jp](mailto:ryojil@cg.mofa.go.jp)

(注) コロナウイルス感染症予防のため、現在業務体制を縮小しております。平日午前9時15分から午後5時までは音声案内に従って操作しますと担当部門につながります。土曜・日曜・祝祭日、平日午後5時以降、翌日午前9時15分まで（事件、事故、その他緊急の用件）は、音声に従って操作しますと、閉館時の緊急電話受付につながります。

## JASM's Email Addresses Changed

Have you already updated our email addresses?



We would like to share JASM's new email addresses.

JASM general email: [jasm@mn-japan.org](mailto:jasm@mn-japan.org)  
Rio Saito: [executivedirector@mn-japan.org](mailto:executivedirector@mn-japan.org)  
Yoko Ueno: [programmanager@mn-japan.org](mailto:programmanager@mn-japan.org)

The old email address with @us-japan.org will be completely inactive starting January 1st, 2022. Please save the new addresses in your contact list!

## Calendar

### January

A Tale of Two Friends: A Brief History of Minnesota-Japan Relations (Online) on Thursday, **Jan. 27, 2022**

## Advertise in the Tsushin!

### Advertisement Rates

Style	Size (height x width)	Cost/issue
1/4 page	5 x 3.5 in	\$50.00
1/2 page	7.5 x 5 in/3.5 x 10 in	\$90.00
Full page	7.5 x 10 in	\$150.00
Classified	80 character line	\$10/line (minimum 2 lines)

Production and design available in both Japanese and English for an additional charge. Deadline for completed ads and classifieds is the 20th of every month.

**Questions? Contact  
the JASM Office  
[jasm@mn-japan.org](mailto:jasm@mn-japan.org)**





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通信

Tsūshin  
January 2022

The Japan America Society of Minnesota is a non-profit, non-political association engaged in bringing the peoples of Japan and the United States closer together in mutual understanding, respect, and cooperation. Through programs and interchange, it endeavors to promote an appreciation of cultural, educational, economic, public, and other affairs of interest to both peoples. Membership in the society is open to individuals, corporations, and other organizations interested in furthering its programs.

The Japan America Society of Minnesota is a member of the National Association of Japan-America Societies.

*Please report any inaccuracies you find in this publication to [jasm@mn-japan.com](mailto:jasm@mn-japan.com)*

### December Event

