

# Japan America Society of Minnesota



# 通 信

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

April 2024 Vol. 33, No. 4

## Announcement: Takuzo Ishida Memorial Scholarship 2024



*Takuzo Ishida  
Memorial  
Scholarship  
Recipient: Olivia  
Tornoe*

It is our great pleasure to offer the annual Takuzo Ishida Memorial Scholarship to a high school student in Minnesota in honor of Mr. Ishida, JASM's former President. Thanks to the generous donations made by friends and relatives of the Ishida family and in his memory, JASM is honored to support a high school student's travel to and within Japan. In March, the Scholarship Selection Committee selected the 2024 recipient. We are delighted to announce that Olivia Tornoe, a Senior at John F. Kennedy High School in Bloomington, Minnesota, will receive this scholarship. We send our heartfelt congratulations, Olivia!

The Takuzo Ishida Memorial Scholarship Selection Committee were impressed not only by Olivia's academic drive and passion for learning, but also by her mature composure, her values and beliefs, and how they informed the way she interacted with and treated others.

Olivia, who also goes by her nickname Bennie, is in her third year of studying Japanese in high school, and her interest in Japanese art and culture were fueled by her early love of Japanese anime, manga, and pop culture. Her teachers have praised how her passion for Japan is woven into her school projects, which have included an animated manga video. She possesses a balance of diligent studiousness and making people laugh through her humor. She regards her parents and teachers as role models for their abilities to inspire, and she wishes to become a person and artist who can do the same for others. She aspires to study art and design after high school to become a professional in the art and design industry.

Olivia will be attending a 3-week program in Tokyo this summer through the Council on International Education Exchange, where she will study anime and manga in classes instructed by professional artists and designers and create her own characters and storylines, and she will also attend intensive Japanese language classes throughout the program.

The Committee recognize Olivia's strong belief in treating others with empathy, an open mind, and acceptance, and along with her mindfulness and resiliency in managing challenging situations, we believe she is well equipped for experiencing Japan in person for her first time, as well as for future endeavors with people of differing life experiences and backgrounds.

... continued on page 2.

## Upcoming: Corporate Roundtable 2024 with Miller Milling Company (in-Person)

Mark your calendar to join us for Corporate Roundtable on **Thursday, April 11, 2024!** We invite you to join us for a presentation provided by our corporate members, **Miller Milling Company.**

This event will feature the following topics:

- US Agriculture and Grain Market update - The wheat market has seen significant disruption with conflicts in Ukraine, once in a century weather events, and significant inflation. We will talk through how this has impacted the US wheat market, causing generational increases in grain prices. We will also discuss how food manufacturing companies like Miller Milling Company are navigating this new and changing business landscape.
- We will also include an overview of Miller Milling Company and our relationship with Nisshin Seifun Group.

**Price:** \$20: Non-Members, \$15: Members

**\*\*Tickets are non-refundable, but they are transferable.**

**Thursday, April 11, 2024 from 8 to 9 am**

7:30 – 8:00 - Registration & Continental Breakfast

8:00 – 9:00 - Presentation

**Address:** Miller Milling Company

10050 Crosstown Circle, Suite 350, Eden Prairie, MN 55344

([Google Maps](#))

### SPEAKERS



**Ben Oertel**, Miller Milling Company CFO – Ben has worked with various manufacturing companies for 20+ years in finance roles supporting operations and sales, along with mergers and acquisitions. This included stints building paint mixers, roofing shingles, hearing aids (twice!) and most recently as CFO of Miller

Milling Company, the 4<sup>th</sup> largest flour miller in the United States. He currently lives in Inver Grove Heights, MN with his wife, Jessica and three kids (Colin – 11, Kate – 9, and Lucas – 14 months).

**Will Untereker**, Miller Milling

General Counsel – Will has over 15 years' experience as trusted liaison between U.S. and Japanese businesses in multiple industries and roles on both sides of the Pacific. He joined Nisshin Seifun Group in 2015, who transferred him to Miller Milling Company in 2020. He currently lives in Edina, MN with his wife Wakana and two children (Billy – 11 and Noa – 7).



## Meet Our Board Member: Jeffrey DuBois



My name is Jeff DuBois, and I am a professor of Japanese Studies at the College of St. Benedict and St. John's University (CSBSJU), teaching the Japanese language as well as literature, culture, and film. I grew up in a small town in central New York State and had the opportunity to spend one year in Japan after high school through the Rotary International Youth Exchange program, living in Morioka, Iwate from 1998-1999. In a

strange twist of fate, my first host mother in Japan had been an exchange student who attended high school in the Wayzata School District in the 1970s, the same district that my kids attend now! Since that first experience in Morioka, I have lived in Saitama Prefecture as well as Tokyo (Takadanobaba, Koenji, Hongo).

I learned about JASM nearly one decade ago when several students at CSBSJU approached me about writing them letters of recommendations for the Mondale Scholarship. I consider myself an evangelist for study abroad and was excited that a scholarship exists to specifically support Minnesota-based students interested in Japan. I've written many such recommendations over the years and am happy to report that a bunch of my students have received the Mondale Scholarship. I joined JASM to help support my students and other students in Minnesota who aim to study in Japan.

I am still learning my roles within JASM, but I hope that my background in higher education can help broaden JASM's mission to engage in community learning opportunities. I hope to be part of the launching of a Japanese language education program and would also love to give lectures on topics such as Japanese films as well.

I have brought my family to the Obon festival at Como Park several times and my girls particularly loved wearing the light-up fox masks at Obon in 2023.

*Jeffrey DuBois, JASM Board Member*



Picture of Jeff and his daughters Nora and Maren

## Announcement: Takuzo Ishida Memorial Scholarship 2024 *continues...*

We are proud to support "Bennie" as an ambassador to further the strong relationships between Minnesota and Japan, and we look forward to her report of her experience in Japan through her unique vision.

Olivia gave this response to the award announcement:

*"I am incredibly honored and grateful to be this year's recipient of the Takuzo Ishida Memorial Scholarship. This year I am finally accomplishing my dream of traveling to Japan to study abroad and receiving this scholarship will significantly support my journey. I am so thankful to my teachers who both recommended me for this scholarship, and to everyone who made this opportunity for me possible. I look forward to reporting back to JASM, my friends, and my family about my experience in Japan as well as representing the important bond we have between Minnesota and Japan. "*

**Congratulations!**

### Membership News (2/21, 2023 – 3/20, 2024)

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

Oscar & Mariquita Anderson,  
Alex, Adrian, Apollo, & Apu Islam,  
Frederick Morris, Melissa Navin

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

Christine Faust, Thomas Greenwalt,  
Tom & Clare Larkin,  
Micah & Bekah Lindstrom,  
Jakub & Rei Nemeč, Jeff & Maritza Steele

#### Thanks to the following Corporate Members:

Satellite Industries, Inc.

Suishin Restaurant



## Upcoming: New Member Social 2024 Welcome new JASM Members!

*This is a new JASM member only event.*



New Member Social 2023 at Upsher-Smith/Sawai Pharmaceutical in Maple Grove, one of our corporate members

New members who registered from May 2023 to April 17, 2024 will be invited!

Please save the date for *New Member Social 2024 on April 18th, 6:30 - 8:00 pm (CT)*. This event will be **IN-PERSON** at Corporate Benefactor Member, **Taiyo International, Inc.** ([Google Maps](#)).

This event will help you get to know JASM a little bit better and become acquainted with other Japan enthusiasts in Minnesota and the surrounding area.

## JASM Fundraising Opportunity with “RaiseRight”



Raise funds by buying gift cards from RaiseRight to pay for your everyday shopping and spending year-round.

Groceries, dining out, home improvement, and everything in between. It's the most convenient and effective way to fundraise because earning becomes part of your everyday life. Plus, gift cards are great for helping you to set and keep a weekly budget.

It's never been easier to create opportunities for what matters most to you. No extra money spent. No extra time wasted.

### How it works:

Buy gift cards at full value from 750+ brands. Pick from eGift cards and physical gift cards.

Earn up to 20% on every gift card you buy.

Use gift cards at full value for your everyday purchases.

Watch your fundraising account grow throughout the year, thanks to the brands that give back to support your community!

### Get started today!

Create a free fundraising account on the RaiseRight mobile app or at [RaiseRight.com](#).

Have questions or need our organization's enrollment code? Contact: [jasm@mn-japan.org](mailto:jasm@mn-japan.org)

*Please thank our members  
with your support!*

#### **Corporate Benefactor Members**

Daikin Applied  
Delta Air Lines, Inc.  
MTS Systems Corporation  
Sawai Pharmaceutical Co., Ltd.  
Taiyo International

#### **Corporate Patron Members**

Dorsey & Whitney LLP  
Miller Milling Company

#### **Corporate Sustaining Members**

Arctos Law PLLP  
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Hamre, Schumann, Mueller & Larson, PC  
Japan Lifeline Co. Ltd.  
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Metropolitan Airports Commission  
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Minnesota Council of Teachers of Japanese  
Naigai Industries U.S.A. Inc.  
The Bank of Tokyo-Mitsubishi UFJ, Ltd.

#### **Corporate Contributing Members**

Briggs and Morgan, P.A.  
IACE Travel  
Murata Vios Inc.  
Satellite Industries, Inc.  
Surdyk's Liquor & Cheese Shop  
Taft, Stettinius & Hollister LLP  
UMEI

#### **Partners in Service**

JK's Table  
Kiku Enterprises, Inc.  
Metoree  
Minnesota Trade Office  
Saint Paul Saints Baseball Club  
Saji-Ya Restaurant  
Suishin Restaurant  
TOMODACHI  
Voyager Group Inc

#### **Nonprofit Members**

Concordia Language Villages  
Economic Club of Minnesota  
Global Minnesota  
JETAA Minnesota  
JETRO Chicago  
JP Network, St. Cloud State University  
KCC-Japan Education Exchange  
Macalester College Asian Languages & Cultures Department  
Minneapolis Japanese School  
Minneapolis Institute of Art  
Minnesota Orchestra  
Mu Performing Arts  
NDSU-Emily Reynolds  
Historic Costume Collection  
Red Wing Sister Cities Commission  
Twin Cities Aikido Center  
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

## Recap: Furoshiki Demo with Kazumi Kataoka (Online)



On Thursday the 21<sup>st</sup>, JASM was thrilled to host a Zoom demonstration by Kazumi Kataoka, the founder of Bagstitute.com. Kataoka-san has been living in Minnesota for the past 20 years and is passionate about educating others about the usefulness and versatility of furoshiki.

Before getting into the demonstration, Kataoka-san talked to us about the history of furoshiki up into the modern day, as well as its origin as mats for public bathhouses.

### History of Furoshiki

- ▶ Bathhouses for high-ranking officials and noble people started during Muromachi Period (14-16<sup>th</sup> centuries).
- ▶ People brought furoshiki to public bathhouses, spread it on the floor and took clothes off, wrapped their personal belongings while taking a bath.
- ▶ More bathhouses were built during Edo Period (17-19<sup>th</sup> centuries) catering to commoners, and furoshiki became a household item.



We also heard

about some fun trivia, like why certain furoshiki patterns show up as a part of the thief archetype in Japan. Kataoka-san then addressed the various ways that furoshiki can be an environmentally conscious choice today, such as being used instead of wrapping paper for gifts, or as a bag in lieu of plastic bags when out shopping. She also discussed the versatility of furoshiki, noting that they can be used for clothing storage, packing cubes, and even around the house as decoration. The use of furoshiki is so flexible in part due to there not being any particular rules about the size or materials, just a square sheet of fabric.



After learning about the materials, size, and patterns of furoshiki, we moved on to the practical portion of the talk. Attendees were encouraged to bring their own cloth and items to the demonstration in order to follow along with Kataoka-san's examples. The practical portion included

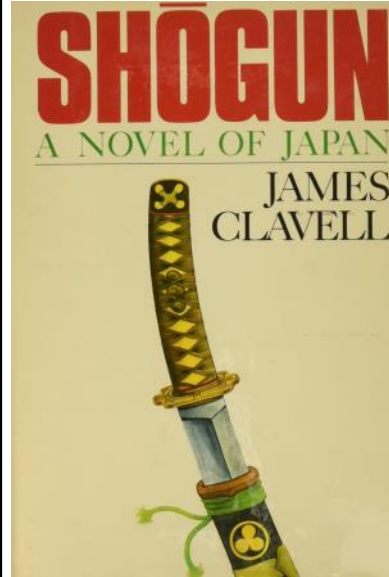
learning a couple of different knots, and then building on those to gradually wrap more complex items. We learned how to wrap things in both square and round boxes, then learned ways to wrap wine bottles, both singular and in pairs. Finally, the demonstration culminated in learning how to turn a furoshiki into a backpack or shopping bag. Specifically, she demonstrated how to use one singular furoshiki as a replacement for two average-sized paper shopping bags.

To finish the talk off, we heard more about Kataoka-san's website Bagstitute.com, and her efforts to promote furoshiki as a low-waste alternative to paper and plastics followed by a Q&A session. The demonstration was extremely informative, and we had a great time, so thank you so much to Kazumi Kataoka for coming in virtually to teach us all about furoshiki!



## Tom Haeg's Book Review

*Shogun*; James Clavell, Delacorte Press (U.S), 1975.



On February 16, 2024, the ten-part television series *Shogun* debuted on FX and Hulu streamline channels reprising a 1980s eponymous television series and novel written in 1975. Critics naturally banter which is the best, most accurate, and most entertaining. The answer, Dear JASM Reader (and Viewer), is yes to all of the above.

Although I am partial to the book since it introduced me to Japan in 1979, both television series are excellent complements. The earlier

adaptation featuring Richard Chamberlin as Englishman pilot John Blackthorne is considered more authentic and truer to the book portraying contrasts between Western and Japanese cultures to enhance television sweeps and ratings. But the new-and-improved version has a spectacular screenplay and stunning scenery coupled with heightened character developments to sustain the longevity of ten segments. And, yes, there is more sex and violence than the erstwhile commercial television version.

The original book is historically accurate with minor embellishment to capture critical Japanese moments in 1600 during the Sengoku period and feudalism's twilight when the *taiko* dies leaving a power vacuum and civil war in its wake. Internal turmoil is compounded by outside barbarian *gaikoku hito*, John Blackthorn and his merry band of Protestant interludes who seek to open up trade to Japan heretofore monopolized by the Portuguese. There are three concurrent plots: 1. the power struggle among the five regents and in particular between Toronaga and Ishido; 2. Catholics (Portugal and Spain) versus the Protestants (English and Dutch) for exclusive trading rights to Japan; and 3. Blackthorne's assimilation to Japanese values.

Author James Clavell died in 1994 at the age of 72. During World War II as a British officer in Singapore he sustained facial wounds and was imprisoned for three years in a Japanese prisoner of war camp. In addition to his prolific writing (*King Rat*) he was a film director (*To Sir, With Love*) and a frequent cinematic contributor (*The Great Escape* and more).

Tom Haeg

## JASM Seeks New Interns



JASM is currently searching for new interns for summer. We are looking for individuals who are:

- Interested in Japan
- Can participate in the Obon Festival on Sunday, August 18
- Have a familiarity with SNS and Microsoft Office programs

- Undergraduate students or recent graduates
- Willing to work flexible hours (10-25 hrs per week) and participate in JASM events

As JASM internships are unpaid, we offer meaningful work experience and intangible benefits. The networking opportunities introduce interns to influential individuals working within Japanese-related businesses and organizations. For more information regarding details on a specific position, please visit our website at [mn-japan.org/Internships-for-College-Students](http://mn-japan.org/Internships-for-College-Students).

If interested in applying, please email a resume and cover letter to: *Yoko Ueno, Program Manager; ProgramManager@mn-japan.org*.

We are looking forward to working with you!



## 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 \_\_\_\_\_

State \_\_\_\_\_

ZIP \_\_\_\_\_

E-mail \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_

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

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

### Individual Membership

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

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

## Japanese Conversation Clubs



### Minneapolis Japanese Conversation Club (formerly "Japanese Speaking Club")

The Minneapolis Japanese Conversation Club is an informal

group for those wishing to practice Japanese – all skill levels welcomed! The group also encourages native Japanese speakers who wish to practice their English to join, in addition to chatting in Japanese. Emphasis is placed on free talk, so participants can cover a wide range of conversation topics.

We encourage those just beginning the language as well as native speakers to participate to meet new people, discuss experiences in Japan, or simply to enjoy speaking Japanese with one another.

The group meets bi-weekly on Saturday afternoons at Corner Coffee Uptown, with Zoom meetings between in-person meet-ups. Schedules are posted to the group's Facebook page, at the following link:

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/minneapolisjapaneseclub/>

In-person meeting Location: Corner Coffee Uptown, 1414 W 28th St., Minneapolis, MN 55408

\*Note: A short questionnaire is required prior to joining. For more details, send an email to group coordinator Will Etkin: [will.etkin@gmail.com](mailto:will.etkin@gmail.com)



Check out another conversation group: Twin Cities Japanese Conversation Meetup Group (<https://www.twincitiesjapaneseconversation.com/>)

The goal of Twin Cities Japanese Conversation Meetup is language fluency in either Japanese or English. This group is for Japanese language learners who want to improve their Japanese speaking skills and/or native Japanese speakers who want to improve their English speaking. Those who just want to help out are also welcome.

Parts to the meetup: 自己紹介 (self-introductions), 質疑応答 (questions and answers about language) and 会話練習 (conversation practice). All meetings and study groups are held in *Discord*.

### Current Schedule:

Su 8:30-10a N5 Study Group, Genki Lesson 10

M 7-8p N3の勉強会、「とびら」という教科書での第1課

W 7-8p 日本語会話, alternating weeks of in-person and virtual meetups

Th 7-8:30pm N3の勉強会、「とびら」の第7課

\*Note: Proficiency in Hiragana is required prior to joining the group.

For any question about this group, please email Mariquita Anderson: [mariquita@twincitiesjapaneseconversation.com](mailto:mariquita@twincitiesjapaneseconversation.com)



J | A | S | M

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# 通信

April Tsūshin  
2024

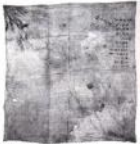
The Japan America Society of Minnesota is a non-profit, non-political association engaged in bringing the peoples of Japan and the United States closer together in mutual understanding, respect, and cooperation. Through programs and interchange, it endeavors to promote an appreciation of cultural, educational, 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)

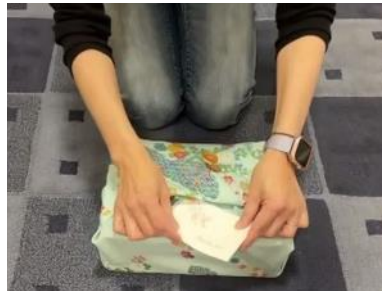
## March Events

### History of Furoshiki



図説「御子綱」の複製写真。複製で、かつて使われていた紙が残っているが、紙は劣化している。資料提供は、船山元吉氏。写し：正徳、正徳印刷局

- ▶ The oldest record of furoshiki dates back to Nara Period (8<sup>th</sup> century) although they were not called "furoshiki" yet.
- ▶ Linen clothes were used to wrap and protect treasures and valuables in shrines and temples.



### History of Furoshiki



- ▶ Furoshiki started to gain attention as an eco-friendly, reusable alternative to disposable plastic bags and wasteful wrapping paper.
- ▶ In 2006, Ministry of Environment in Japan launched a "Mottainai Furoshiki Campaign".

