

# Japan America Society of Minnesota



## 通 信

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

December 2023 Vol. 32, No. 12

### Recap: Mondale Award and Scholarship Gala 2023



Emcee: Clint Conner

On November 4th, the JASM community gathered at the Oak Ridge Country Club in Hopkins to celebrate the 26th Annual Mondale Award and Scholarship Gala. The Mondale Award and Scholarship Gala is JASM's most important fundraising event of the year that honors individuals who have made significant contributions to

Minnesota and Japan relations, as well as awards scholarships to distinguished students pursuing Japanese studies seeking to study abroad in Japan. This year's event was another great success, with nearly 150 individuals celebrating these efforts and individuals.

After a social and networking hour and opportunity for guests to bid on a variety of wonderful, silent-auction items, the event began with opening remarks from the Master of Ceremonies, Clint Conner. Mr. Conner gave a warm welcome to event guests and shared a little bit



From left: Rio Saito, JASM Executive Director, Consul-General Jun Yanagi, State Representative Samantha Sencer-Mura, and Ron Leonhardt, Honorary Consul of Japan, in MN, ND, and SD

about the history of the Mondale Award and Scholarship. Following opening remarks, Mr. Conner introduced and welcomed the recently appointed Consul-General Jun Yanagi, from the Consulate General of Japan in Chicago, who spoke about the positive relationship between Japan and the midwestern region and the central role played by JASM in promoting the relationship. He then invited everyone to share in a toast to honor these important efforts and achievements.

The evening continued with JASM President, Bob Luck, and JASM Executive Director, Rio Saito, recognizing our many sponsors who donated experiences, gifts, and resources to help make the event possible and successful. ... continues on page 3.



2023 Mondale Award Scholarship Gala Sponsors

### Upcoming: Annual Meeting 2023

The end of the year is just around the corner. It is time for JASM's annual meeting. The 2023 Annual Meeting will be on **December 13th at 6:00 pm** at Corporate Benefactor Member, **Taiyo International, Inc's new office.** ([Google Maps](#))



At the meeting, we will be reflecting on the year as a whole and looking forward to next year. We'll discuss additional ways we can further JASM's mission and will hold elections for board members. There will also be some special door prizes and light refreshments.

#### Agenda

1. Welcome
2. Call to Order
3. Message from the President - Bob Luck
4. Treasurer's report - Mio Ishida
5. Message from the Executive Director - Rio Saito
6. JASM Strategic Plan & Member Feedback discussion: *Survey participants will be notified via email at the beginning of December. Please keep an eye out for the survey in your inbox around this time.*
7. Board Elections
8. Board Candidate introductions - Joe Montgomery
9. Closing remarks & networking (fabulous door prizes!!!)

Registration priority will be given to voting members. Please contact [jasm@mn-japan.org](mailto:jasm@mn-japan.org) to check on space availability if you wish to bring a guest.

#### Parking information:

Please use Lilac Drive S to enter the parking garage on the east side. If arriving from Utica Street, take the road in front of the Taiyo office building, which will lead you to Lilac Drive and the parking garage entrance. There is no charge for parking. (Click [here](#) for the image)

### Membership News (10/21 – 11/20, 2023)

#### Thanks to the following renewing JASM members:

Deborah Huskins, Etsuko Kimura-Pederson,  
Yoko Liberman, Donald & Abby Marier,  
Riley & Saiko Melvor, Fusako Muro,  
Naomi Oshiro, Michaelle Watanabe,  
Masako Yoshida

## Message from Executive Director: Rio Saito



Hello JASM's friends and families,  
It is already the end of the year.  
Where did the time go? In Japanese,  
we call December not only just 12月

(12<sup>th</sup> month), but also 師走/  
Shiwasu. The first kanji is "master/  
teacher" and the second is  
"running". The end of year is so  
busy for everyone that even masters  
must run around taking care of  
things. This year we had quite few

of in-person events as well as online events, but also, it seems  
like we were invited by many different organizations to visit  
and/or collaborate with them. I had the privilege of being invited  
to 5 different companies including Jamf, Hennepin County, U of  
MN, Billy Sushi, and Hoya to talk about JASM and Japan. Also,  
We also participated in many events outside of JASM, such as,  
the Cherry Blossom Cerebration by St. Paul Nagasaki Sister  
City, International Festival by the city of Burnsville, an event at  
Tomodachi in Mall of America, Family Day at Minneapolis  
Institute of Art, Quantum Con and Anime Fusion. We also  
paired 7 Japanese guests through Grassroots Summit by Center  
for International Exchange with JASM members for home stay  
and I also had the honor of hosting the Executive Director of the  
JAS of Iowa and JAS of Heart of America Japan-America  
Society from Kansas City for the new director mentorship  
program. We also were invited to collaborate with the Chinese  
Community Center, along with the Korea Institute to collect  
stories of Asian immigrants in Minnesota. One of my goals is to  
work with the Chinese and Korean communities and I think this  
will be a great start to our relationship.

We also had our first renewed J-Quiz. In the past, it was strictly  
for the high school students who were taking Japanese courses,  
but now, it is open to anyone and everyone who is interested,  
and not to mention, it is online. The new mission of J-Quiz is to  
help people learn about Japan, instead of competition. And it is  
about growing together as a community by learning together. It  
was a little bit of a difficult decision and process to make huge  
changes to an event that was carried on by those who came  
before us for so long, but we have a good feeling about the new  
format, and we believe that this will work better with the current  
audience. Our J-Quiz 2024 will be on February 11<sup>th</sup>. Please  
come join us and learn together.

JASM would like to continue evolving and growing to serve our  
ever-changing community with you. Thank you for your  
continued support. As we would love to continue our outreach  
efforts, we will need your help to spread the message. We  
always have so much fun with our volunteers so, please let us  
know if you are interested in volunteering. I am looking  
forward to 2024 and more adventures (or trouble) we can get  
ourselves into.

Have a happy new year!  
*Rio Saito, Executive Director*

## Sponsors and Supporters: 2023 Mondale Award and Scholarship Gala

We would like to give special thanks to sponsors of this  
year's gala:

*Matsu/Pine Tree Sponsor*



*Take/Bamboo Sponsors*



*Ume/Plum Sponsor*



**John and Hiroko Shade**

**This event was made possible through the generous contribution of  
our sponsors.**

We are incredibly thankful for all of your contributions and  
unwavering dedication to JASM and our associated events. It is  
thanks to you that JASM is able to fund scholars, put on events,  
and succeed in hosting our gala every year. We look forward to  
another fantastic year with all of you.

**The Japan America Society of Minnesota sincerely appreciates  
the efforts and contributions of these individuals:**

*Gala Planning  
Committee*  
Kat Dalager  
Mio Ishida  
Michiko Smith

*Kimono Assistance*  
Tomoko Stubbings  
  
*Tejime*  
Shiro Katagiri

Crystal  
Neff, Program  
Volunteer  
Peter Vesely,  
Volunteer

*Gala Auction*  
Marc Blehert  
Mio Ishida, Chair  
Michiko Smith

*Audio*  
Ted Yang

*Mondale Award  
Committee*  
Bob Luck, Chair  
John Babcock  
Mirja Hanson  
Elizabeth Fehrmann

*Emcee*  
Clint Conner

*Photographer*  
Krizia Almoite  
Thao Hoang,  
Assistant

*Auctioneer*  
Kat Dalager

*JASM Office*  
Rio Saito, Executive  
Director

*Mondale Scholarship  
Committee*  
Charles Chan, Chair  
Michiko Kato  
Dressen  
Mirja Hanson  
Bob Luck

*Floral Arrangement/  
Table Decoration*  
Sogetsu Study Group

Yoko Ueno, Program  
Manager  
Jael Medzagoh,  
Intern

*Dessert*  
Tomoko Drake

Chandra Colvin,  
Program Volunteer

## Recap: Mondale Award and Scholarship Gala 2023 *continued...*



*State Representative  
Samantha Sencer-Mura*

As is tradition for the evening, a silent auction was held as a fundraiser during the event, with everything from handmade pottery and art, Japanese food and beverage items, and even a signed baseball from Minnesota Twins player Kenta Maeda up for auction!

This year, we were fortunate to hear from State Representative Samantha Sencer-Mura as our keynote speaker, who spoke about her own story and the important work of fostering cross-cultural understanding and relationships. Rep. Samantha Sencer-Mura is the first Japanese American to serve as a legislator in Minnesota, representing District 63-A in Minneapolis. Her election and service represents an important milestone in the history of Minnesota's state government and in the diversification of its elected officials. Following her speech, President Luck returned to the podium to present the Mondale Award to this year's recipient, Mr. Dick Stahl. Dick has been an advocate for promoting U.S. relations with Japan and other nations for decades through volunteer and professional work, and was even awarded the Order of the Rising Sun and Gold Rays with Rosette by Consul-General of Japan in Chicago, Kenichi Okada, in 2021.



*Dick Stahl receiving the Mondale  
Award 2023*



*Kat Dalager, JASM Board  
Member and Auctioneer*

During dinner, the live auction took place, led by JASM board member, Kat Dalager, where guests bid on the awesome items donated by this year's sponsors. It was a lively event, and we even had an impromptu game of "musical bid cards!" Thank you to everyone who generously bid on this year's live auction items!

The Mondale Scholarship Presentation was given by Mondale Award Committee Member, Mirja Hanson, who presented the Mondale Scholarship to the following distinguished students:

Livvy Peters and Rachel Kelly, both juniors at Macalester College, and Kendra Martin, a junior at the University of Minnesota. We also heard from previous recipients of the Mondale Scholarship, who had recorded short videos sharing their inspiration for wanting to pursue their Japanese studies, their experience while studying abroad in Japan, how the scholarship has helped them in their studies, and advice for future scholarship recipients. Board member Kat Dalager returned to host the "Fund the Scholar" donation portion of the event before hearing from our final presenters for the evening.



*Mirja Hanson presenting  
Mondale Scholarship  
Committee, announcing for the  
Mondale Scholarship recipients  
for 2023-2024*



*Shiro Katagiri closing  
out the gala*

Emcee Clint Conner gave the closing remarks and introduced our final presenter, Mr. Shiro Katagiri, who led the ceremonial hand clapping custom, known as *tejime*, to close out the evening.

This year's Mondale Award and Scholarship Gala was another great success, and JASM could not have done it without the support and generosity of our donors, members, and guests. We enjoyed the wonderful company, delicious food, and a homemade dessert (a matcha mousse rolled cake!) by Tomoko Drake. We hope our guests and attendees felt the significance of the evening as well. Thank you to everyone who contributed!

*Crystal Neff, JASM Program Volunteer, with contributions  
from Andy Morris, JASM Board Member*



*Delicious dessert, matcha  
mousse rolled cake made by  
Tomoko Drake*

*Please thank our members  
with your support!*

### **Corporate Benefactor Members**

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Taiyo International

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UMN Department of Asian and Middle Eastern Studies  
University of North Dakota-Grand Forks  
Winona State University Global Studies and World Languages

### **Sakura Circle Membership**

Sam and Mirja Hanson  
Noriko Ishida  
Bob and Hisayo Luck  
John and Hiroko Shade

## 令和6年度（2024年） ミネアポリス日本語補習授業校 園児・児童募集

<http://www.minneapolisjapaneseschool.org/>

4月からの幼稚園及び小学部の新入生を募集します！

クラス	対象	体験	試験/面接	募集期間
おひさま組 親子教室	満2歳	1月20日	1月27日 (面接)	令和5年 11月20日～ 令和6年
幼稚園 年少組	満3歳	1月13日 (体験/ 面接)	-	令和5年 11月20日～ 令和6年
小学部	満6歳	-	2月3日	令和5年

対象年齢は令和6年4月1日時点での年齢。参加をご希望の方は、  
ガッドボイス [seito@minneapolisjapaneseschool.org](mailto:seito@minneapolisjapaneseschool.org) までご連絡ください。

### Trial Classes and Enrollment Interview at Minneapolis Japanese School

Class	Date of Birth	Trial Classes	Interview & Examination	Application Deadline
Parent and Toddler class	4/2/2021 ～ 4/1/2022	1/20/2024	1/27/2024 (Interview only)	1/13/2024
Preschool class	4/2/2020 ～ 4/1/2021	1/13/2024	-	1/6/2024
1st Grade	4/2/2017 ～ 4/1/2018	-	2/3/2024	1/27/2024

If you are intinterested in attending, please contact  
Ayako Gadbois at [seito@minneapolisjapaneseschool.org](mailto:seito@minneapolisjapaneseschool.org).

## Recap: JASM Fundraiser Chirimen and more 2.0



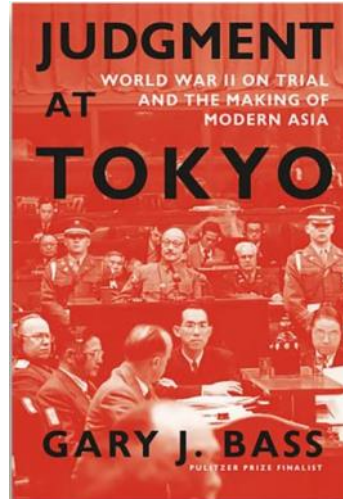
We hosted *JASM Fundraiser Chirimen and more 2.0* on Sunday, November 19, from 1pm to 7pm at Asia Mall in Eden Prairie. Asia Mall kindly let us use the space and thanks to many shoppers we could raise about \$1,500. The gently used beautiful chirimen and other clothes, bags, and shoes were donated by our member, Yukari Tokiwa.

Also, it couldn't be done successfully without the support of JASM engaged board members: Kat Dalager, Peter Hill, Joe Montgomery, and Andy Morris. We would like to thank the very dedicated volunteers Jessica Bemlott and Peter Vesely too. Thank you so much everyone who contributed to this event's success!



## Tom Haeg's Book Review

*Judgment at Tokyo*; Gary J. Bass, Knopf Press, 2023; 912 pages.



After more than 75 years, Gary Bass, esteemed political science professor at Princeton University, shakes off the dust of trial transcripts, misplaced documents and dated journal entries to cast new light on the so-called and obliquely misunderstood International Military Tribunal of the Far East, aka a Nuremburg-style trial to adjudicate the Japanese Imperial military after World War II. It is a story tracing legal proceedings lasting over two years resulting in seven death sentences, 16 life imprisonments, two lesser

sentences and one dismissal for unfitness to stand trial. Acquittals: none.

*Judgment claims the Tribunal was lax in due process and ignorant in legal definitions to hastily execute the 1945 Potsdam Declaration as its legal authority and raison d'être. Bass is not kind to the Chief Justice, Australia's William Webb, and neither were the other justices. They referred to Webb as "the dictator" and regarded him as "...argumentative and injudicious..." Bass proceeds to criticize all 11 jurists, representing 11 countries, as disparate and leaning to advocate for vengeance from purely national interests instead of justice. There were distracting dissents by three jurists who took issue with the proceedings. One in particular caught my attention. It was written by the Indian jurist Radhabin Pal in a loquacious 1,230 page dissent essentially apologizing for Japanese Imperialism under the pretext of colonial revisionism. The dissent has been inherited by post-War Japanese nationalists to excuse criminal activity during the war. And this is interesting: I learned there actually is a monument dedicated to the memory of Pal in the Yasukuni Shrine in Tokyo. Go figure.*

In fairness, Mr. Bass cites the Tokyo carpet bombing and the civilians who died in Hiroshima and Nagasaki as politically motivated and hypocritical omissions of judgment by the Tribunal diminishing its legal and moral authority. And let us not forget the general amnesty extended to Emperor Hirohito and the over-reaching effect of the Supreme Commander, Douglas MacArthur. Nonetheless, for purposes of closure, he cites the Mainichi Shinbun when it wrote "the executions of Japan's war leaders must become a symbol of the rejection of war for the entire world."

*Judgment is thorough and definitive, exuding comprehensive academic research and support. It can be read on several academic levels: trial review, history and social commentary. After another 75 years it will endure for its excellent scholarship.*

Tom Haeg

# 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 (minimum 2 lines)	\$10/ line

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**

## Japan America Society of Minnesota

- ☐ Membership Application   ☐ Change of Address
- ☐ Membership Renewal   ☐ Tax-deductible Donation

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Name (2nd adult of a household membership) \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_

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Phone \_\_\_\_\_

I would like to make an additional tax-deductible donation of \_\_\_\_\_

Amount Enclosed: \_\_\_\_\_  
(Please make checks payable to JASM)

Japan America Society of Minnesota  
P.O. Box 26639, Minneapolis, MN 55426

### Individual Membership

Sakura Circle Membership \$1,200+  
Individual .....\$50  
Student .....\$30  
Household .....\$75  
(2 adults plus children under 18)

## Calendar

**December 13, Annual Meeting 2023**

**February 11, J-Quiz 2023**

## Become a JASM Member

*Support our mission and become a member!*

1. Go to [mn-japan.org](http://mn-japan.org)
  2. At the top, hover over 'Support' then click on 'Join'
  3. Select your membership type and read the benefits and instructions.
- You can also become a member using your smartphone.

# 2024 Haiku Contest: The Minneapolis Ibaraki Sister City Association



The 2024 Haiku Contest is now accepting entries!

**This year's theme is "tomo (友)" which means "friend".**

Entries must be received by 11:59 pm on Wednesday, December 13, 2023.

The contest is open to students in grades K – 12 that attend a Minneapolis Public School. There is also an Adult category that is open to any adults living or working in Minneapolis. Entries are due by 11:59 pm on Wednesday, December 13, 2023.

Entries can be submitted as follows  
Via [Google Form](https://forms.gle/9K8K8K8K8K8K8K8K) (Best)  
Via email to: [misca.info@gmail.com](mailto:misca.info@gmail.com)

Remember that how wonderful your poem may sound to the MISCA judges, if it doesn't follow the 5-7-5 syllable pattern it will be rejected!

Last year we received over 600 entries. In January, MISCA board members will do an initial judging of all entries and select what they feel are the best 30 Haikus in each age category, K-5; 6-8; 9-12 and Adults, to send on to Ibaraki for final judging. The top eight winners in each category will receive their awards at the Annual Haiku Contest Ceremony to be held sometime in April of 2024.

We look forward to reading all of your amazing Haiku!





J | A | S | M

JAPAN AMERICA SOCIETY  
of MINNESOTA

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www.mn-japan.org

## 通信

December Tsūshin  
2023

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)

### November Events

