

# Japan America Society of Minnesota



# 通信

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

August 2017 VOL. 26, No. 8

## NAJAS/KKC Speakers Emphasize “Why Japan Still Matters”

On July 21st JASM hosted a luncheon event sponsored by The National Association of Japan America Societies and the Keizai Koho Center as part of their Business Speaker Series in which a senior representative from a Japanese company and an authority on the U.S.—Japan relationship are invited to speak on the importance of the economic, social, and political ties between Japan and America in the present day. The speakers for this event were Ray Nishimoto, Senior Managing Executive Officer of Sumitomo Chemical and President of the Health & Crop Sciences Sector, and Sheila Smith, a Senior Fellow for Japan Studies at the Council on Foreign Relations.

The luncheon took place at the Radisson Blu in downtown Minneapolis. Prior to the presentations by the two keynote speakers, JASM President Marc Blehert opened with welcome remarks followed by Peter Kelley, President of the National Association of Japan America Societies, who spoke about the background of the event and introduced the keynote speakers.



Ben introduces Peter Kelley

Mr. Nishimoto started with a company overview and a history of Sumitomo Chemical giving a broad outline of how Sumitomo Chemical was started, how their business enterprise has evolved today, and the factors which have affected their corporate structure,

Continued on Page 2



Mr. Nishimoto Speaking at the Radisson

## U.S. Senator Al Franken to Keynote Mondale Award and Scholarship Gala, October 28



U.S. Senator Al Franken

JASM is very pleased to announce that U.S. Senator Al Franken will be the keynote speaker at the Mondale Award and Scholarship Gala at the Oak Ridge Country Club in Hopkins on Saturday, October 28.

Senator Franken grew up in St. Louis Park, MN and graduated from Harvard University. During his long career, he's been an award-winning comedy writer, a best-selling author, and since 2009 has represented Minnesota in U.S. Senate. In the Senate, he has worked to improve the lives of those in the middle class, and those striving to get into the middle class by focusing on education, health care, agriculture, and training workers for 21<sup>st</sup> Century jobs.

He's also pressed to address global climate change, safeguard Americans' privacy in a time of fast-moving technological advances, and he's worked to rein in Wall Street excesses that hurt middle class families.

During his address, Senator Franken will discuss his work and the importance of building bridges - not walls - between the United States and its important allies like Japan.

More information about the Mondale Gala will be provided in future issues of the Tsushin.

## NAJAS/KKC (continued)

identity, and values. After the general overview of the company, Mr. Nishimoto then focused on the interactions which Sumitomo took part in on a global scale, especially in the United States. Sumitomo just recently acquired MGK, a Minnesota based chemicals company, as well as already possessing several US companies such as Valent. Sumitomo has plans to create a research center in Illinois and expand the operations of MGK. Finally, Mr. Nishimoto talked about Sumitomo's dedication to creating a greener Earth by following the goals set by the UN in 2015. It was clear from his presentation that both Mr. Nishimoto and Sumitomo Chemical had a vested interest in maintaining and expanding US-Japan economic relationships both in the present and going into the future.

After Mr. Nishimoto spoke, Sheila Smith took the podium. Ms. Smith, as a Japan expert on the Council on Foreign Relations, has been travelling to and from Japan and Northeast Asia for many years, and speaks on the situation to the highest levels of the U.S. government. Ms. Smith spoke on the geo and sociopolitical situation in Japan and its surrounding countries, namely China and North Korea. She started by highlighting the major points of interest in Japan, Prime Minister Abe's current actions and position being in the forefront. Ms. Smith talked about how P.M. Abe was making moves towards changing the political language of the Japanese constitution, and how this is the first time since World War II that a single party in Japan had the power to legally attempt to do so. If P.M. Abe is successful in changing Article 9 of the constitution, it would represent a major change in the way the self-defense forces operate and it would open the door for more changes.

After speaking on the situation in Japan, Ms. Smith spoke about the wider picture. She talked at length about the aggressions of North Korea towards Japan and how Japan might need to invest much more heavily into missile defense systems and take the threat from North Korea much more seriously. The second "big picture" issue she covered was the Senkaku island dispute between China and Japan. Both sides have currently reached a stalemate on the situation, but that the dispute was far from over. She presented the relationship between the US and Japan as important not only because of the economic interactions we had, but also stressing the importance of having Japan as a solid ally in Asia, especially considering the growing influence of China on a global scale and the continued tense relationship with North Korea.

After both Ms. Smith and Mr. Nishimoto spoke they took several questions from the audience in which they clarified points in their presentations. Then the event ended, but the guests stayed to network and to discuss the points brought up by the speakers. This event was a great success, and JASM is grateful to NAJAS and the KKC for providing the opportunity hold this event. JASM also appreciates participation of the many guests who attended.

## Mikaharukai Prepare for Obon Festival with Traditional Dance Training

On Monday July 17th, Mikaharukai partnered with JASM to host a short training session in several of the traditional dances which will be performed at the Obon Festival later this month. The night started off with a Japanese dinner of curry, sushi, and inarizushi among other delicacies cooked by the Mikaharukai dancers.

After the volunteers had arrived, the ladies then taught three traditional dances to the volunteers, including an original dance arrangement created by their late founder Betty Wendt that incorporates "a year in the life of a Minnesotan" into dance.

At the Obon Festival, Mikaharukai will be teaching the dance to anyone who is interested, and they will all have the chance to join them in performing the dance in a large group on the performance stage.



Volunteers and Mikaharukai Dancing

## Membership News

Thanks to the following

Renewing JASM Members:

Michiko Dressen, Katharine & Richard Fournier, Peter Thompson, Bruce & Tomoko Drake, Luke Walbert, Hiroshi & Ursula Nomura, Mimi & Ben Bekele, Sharon Bigot, Michael Johnson, John Omori, John Babcock, Jan Magree, Sarah Walbert, James & Maria Christina Gregory, Seikei Hibino, Jean Jarvis, Jane Dever, Tom & Clare Larkin, Koichi & Yvonne-Marie Shiozawa, Karl Reinhard, Helen Sauer, Alan Gardiner, Heidi Anderson, Peter Hill, Akihito Ito, Michiko & Paul Buchanan, Christina Kunz, Kathleen Markwell, Lawrence & Keiko Farrar, Machiko Larson, Hiroko Nagai, Ann McCarthy, Hanna Brandt, Peter Gavin, Ann Van de Winckel

Thanks to the following

New JASM Member:

Daniel & Cheryl Dulas, Benjamin Pecarina, Ryan Brown  
Bryan Ross

Thanks to the following

New Contributing Member:

Hiroe Hosna

Thanks to the following

Renewing JASM Corporate Members:

Briggs & Morgan, P.A., Minneapolis Institute of Art, Macalester College

Thanks to the following

Renewing Sakra Circle Members:

Takuzo & Noriko Ishida, Ronald Leonhardt, Hiroko Shade

## Come Enjoy the Obon Festival at Como Park!



Lanterns from Obon 2015

Come and have a good time August 20th by celebrating the Obon Festival at Como Park. The largest Japan-related event in Minnesota, the event features food, performances, cultural demonstrations, and activities for adults and kids. Come and watch the Mikaharukai dancers, a Taiko performance, fish for goldfish, or just come and enjoy some good food. There will be something to do throughout the day. As sunset approaches, be sure to make your way to the water, where paper lanterns will be lit and set afloat, a practice which is believed to guide the souls of dead ancestors back to their old homes on earth. The Obon Festival is a great way to experience Japanese culture, and while enjoying a Japanese festival in Minnesota on a Sunday in August.

**When:** 3:00 p.m. to sunset on Sunday, August 20th

**Where:** Como Zoo Park, outside the Marjory McNeely Conservatory

### Ticket Prices

Adult (age 13 and older) – \$5.00

Child (age 3 to 12) – \$3.00

Senior (age 65 and older) – \$3.00

Under the age of 3 – Free

\*As parking will be rather hard to find as the day goes on, Como Park is

also offering a free shuttle service from:

St. Paul Schools District Service Center

1930 Como Ave

St Paul, MN 55108

*Please thank our members with your support!*

### Corporate Benefactor Members

3M Company  
Daikin Applied  
Delta Airlines, Inc.  
MTS Systems Corporation  
Taiyo International  
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### Patron Members:

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Medtronic, Inc.  
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MGK, Inc.  
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NDSU-Emily Reynolds Historic Costume Collection  
US China Business Connection  
U of MN Dept. of Asian Languages and Literatures, Japanese Language Program  
Winona State Univ. Global Studies Dept.

## Corporate Spotlight: Japan Lifeline Co. Ltd.



Japan Lifeline Co. Ltd. is an independent trading company and manufacturer of medical devices, specifically those in the cardiovascular field. Their devices help to combat against a wide range of cardiovascular diseases and support Japan's medical field.

Within the cardiovascular field of medical devices, Japan Lifeline specializes in four domains. The first is Cardiac Rhythm Management, in which they create implants which treat arrhythmias (irregular heartbeats). The second domain is Electrophysiology/Ablation. In this domain, Japan Lifeline creates disposable catheters used to diagnose and treat arrhythmias. The third domain is Cardiovascular and Vascular Surgery, which provides prosthetic blood vessels and heart valves. The fourth and final domain is Trans-vascular Intervention, in which Japan Lifeline creates devices which can provide intravascular treatment for a variety of conditions via a percutaneous approach.

At the Center of Japan Lifeline's company identity is the patient. Before creating or trading a device, they always ask two questions: "Is it appropriate for the patient?" and "is it valuable for the patient?" Through always asking these two simple questions, Japan Lifeline has come to be a respected and successful player in the medical devices field in Japan

JASM is proud and grateful to have Japan Lifeline for supporting us as a Corporate Sustaining Member. We would like to thank our previous contact Bruce Drake who is retiring as well as our contact in Japan Yumiko Hoshiba

## Ambassador Sasae Banquet to be Held at St. Paul Hotel



Ambassador Sasae

His Excellency Kenichiro Sasae, the Ambassador of Japan to the United States, will be the keynote speaker at a special banquet hosted by the Japan America Society of Minnesota to welcome him to Saint Paul and Minneapolis. The event will be held on **September 13th due to unforeseen circumstances in the schedule of ambassador Sasae.**

Ambassador Sasae will also meet with the Honorable Walter Mondale, the 42nd Vice President of the United States and 24th United States Ambassador to Japan, and the Honorary Chairman of JASM. Later in the day, JASM will be hosting a banquet welcoming Ambassador Sasae on his first official visit to the state of Minnesota. This event will also celebrate the 45th anniversary of the founding of the Japan America Society of Minnesota. Tickets for this event will be available online. JASM urges its members to not miss this special opportunity to meet the highest ranking Japanese government official to the United States.

## Volunteers Needed for Obon Festival August 20th!

We are looking for volunteers for this year's Obon Festival and would greatly appreciate your help in making it a success! This is a great opportunity for people who are interested in Japanese culture, meeting new people, and being part of a fun event. Volunteers are also compensated with free admission to the festival.

The Obon Festival will occur on August 20th from 3:00 P.M. to Sunset at the Como Park Zoo and Conservatory.

If you are interested in volunteering, please be sure to check the Obon Festival event page on the JASM



website. The page on the website includes a link to a form which you **must** fill out if you wish to volunteer.

Please, if you have any further questions or need more information, email us at [jasm.interns@gmail.com](mailto:jasm.interns@gmail.com) to learn more!

## Yoko Ueno Joins JASM as the New Program Manager



It is a pleasure to welcome Yoko Ueno to the position of Program Manager of JASM

Yoko Ueno who is originally from Nagoya has considerable experience living and working in Germany for over 10 years and in California for 6 years before moving to Minnesota in 2015.

Yoko has had the opportunity to manage and lead teams in cross-cultural situations in her career. For six years, Yoko worked at the Clark Center for Japanese Art and Culture in Hanford, California. There she served as the head of the 8,000 volume library. Later, Yoko was chosen to serve in the important role of director of the Japanese center when the Japanese art items were acquired by the Minneapolis Institute of Art (Mia). Yoko then came to Minneapolis and worked with the Mia staff in cataloging and organizing the Japanese art items that were received from the Clark collection.

In addition to her background in the arts, Yoko has been involved in building relationships that support activities of the art institutions where she has worked. She met with Japanese artists and visitors from all over the world who visited the Clark Center and also led the team at the Clark Center in preparing for the move to Minnesota. While at the Clark Center, Yoko planned and organized events that featured Japanese art and cultural activities, such as tea ceremony and flower arrangement. This was her opportunity to engage people who were fascinated by the art work they saw in the museum to learn more about the culture and traditions that produced these Japanese art pieces.

Yoko is excited to join the JASM Office Team and serving as the Program Manager. She enjoys being a "bridge between cultures" and believes that her new role with JASM fits her lifelong passions. Yoko will focus on organizing the JASM five Major "Destination" Events. She will work with the JASM Board Members in supporting their leadership in organizing the event and serving as leaders for the events. She will also supervise the JASM interns in their various duties at the JASM office.

We are happy to welcome Yoko Ueno to the JASM team and receive the gifts of her experience with the arts of Japan, her deep cross-cultural skills from living in three countries, her organizational expertise, and her passion for building bridges between Japan and the U.S. in Minnesota!

## U18 Baseball World Cup Taking Place Just Across the Border



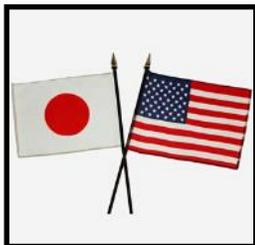
From September 1st to the 10th, The XXVIII WBSC U-18 Baseball World Cup 2017 will be hosted in Thunder Bay, Ontario, a six hour drive from Minneapolis.

There, twelve teams from around the globe will face off to determine a champion.

The Japanese U18 National Team is currently ranked first in the world, a favorite to take home the prize. Ranked directly behind them is the United States team. The tournament is sure to be exciting for any baseball fan out there and holds special significance for JASM as both Japan and the United States, in addition to being the highest-ranked teams in the tournament, are two of the most baseball oriented countries in the world.

If you find yourself in Thunder bay in early September, be sure to go and support either team, or both!

## Remembering Hiroshima and Looking Forward



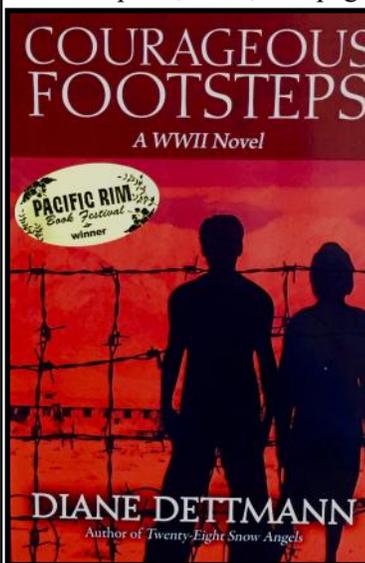
August 6th-9th, 1945 mark the dates in which war and technology both took a drastic step forward, when the U.S. dropped two atomic bombs on Hiroshima and Nagasaki, essentially ending World War II.

It is important that we remember what happened back then, both to serve as a warning for the wanton destruction and loss of lives that nuclear weapons can bring, as well as to honor and mourn the fallen and promise that such an event cannot be allowed to occur again.

Let us also remember that, even though such an event occurred, the United States and Japan were still able to overcome it and develop the strong relationship that we have today. Over the last 72 years many sister-city relationships have been formed as well as 36 Japan America Societies spread throughout the United States. JASM is grateful for the opportunity to be a part of building bridges between Japan and America, be it culturally or otherwise.

## Tom Haeg's Book Review:

*Courageous Footsteps*; Dettmann, Diane;  
Outskirtspress, 2015; 320 pages.



I recently interviewed Diane Dettmann over coffee before reading *Courageous Footsteps*, her first book in a historical fiction trilogy recalling the Japanese-American post-World War II experiences. She is quite a delight. And she was quick to admit (perhaps encouraged by the caffeine) the obvious, -she is not of Japanese origin, she does not speak Japanese and she has never been to Japan. In fact, I don't even think she is particularly fond of sushi, either.

Dettmann does a wonderful job overcoming these seeming handicaps. Her first encounter with the Japanese -American experience is traceable to the 1950s while growing up on the far north side of Minneapolis as a neighbor to the Matsuura family, a family she dearly loved and admired. As a child she was not aware of the internment of Japanese-Americans. It certainly wasn't in her school textbook and her neighbors were reticent to discuss it. It was not until much later in life that she learned that Art Matsuura was interned during the War. With this newly acquired revelation, she was stunned, suspended in denial and angered. How could this have happened in America? To this wonderful and kind family? To our neighbor?

To answer these questions, *Courageous* follows the lives of the fictional Sakamoto family residing in fictional Glenville, California. The fiction is rudely interrupted on December 7, 1941 and the family, -father, mother and two teenage children, are subsequently interned *sans* due process in a camp in eastern California by an executive order of President Roosevelt. But let there be no mistake, it was no bucolic camp: armed guards and barbwire fences. Dettmann does a brilliant job of drawing the reader's attention to the indignity suffered by the Sakamotos and how the strength of their spirit and unwillingness to surrender to the patent injustices enabled them to survive the ordeal with pride and humility. Dettmann accomplishes this by a developing the protagonists' characters in a manner that I suspect mirror and project her neighbors in north Minneapolis as she knew them to be.

Diane is a newly enrolled member of JASM. She did her undergraduate studies at the University of Minnesota and received her Master's degree from Hamline University. For more information, visit her website at [www.outskirtspress/footsteps.com](http://www.outskirtspress/footsteps.com). Next month, I will review the second book in her trilogy, *Yasu's Quest*. She will be available at the Como Park Lantern Festival for book signings at the *Nihon-jin kai* booth. She may even offer you a cup of coffee, too.

-Tom Haeg

## 母の声が聞こえる

「これこれ洋子や、掃除は隅々から掃くもんだ、そうせば真中はひとりで綺麗になるすけれ。」(新潟弁) 電気掃除機のない昔、母に言いつけられて背丈より高い箒を振り回して畳の床と格闘していた。25年前に85歳で亡くなった母の言葉だ。小学校低学年頃の(見えない処に心を籠めよ)の格言。村の中学校教員官舎が近く、駄菓子屋の店番をしていた母と校長先生の奥様の長話が続いていた処へ就学前後のミドリちゃんが来て「お腹が減ったー。」の返事に「卵の割目に両方の親指の先を入れて静かに自身をフライパンの上に落とし自身半分固まった真ん中に黄身をソット乗せるのです。」「直ぐ帰るから待ってなさい。」の小言でなく小さい娘に目玉焼きの作り方を教える奥様の家庭教育に感激した。母の駄菓子屋の外で男の子達がメンコをしていたが、突然大声が聞こえた。「お父様が『誰かが人の悪口を言い始めたら家へ帰れ』って言ったから俺帰る！」村の地主の末息子だった。バイオリンの才能教育先駆者、鈴木慎一博士がお母さん達に繰り返して言っていた。人間の頭脳は6歳以前が最も活発であり就学前の家庭環境が子供の人格を左右する、と。(まだちっちゃい児だから…大きくなったら自然に治る…) 学校は知識を与えてくれるけど、「子は親の鏡」とか子供達は敏感な染色体の持ち主である、毎日の言語行動は子供達のの触覚に受け取られている。良い児を望むとき私達はまず良い大人でなければならぬ。小学校に二年しか行っていなかった母は引揚後「洋子に小学校六年を卒業させて。」と二ヵ月残っていた就学期間を周りに懇願してくれた。お母さん有難う。



**Yoko Breckenridge**

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## Immigrant Journey Project Opening August 4th



On August 4th the culmination of the three year *Immigrant Journey Project* will finally have its opening night, running from August 4th-20th. The project is a partnership between Mu Performing Arts, renowned puppeteer Masanari Kawahara, and 5

community groups. Over the past three years, the project gathered 80+ stories, hand-crafted puppets, and created a single theatrical narrative exploring the immigrant experience in the 21st century.

Mu Performing Arts, founded in 1992, is a theater company which almost exclusively exists to bring Asian American voices to the Twin Cities through a variety of artistic mediums. It remains Minnesota's only pan-Asian performing arts organization, as well as being among the largest in the country. Those interested in finding out more about Mu Performing Art's season or *Immigrant Journey Project* can visit [www.muperformingarts.org](http://www.muperformingarts.org)

## Seeking Host Families for 2017-18



Azusa (Academic Year in the U.S.A.) is currently seeking families to host some fantastic high school students like Saki from Japan. Ayusa is a Department of State regulated student exchange program. Our central goal is to provide

young people with learning experiences that foster cultural appreciation, insight and meaningful friendship. If you are interested in hosting, please contact Whitney Fisher at 866-534-5399 or [wfisher@ayusa.org](mailto:wfisher@ayusa.org)

Featured Student: Saki

*Saki is an active and kind young girl who can start a conversation with many people. She loves to listen to pop music and sing karaoke with her friends. Saki is also the leader of her Tea Ceremony club and has the important role of entertaining guests and helping the younger members. She hopes her stay in America improves her English so she can volunteer at the 2020 Tokyo Olympic Games. Saki plans to study dentistry and open an international practice for native and foreign residents in Japan.*

# Advertise in the Tsushin!

## Advertisement Rates

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

Ad 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  
Tel: 612-627-9357  
jasm@us-japan.org**

## Japan America Society Calendar

### August

**20th: Como Park Japanese Obon Festival-2017**

\*If you would like to let JASM know about an upcoming event, email us at [jasm.interns@gmail.com](mailto:jasm.interns@gmail.com)

## Japanese Speaking Club

The Japanese Speaking Club is an informal meeting place for those wishing to practice Japanese. We encourage those just beginning the language as well as native speakers to gather at the **Espresso Royale Café** in Downtown Minneapolis to meet new people, discuss experiences in Japan, or simply to speak Japanese. Come when you can, leave when you must.



**Date/Time:** Every Saturday at 3:00 p.m.

**Place:** Espresso Royale Café

1229 Hennepin Ave., Minneapolis, MN 55403

**For more information, visit [www.meetup.com](http://www.meetup.com) and search for the key words "Japanese speaking club"**

## 月例日本人会のお知らせ

毎月日本語図書館で日本人会の昼食会 (Monthly Nihonjin-kai) を行っています。電話などでお誘い合わせの上、お友達やお知り合いとご一緒においで下さい。可能の方はどうぞ料理を1品ご持参願います。ミネソタ州在住の日本人達で良い事を考え、ご馳走と日本語で楽しい時間を待ちましょう。

日程：毎月第2月曜日正午より

場所：日本語図書館

(4231 Bloomington Ave S., Minneapolis, MN 55407)

また、毎週土曜日午後2時から、日本語図書館のお手伝いしてくださる方の集まりがあります。是非ご参加ください。この図書館には、漫画や宗教誌約25000冊や約2500本のビデオDVDがあり、希望者にはセルフサービスで日本人会と同じく無料で貸出しています。お問い合わせは下記までどうぞ。

Yoko Breckenridge

Cell phone: (612) 839-0008 E-mail: [Yoko@yoko4home.com](mailto:Yoko@yoko4home.com)

Nihonjin-kai monthly meeting on 2nd Monday, at noon, at 4231 Bloomington Ave S Minneapolis, MN 55407

## Become a JASM Member online!

*Support our mission and become a member!*

1. Go to [mn-japan.org](http://mn-japan.org)
2. Click on 'Membership' at the top
3. Select your membership type and read the benefits and instructions.

You can also become a member using your smart phone!

## Japan America Society of Minnesota

- Membership Application    Change of Address  
 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

Patron.....	\$1,000+
Sustaining.....	\$500+
Contributing.....	\$100+
Individual .....	\$30
Student/Senior .....	\$20
Household .....	\$50
(2 adults plus children under 18)	

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Minneapolis, MN 55414

# Japan America Society of Minnesota



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www.mn-japan.org

## 通信

Tsūshin  
August 2017

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.

## NAJAS/KKC Business Speaker Series 2017

