



Chicago Okinawa Kenjinkai

Newsletter

Summer 2026

2026 Officers Election

Greetings and Happy Summer to everyone!

The time has come once again to elect new officers. This year the election will take place on the day of the picnic, Saturday, August 15, 2026, when the majority of our members will be in attendance. We are currently seeking nominations for the following three positions:

- President
- Vice President
- Treasurer

If you would like to nominate someone or wish to be nominated yourself, please send your nominations by August 1, 2026 by email to: chicagookiken@gmail.com or via mail to:

Chicago Okinawa Kenjinkai,
P.O. Box 94
Elk Grove Village, IL 60009

For details regarding each officer's responsibilities, please refer to the Bylaws available on our website: www.chicagookinawakenjinkai.com.

Nominees will be announced via email before the picnic, and voting will occur after lunch at the picnic. We eagerly look forward to seeing everyone at the picnic!

--From the Chicago Okinawa Kenjinkai Officers



Upcoming Summer Events - Save the Dates !!!

July 11-12	Japan Fest Chicago 2026 in Skokie
July 19	Natsu Matsuri at Buddhist Temple of Chicago
August 8	Yuiden Event - Harper College, Palatine
August 15	Chicago Okinawa Kenjinkai picnic - Bunker Hill Grove 6, Niles





Annual Picnic is here!!

Bunker Hill - Grove No. 6 in Niles, IL
Sat., August 15, 2026 11:00am - 5pm



- Raffle and 50/50 raffle with cash prizes
- **NEW!** - Join our Line dance lineup including Macarena, Electric Slide, Cha Cha Slide, Cupid Shuffle and more!
- Prizes for Best Line Dancer and Best Costume
- **NEW!** - Hogen (Okinawan Language) Contest
- **NEW!** - Watermelon Eating Contest
- Contest prizes worth \$25~\$50
- Games for kids and adults
- Officer's Election
- Free soda, tea and water
- Members free - Guest fee \$5
- Bring your summer vegetables



Picnic Bentobox Orders

Order Deadline is Wednesday, August 5, 2026

Cost: \$15.00 each



No. 1 - Salmon Bento



No. 2 - Chicken Karaage Bento



No. 3 - Tofu Sukiyaki Bento
(vegetarian)

For Orders contact: Linda Asato by email: chicagookiken@gmail.com or
call/text to: 773-593-4009

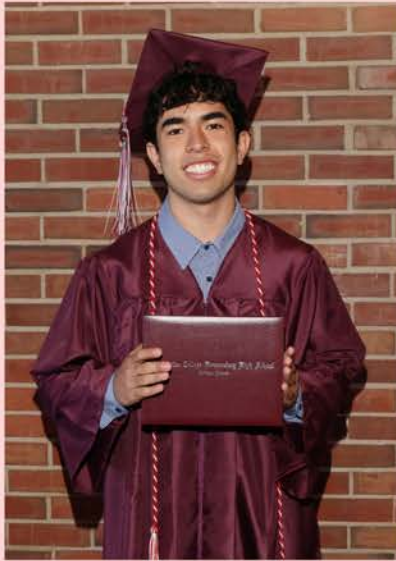
Select from: No. 1: Salmon Bento
No. 2: Chicken Karaage Bento
No. 3: Tofu Sukiyaki Bento (vegetarian)

****All bentos include choice of white or multigrain rice. Side dishes as shown: egg roll, 2 kinds of salad, takuan (pickles), etc. Bentos prepared by Ichi by Torino restaurant in Wilmette.**

Pay in advance by either check payable to: Chicago Okinawa Kenjinkai, P.O Box 94, Elk Grove Village, IL 60009,
by Zelle at chicagookiken@gmail.com, Paypal or by credit card (provide card no. expiration date, code and zip code).

Announcements

2026 Scholarship Winner – Kobo Michaeli



H.S. Senior
Kobo Michaeli

Congratulations to Kobo!

We extend our heartfelt congratulations to Kobo for being awarded the 2026 Chicago Okinawa Kenjinkai Scholarship. Since spending his summers in Okinawa, Kobo has developed a deeper appreciation for his heritage and culture. He particularly enjoyed interacting with students at Okinawa Shogaku High School in Naha, where he played soccer and engaged in their daily activities.

Kobo is motivated to further his studies in Japanese to maintain his connection with his family in Okinawa and to gain a deeper understanding of the culture that shapes his identity. He plans to pursue a degree in Business and Japanese at Illinois Wesleyan University, with aspirations to join their study abroad programs focusing on Japanese studies. Read more about Kobo's background from his essay on our website: chicagookinawakenjinkai.com

We wish Kobo the best of luck!

Japan Fest Chicago 2026



**July 11-12, 2026 * Skokie Sports Park East
3333 Oakton St., Skokie
Free Admission!!**

From taiko drums to J-pop, kimono fashion to anime art, and tea ceremonies to street food favorites, Japan Fest Chicago brings together the best of old and new Japan— this time, held on two spectacular days! The Chicago Okinawa Kenjinkai Performance will be held on **Saturday, July 11th**. Come out and show your support!

Hosted by the Chicago Japanese American Council (CJAC), a coalition of 12 Japanese and Japanese American organizations dedicated to promoting Japanese culture and heritage in the United States.

60th Anniversary in Pictures



On May 23rd, the Chicago Okinawa Kenjinkai celebrated its 60th Anniversary at the Doubletree Hilton Hotel in Arlington Heights. The event was a great success featuring five special guest artists from Okinawa, who performed together with dancers from the St. Louis Eisa Taiko group and our very own performance groups. Over 230 guests attended with several joining us from seven states. Together we celebrated the theme "Honoring Our Past - Embracing Our Future." Everyone had a wonderful time and eagerly await the 70th Anniversary in 2036!



60th Anniversary in Pictures



Announcements, cont'd

The 8th Worldwide Uchinanchu Festival Oct. 27 - 31, 2027 in Okinawa, Japan



FINALLY ANNOUNCED!

第8回 世界の ウチナンチュ大会

The 8th Worldwide Uchinanchu Festival

開催日程
Dates

前夜祭: 2027年10月27日(水)
本大会: 2027年10月28日(木)~31日(日)
Eve Festival: Oct 27 | Main Event: Oct 28 - 31

主な会場
Venues

沖縄セルラースタジアムパーク、県立武道館、奥武山公園 等
Okinawa Cellular Stadium Park,
Prefectural Budokan, Onoyama Park, etc.

再会を楽しみにしています！

We are looking forward to seeing you all again.



Get ready for another spectacular Uchinanchu Festival hosted by the Okinawan government. The official dates have been announced, and they are from Oct. 27-31, 2027. The 4-day event features an international parade of kenjinkai groups from all over the world, an opening and closing ceremony with many music bands and taiko drummers, concerts and exhibitions, food festivals, and much much more.

If you have never been to one of these festivals, now is your chance to go.

We will share further details in our newsletters and on our website as we receive them.



Sanshin leader
Mayumi Tonks

Mayumi Tonks awarded the Certification of Sanshin Instructor

We are excited to announce that our talented and dedicated sanshin leader, Mayumi Tonks, received the prestigious Certification of Sanshin Instructor on May 18, 2025, from the Ryukyu Island Song Association (島唄 Shimamura/folk song).

- Congratulations to Mayumi on this well-earned recognition!
- We also extend our heartfelt gratitude for her exceptional leadership in coordinating and producing the outstanding program for our 60th Anniversary event.



Reminder - Membership Dues



Just a friendly reminder: if you haven't done so yet, please submit your membership form and dues for 2026.

****Family membership: \$25**

****Individual membership: \$15**

We accept payments via checks, Zelle, PayPal, and credit cards.

You can also make your payment at the picnic!



Officers, Goodwill Ambassadors and Performance Group Leaders



Linda Asato, President
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lhasato1@gmail.com



Minori Yamaki
Vice President
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Michiko Ishikawa
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Satsuki Morgan
Secretary
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Michiko Ishikawa
Goodwill Ambassador



Yujiro Uza
Goodwill Ambassador



Taiko & Ryubu Dance
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Okinawan Sanshin
Mayumi Tonks
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Performance Contact
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CHICAGO OKINAWA KENJINKAI

NEWSLETTER

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