



Chicago Okinawa Kenjinkai Newsletter Spring 2026

President's Message



Linda Asato
President

Happy Springtime, Everyone!

As our nation prepares to celebrate its 250th birthday this year, we are equally excited to commemorate our 60th anniversary with our members and their families in May. The celebration will feature the renowned artist, Majikina Hidemi, a National Living Treasure known for Ryubu dance, along with five guest artists coming directly from Okinawa, Japan. Additionally, the vibrant St. Louis Eisa Taiko group will entertain us with a selection of their most popular pieces.

By now, you should have received an invitation to our event at the Arlington Heights Doubletree Hotel, along with forms for ordering plated lunch options and a form for congratulatory ads for our commemorative program book. These forms were mailed to all members in February. If you have not yet received them, please let me know, and I will be happy to send them your way.

This year also signifies the conclusion of a two-year term for our officers. We will hold elections in June, shortly after the 60th Anniversary event. I encourage you to read the section regarding Seeking Nominations and nominate forward-thinking members who can lead our organization into the future. It has been a pleasure serving as your president for the past seven years and 15 years altogether. We have made significant progress in many areas, but there is still much work ahead. With your support, our organization will not just survive but thrive in the coming years.

I eagerly anticipate seeing all of you at the 60th Anniversary celebration. A heartfelt thank you to all the volunteers who have made this event possible.

Linda Asato, President



\$1000 Scholarship Available

We are offering a \$1000 scholarship to a qualified high school student who submits a complete application by **April 30th, 2026** deadline. The successful applicant will be a senior who shows the most potential in helping us meet our goals of preserving the culture and traditions of Okinawa. There is an additional requirement to satisfy a minimum of 8 hours of community service which includes assisting the Kenjinkai with a variety of tasks at our annual events. A Community Service form is available on our website.

Applicants should be current high school seniors accepted to an undergraduate program at an accredited college or university. Students attending the first year of college will be considered only if there are no qualified high school seniors. Details and applications are available on our website, www.chicagookinawakenjinkai.com or from one of the officers. We encourage you to apply early – Good Luck!



Upcoming Events in 2026

- | | |
|--------|---|
| May 23 | 60 th Anniversary of the Chicago Okinawa Kenjinkai |
| June | Election of Officers |
| July | Japan Festival in Skokie |
| Aug 15 | Chicago Okinawa Kenjinkai picnic |

There are many festivals planned for this summer. Stay tuned and check our website: www.chicagookinawakenjinkai.com for dates and details



Save the Date!!

Chicago Okinawa Kenjinkai 60th Anniversary Celebration



Sat., May 23, 2026

**Doubletree by Hilton
Arlington Hts., IL
Arbor Ballroom**

**Cost: \$75 per person
\$85 (non-members)**

For details and order forms,
please contact Linda Asato:
Email: lhasato1@gmail.com or
Ph. 773-593-4009

Deadline for ordering: April 23, 2026



Honoring our Past * Embracing our Future



Announcements

Seeking Nominations for President

In June, our current president, Linda Asato, will conclude her 15 years of dedicated service, spanning two separate terms. We invite all members to consider nominating a new candidate for the next president.

When making your selection, please think of a leader who can elevate our organization, bring forth innovative ideas, and engage younger participants eager to be challenged and guide the organization into the future. The qualifications for candidates will be provided along with the nomination ballot.

Voting Eligibility - All active members are welcome to vote. Once we gather the nominations, an election will be conducted via email and traditional mail.



Current Officers
President: Linda Asato
Vice President: Minori Yamaki
Treasurer: Michiko Ishikawa
Secretary: Satsuki Morgan



In Memoriam

Nobuko Green



Nobuko Green, 83, passed away peacefully on February 18, 2026, surrounded with the love of her family. She was born on February 25, 1942, on the beautiful island of Tokashiki in Okinawa, the youngest of six daughters of Ushi (mother) and Kameo (father) Omine. During her 34 years in downstate Illinois, Nobuko became a beloved cultural ambassador. As one of the few Asian Americans in the region, she introduced countless people to elements of Okinawan culture. She performed traditional Okinawan dance, created award-winning ikebana, and shared homemade sushi and tempura with neighbors and community groups.

Memorial Service

We invite you to join us in honoring and celebrating the life of our beloved mother, Nobuko Green.

Date: Saturday, March 21, 2026

Time: 11:00 a.m. (10:30 a.m. daimoku for SGI members)

Location: SGI Culture Center, 1455 S. Wabash Ave., Chicago, IL 60605

Harriet Ito - Celebration of Life

Sat., March 28, 2026

Christ Church of Chicago

6047 N. Rockwell St. - Chicago, IL 60659

Time: 12 Noon, Doors open at 11:00am

Honoring Recently Departed Members - We would like to acknowledge and pay tribute to the following members who have recently passed away:

- Sachiko Lamb
- Kikuko Reavis
- Dennis and Ritsuko White
- Fred Yamanuha

Our deepest sympathies go out to their families during this difficult time.

Serving the Chicago Okinawan



**Friendship
and Family...**



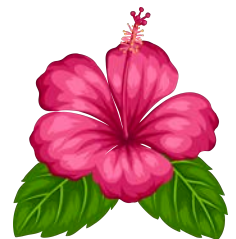
Ichariba Chode!!
Once we Meet, we are
Brothers & Sisters



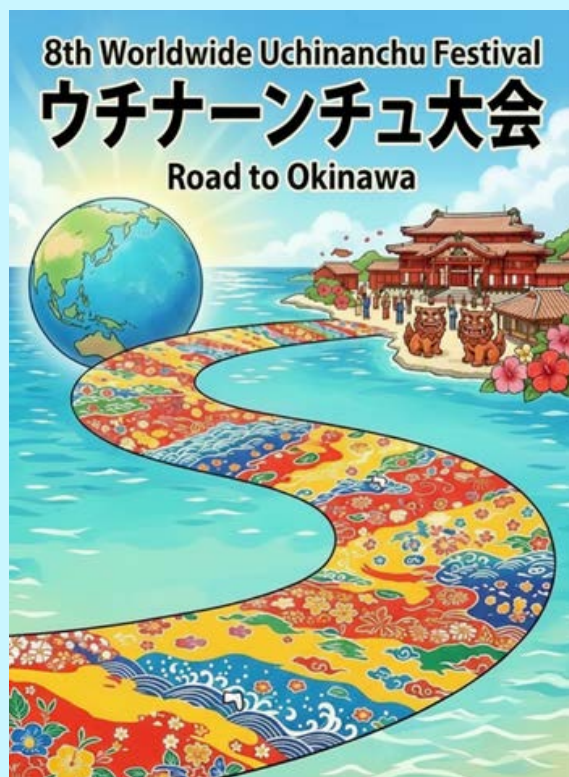
...community for over 60 years!!



Memories and magic...



Announcements



2027 Worldwide Uchinanchu Festival

The 8th Worldwide Uchinanchu Festival is scheduled to be held in Okinawa in 2027, continuing the tradition of a global reunion held every five years to celebrate Okinawan culture and heritage. The event brings together the Okinawan diaspora for music, dance, and traditional performances, centered around October 30, known as "Worldwide Uchinanchu Day".

Purpose: The festival aims to reconnect Okinawan emigrants and their descendants with their roots, strengthening the global network of over 400,000 people of Okinawan descent.

Activities: The event features a massive parade, traditional Eisa drumming, sanshin performances, and Ryukyuan culinary experiences. Over 7000 participants attended the last one in 2022.

Location: Most events take place in Naha and across the main island of Okinawa. Stay tuned for more details!

CJFC Special Film Screening

Ishibumi

by KORE-EDA Hirokazu

April 3, 2026 (Fri) @ 7:00 pm

at Gorton Center, Lake forest, IL

<https://www.cjfc.us/>

In commemoration of the 80th anniversary of the end of World War II, the Chicago Japan Film Collective (CJFC), in partnership with Gorton Center, presents a special screening of *Ishibumi* (2015), directed by acclaimed filmmaker KORE-EDA Hirokazu. Originally produced by Hiroshima Television, *Ishibumi* revisits the story of 321 first-year students of the former Hiroshima Second Middle School whose lives were taken in the atomic bombing of August 6, 1945. Through the quiet and powerful recitation of letters and family testimonies, the film preserves voices that might otherwise fade from collective memory.

Known worldwide for his deeply humanistic storytelling, Kore-eda returns to his documentary roots in this moving work. Actress Haruka Ayase, a native of Hiroshima, lends her voice to the recited letters, offering a restrained yet emotionally resonant performance that honors the memories of the young lives lost.

The screening will be presented as a one-time theatrical event. A panel discussion may follow, subject to availability.

We invite you to join us for an evening of remembrance, reflection, and shared history.



2025 FINANCIAL REPORT			
	EXPENSE	INCOME	BALANCE
PREVIOUS BALANCE (AS OF 12/31/2024)			\$ 12,139.59
Membership fee (single -49 & family 73)		\$ 2,560.00	\$ 14,699.59
Donations from Members**		\$ 5,180.00	\$ 19,879.59
2025 scholarship (Ema Tamamura)	\$ 1,000.00		\$ 18,879.59
2025 Performance Income (Balance as of 12/31/25 \$2,104.64)		\$ 2,150.00	\$ 21,029.59
2025 Performance Expenses	\$ 1,274.75		\$ 19,754.84
2025 Spring Party Income		\$ 2,540.00	\$ 22,294.84
2025 Spring Party Expenses	\$ 2,984.06		\$ 19,310.78
2025 Picnic Income		\$ 1,585.00	\$ 20,895.78
2025 Picnic Expenses	\$ 1,432.49		\$ 19,463.29
2025 Administration Expenses	\$ 2,547.48		\$ 16,915.81
Obituary to Ms.Iwako, K. Anamizu & M. Dietz	\$ 250.00		\$ 16,665.81
State of IL Annual Report	\$ 26.00		\$ 16,639.81
2026 Picnic Site Permit	\$ 200.00		\$ 16,439.81
2026 60th Anniversary Deposit & Gift	\$ 1,650.00		\$ 14,789.81
AS OF 12/31/2025 BANK BALANCE	\$ 11,364.78	\$ 14,015.00	\$ 14,789.81

Prepared by Michiko Ishikawa, Treasurer

- Welcome New Members!**
Please welcome our new members:
- **Lindsay Haukebo**
 - **Naoko Kozakura**
 - **Nanae McClue**
 - **Megumi Okada**
 - **Yukako Sortino**

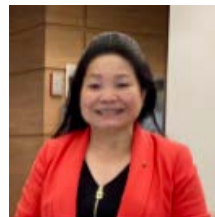
Current Goodwill Ambassadors and Performance Group Leaders



Linda Asato, President
773-593-4009
lhasato1@gmail.com



Minori Yamaki, VP
yamakimr1@hotmail.com



Michiko Ishikawa, Treasurer
Goodwill Ambassador
mishikawa601@gmail.com



Satsuki Morgan, Secretary
satsukikitty@gmail.com



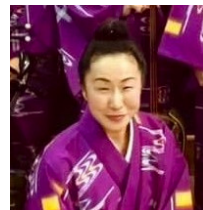
Yujiro Uza
Goodwill Ambassador
uzadojo@yahoo.com



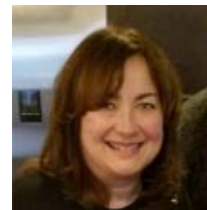
Taiko & Ryubu Dance
Mitsue Koch
773-706-0813
mk51@att.net



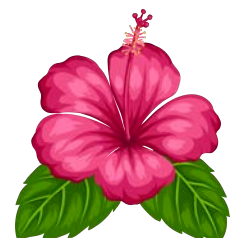
Okinawan Karate
Yujiro Uza
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Okinawan Sanshin
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Chicago Okinawa Kenjinkai
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Follow us on Facebook.com/ChiOkiKen
Website: www.chicagookinawakenjinkai.com

Celebrating 60 years of Okinawan culture in the Midwest

Chicago Okinawa Kenjinkai
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*Chicago Okinawa
Kenjinkai
Newsletter*

2026 Spring