



# ConsuLink

April 2022 Newsletter

Keeping you updated on Japan-related news in Michigan and Ohio

## Sakura Mochi: Japan's Spring Treat



In Japan, the arrival of spring is marked with the enjoyment of cherry blossoms (or *sakura*) and a special traditional sweet known as *sakura mochi*. These treats are made of pink-colored rice cakes (*mochi*) filled with sweet red bean paste (*anko*), and wrapped in a cherry tree leaf.

There are different styles of *sakura mochi* in different regions of Japan. Cherry-blossom viewers in the city of Omiya, in Ohio's sister-state of Saitama (pictured below left), are likely to enjoy the more crepe-like *sakura mochi* of the Kantō region. Michigan's sister-state of Shiga is in the Kansai region, so on the Kaizu Osaki peninsula in Shiga (pictured below right), one is likely to find the chewier rice-ball type of *sakura mochi*.



Places to enjoy *o-hanami* (blossom viewing) in Michigan include Belle Isle in Detroit, Meijer Gardens in Grand Rapids, and Old Mission Peninsula in Traverse City. In Ohio, popular *o-hanami* spots include Akron, Athens, Bowling Green, Cleveland, Columbus, Dayton, Dublin, and Newark. The first [Columbus Cherry Blossom Festival](#) will be held this April.

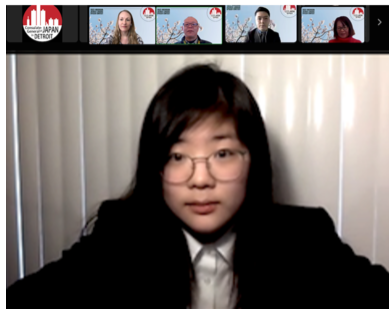
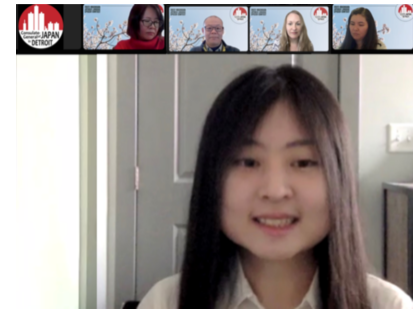
## Japanese Language Learners Shine in Michigan and Ohio Contests

Congratulations to the participants in all the Japanese language and culture contests in Michigan and Ohio last month! First-place teams in the **2022 Ohio Japan Bowl**, from **Marysville High School** and **Dublin Jerome High School**, are eligible to compete at the [30th National Japan Bowl](#) in late April.

Earning the Consul General Award in each division in the 27th annual Michigan Japanese Language Speech Contest were **Siyao Du of the University of Michigan** (\$800 prize) and **Heejin Shyn of Troy High School** (\$500 prize).

In the restructured 2022 Ohio Japanese Speech Contest, there was a single open category, and the top two speeches were recognized. The Consul General's Prize went to **Sydney Olney of Case Western Reserve University** and the JASCO Prize went to **Keegan Mulligan of Marysville High School**. Special awards were also presented to **Shane Scott** in the College+ Category, and **Justinian Su** in the High School Category.

Also in March, dozens of Japanese learners in Michigan took part in the 2nd Annual Michigan Japanese Culture Festa and the 5th Annual Hinoki Cup. Thank you to everyone who helped make all these events possible!



Consul General Award winners Siyao Du of the University of Michigan (above left) and Heejin Shyn of Troy High School (above right).

Top speech makers Sydney Olney of Case Western Reserve University (below left) and Keegan Mulligan of Marysville High School (below right).



## RECENT CONSULATE ACTIVITIES

### Consul General Shindo Travels to Cleveland



On March 22, Consul General Shindo made a presentation at an event hosted by [Global Cleveland](#), as part of their Ambassador and Diplomat Series program. The Consul General also paid a visit to Cleveland City Hall to meet Mayor Justin M. Bibb. Afterwards, he stopped at the Cleveland Museum of Art to "meet" the friendship doll known as Miss Gifu. She is one of 58 "friendship dolls" (*tōrei ningyō*) sent to the U.S. from Japan in 1927 as a gesture of goodwill. Representing Gifu Prefecture, she returned there temporarily for repairs in 1995.

### "Business Update" Marks 45th Anniversary of Honda Activities in Ohio



On March 25, a special Japan in Ohio Business Update was held in Marysville and shared via livestream. It was sponsored by the National Association of Japan-America Societies (NAJAS) and the Japan Institute for Social and Economic Affairs (Keizai Koho Center), and co-hosted by the Japan America Society of Central Ohio (JASCO) and One Columbus, an area economic development organization.

This event highlighted American Honda Motor Company's 45 years of activities in Ohio, and featured presentations about that history as well as recent initiatives related to automobile manufacturing, including electric vehicle (EV) production, workforce development, and business/education/government partnerships.

## CALENDAR

### Exhibits & Events

Fri., April 1  
[WMU Virtual Japanese Conversation Table](#) @ online platform

Sat. - Sun., April 2 - 10  
[Columbus Cherry Blossom Festival](#) @ Columbus, OH

Sat., April 2  
[EMU Japanese Student Association Festival](#) @ Ypsilanti, MI

Sun., April 3  
[Cherry Blossom Celebration](#) @ Franklin Park, Columbus, OH  
[14th Annual JSO Spring Festival](#) @ OSU, Columbus, OH

Sun. & Sat., April 3 & 9  
[Ann Arbor \(MI\) Japanese Language Meetup](#) @ online platform

Tues., April 5  
[Anime Club for Teens & Tweens](#) @ Kenmore Branch Library, Akron, OH

Thurs., April 7  
Kalamazoo (MI) College Kafu Lecture: [When Women Write Poetry](#) @ online platform  
[UM-CJS Lecture: Japanese Way of Well-Being](#) @ online platform

Fri., April 8  
[OSU East Asian Studies Center 50th Anniversary Conference](#) @ The Ohio Union, Columbus, OH

Sat., April 9  
[UM Animanian Con Ja Nai \(Un-\)Convention](#) @ MLB, Ann Arbor, MI

Thurs., April 14  
[Hofu-Monroe Book Club](#) @ online platform  
[OSU-IJS Kenny Endo Taiko Demo](#) and [Concert](#) @ Columbus, OH

Sat., April 16  
[Anime & Japanese History](#) @ Green Branch Library, Uniontown, OH  
[OSU-IJS "Transcendence" Musical Performance](#) @ Columbus, OH

Thurs., April 21  
[JASCO 25th Anniversary Gala Dinner](#) @ Dublin, OH

Fri., April 22  
[Van Buren District Library Anime/Manga Club](#) @ Covert, MI

## QUICK LINKS

[Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan](#)



[Kizuna: The official magazine of the Government of Japan](#)

Digital publication reporting on a variety of topics, promoting stronger links between Japan and the world.

[Consulate General of Japan in Detroit](#)



ConsuLink is the official newsletter of the Consulate-General of Japan in Detroit

400 Renaissance Center, Suite 1600 | Detroit, MI 48243 US

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