

President's Message



Aloha HJJCC Members!

It is such a great honor to be your 72nd President of the Honolulu Japanese Junior Chamber of Commerce. I have been involved with the HJJCC since 2016 and I can say without a doubt, that being a member of this amazing organization has positively impacted my life in so many ways.

Last year, we were all thrown a curveball and everyone needed to adjust and overcome the many obstacles that the pandemic presented. Despite all the challenges, many of which are still present today, I was in awe of how our community and especially our membership, pulled together to make the best of the situation. I am confident that this year again, we will overcome any obstacles we are presented and have an amazing year – all thanks to the dedication of our Board of Directors and our membership.

During a year when many other organizations were unfortunately faced with a decline in membership due to the pandemic, it is with great pride that I am able to announce that the HJJCC was recognized as the top chapter for growth at the JCI National Convention!

I would like to extend a very heartfelt welcome to all of our new members. I have really enjoyed getting to know some of you over the past few months and look forward to you getting involved with different committees and attending upcoming events.

I am very excited for what the rest of this fiscal year has in store for the HJJCC and am especially looking forward to seeing everyone in person again very soon! If you have any questions, please feel free to contact me at president@hjjcc.com.

Sincerely,
Kari Kiyota, 72nd President



Community Development

By Ross Kohara – VP of Community Development

The first quarter of our new fiscal year started filled with hope for a fulfilling year of community service opportunities.

In July, we kicked off the year with a community service event at the Honolulu Zoo. We provided much needed help to their maintenance and conservation efforts by first sorting the contents of recycle bins across the entire property. Then we walked the grounds and sanitized the signage throughout the property. When we finished, attendees had the opportunity to enjoy the Zoo and its exhibits!

Unfortunately, as the summer progressed, so did the surge of the COVID-19 Delta variant and we made the decision for the safety of our members, their families and all others involved, to pause in-person events that were in the works for the remainder of the summer. Thankfully, as the surge passed, we now see the light at the end of the tunnel.

During a transitional period, we wanted to allow members to help our community on their own schedule. We recently concluded our HJJCC-sponsored blood donation weeks in support of the Blood Bank of Hawaii. We plan to return to in-person service events soon with several opportunities on the horizon. We look forward to seeing everyone soon and being surrounded with the positive energy you bring to our service events.

We will continue to be on the lookout for new service opportunities, and be flexible enough to adapt to the environment around us.

If you have any organizations or suggestions for future events, or are interested in joining our Community Development Committee, please email Ross Kohara at community.service@hjjcc.com.



International Relations

By Garrett Lau – VP of International Relations

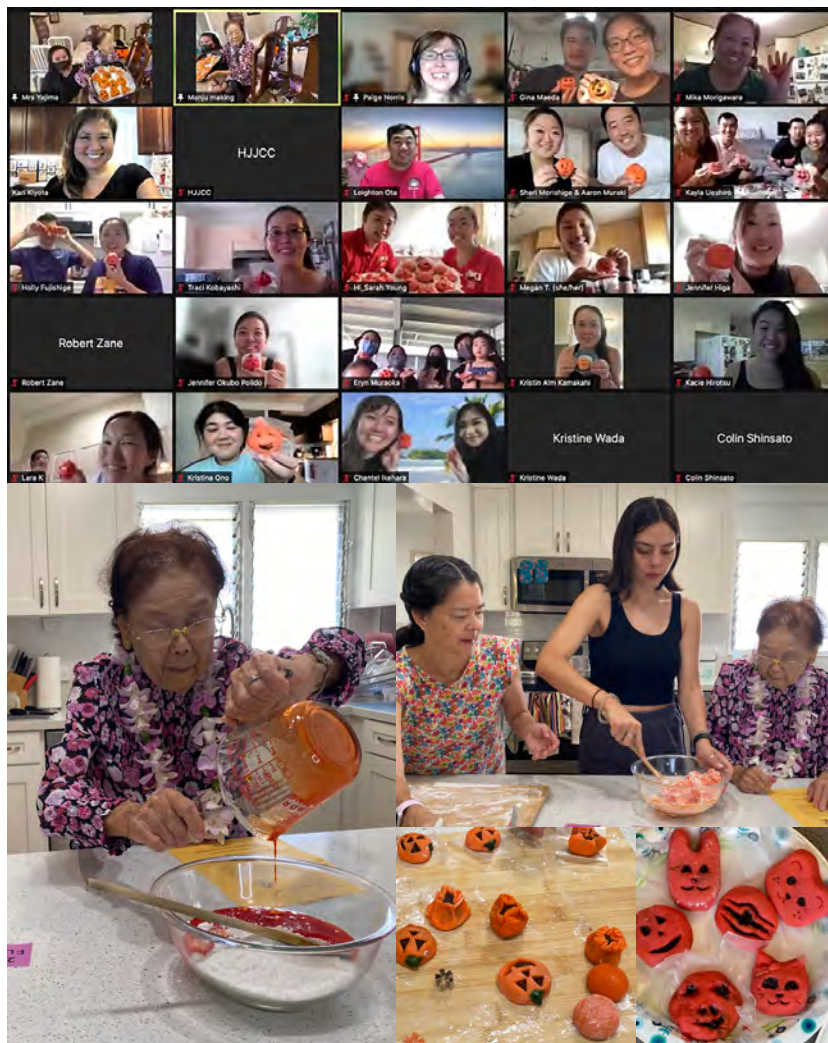
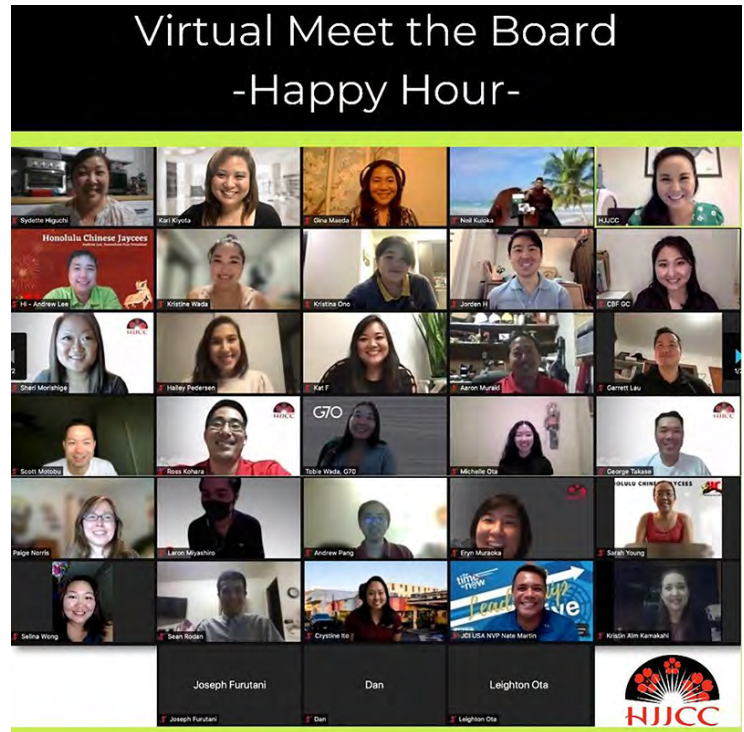
Something many members look forward to each year is the Goodwill Tour which typically takes place in mid-October. Although travel restrictions still continue in Japan, we still are still very connected to our sister chapters in Kobe, Kurashiki, Kojima, Tamashima, and Odawara and have been keeping in touch with them virtually.

We are looking forward to the upcoming virtual events with our sister chapters that are in the works and are hopeful we will be able to see each other in person very soon. In the meantime, hope everyone continues to stay safe and healthy while we wait for things to get better!

Membership Development

By Heather Furutani – VP of Membership Development

Membership kicked off the fiscal year with a Virtual Meet the Board Happy Hour! Originally, we were hoping that we could start the year with in-person events, but unfortunately the rising COVID numbers and the restrictions forced us to go back online. We were so fortunate to partner with Beer Lab Hawaii for our first event as members were able to purchase a special 4-pack of 16oz cans for a discounted price. Committee members explained to members and guests about how to get more involved within the HJCC. Members and guests were able to chat and meet other members who attended the event in break out rooms. We ended the night with a challenging “Guess that Board Member” game of matching the board member to their baby photo! We had so much fun looking at the cute baby faces of our Board of Directors. Thank you to Gina Maeda who was an awesome moderator for the event!



To kick off the holiday season, we were so grateful to have Mrs. Lillian Yajima teach our members and guests how to make her famous Jack-O-Lantern manju virtually. Mrs. Yajima is a long-time supporter of the Cherry Blossom Festival and has been teaching CBF contestants how to make her cute manju and origami for many years. Those who attended did an ingredient pick-up before the event and were ready to start baking! Mrs. Yajima walked us through the process step-by-step and attendees were able to follow along. As we waited for our manju to steam, members watched a nice slideshow of Mrs. Yajima’s involvement within the Japanese American community in Hawaii, and we did a question and answer session. Members learned how she started the Jack-O-Lantern manju and how to store the manju dough correctly. Mrs. Yajima loved seeing all the creative Jack-O-Lanterns and she was so happy to see so many people online who wanted to learn how to make manju from her. Thank you to Mika Morigawara for heading the ingredient pick-up, Gina Maeda for making the beautiful slideshow, Paige Norris for being an awesome moderator for the event, and Joseph Furutani for being our camera guy. We are so thankful to Mrs. Yajima for continuing to perpetuate and share her love of Japanese culture with our members.

Young Business Roundtable

By Claire Fukuoka – Young Business Roundtable Chair

On September 23, we kicked off the first Young Business Roundtable (YBR) session of the fiscal year with a virtual presentation, “Creating Power Goals” by Cynthia Yamasaki. Cynthia is the Chief Energizing Officer (CEO) and Founder of EEPATH, a life coaching organization created to help individuals navigate career-life challenges and change, and a member of the Honolulu Japanese Chamber of Commerce. Members enjoyed Cynthia’s presentation on creating and achieving “POWER” (Purposeful, Objective, with Willingness, Engagement, and Reflection) goals, and provided tactical tools and examples to help members plan and support their goal-setting journey. Cynthia also facilitated a discussion among members to share their stories, brainstorm solutions, and provide meaningful feedback.

Thank you to Cynthia for sharing her experience and leading a great discussion, as well as to all the members who attended this session! Please stay tuned for more YBR events to come!



Happy Birthday!

AUGUST

Aaron Muraki
 David Ota
 Jacquelyn Chew
 Kelli-Ann Wong
 Kirstie Maeshiro-Takiguchi
 Larsen Ibara
 Lauren Dookchitra
 Lori Kim
 Masato Itoh
 Paige Norris
 Robert Zane

SEPTEMBER

Amy Fujiwara
 Crystine Ito
 Devan Kwee
 Everett Arakawa
 George Takase
 Grant Kobayashi
 Jennifer Ezaki
 Kacie Hirotsu
 Laron Miyashiro
 Lauren Holt
 Lauren Sugai
 Michelle Ota
 Nicole Ono
 Taylor Chee
 Tobie Wada

OCTOBER

Brittney Kawahara
 Chantel Ikehara
 Colin Lee
 Erin Shiroma
 Evan Tom
 Jennifer Higa
 Joshua Matsuda
 Kenneth Kim
 Kim Takata Endo
 Lauren Kobayashi
 Neil Kuioka
 Sydette Higuchi

NOVEMBER

Dane Sako
 Drew Hironaga
 Eric Imada
 James Odan
 Jason Sugibayashi
 Kailey Wong
 Kelli Kimura
 Mika Morigawara
 Traci-Ann Kobayashi

69th Cherry Blossom Festival Queen & Court

By Kristin Alm Kamakahi – 69th Cherry Blossom Festival Queen & Court Advisor

The 69th Cherry Blossom Festival Court has continued to give back to the community over the last several months!

At the beginning of July, the Court hosted a Blood Drive with the Blood Bank of Hawaii. It was so amazing to see the community come together to give blood during this crucial time.

The Court attended the Honolulu Japanese Junior Chamber of Commerce Installation Banquet where they had a chance to welcome guests and congratulate the incoming and outgoing Board of Directors. They are so grateful to the HJJCC for their Cherry Blossom Festival experience.

The Court also had the opportunity to join Sakura Hawaii Alumnae in celebrating Mrs. Lilian Yajima's 101st Birthday. Over the decades, Mrs. Yajima has been a tremendous support to the Cherry Blossom Festival and Contestants always look forward to taking cultural classes with her.

Towards the end of July, the Court was also able to support the Japan-America Society of Hawaii with their Annual Friendship Golf Tournament. They welcomed back participants after the tournament and sold lucky draw tickets to the golfers.

The Court continued to have virtual Meet and Greet events for the 70th Cherry Blossom Festival. They enjoyed being able to share about the contestant experience with potential Queen Contestant applicants and reminisce about their contestant journey.

They also participated in the Japan-America Society of Hawaii's Natsumatsuri virtual event where they shared a somen preparation tutorial video. The Court enjoyed preparing and sharing their recipe with the viewers. The theme of the Natsumatsuri event was Tanabata and the Court also had a chance to share the importance of Tanabata and the importance of somen to the occasion.

In August, they had the opportunity to appear in the Nisei Week Japanese Festival Program. While travel to Los Angeles wasn't possible this year – the Court had a chance to virtually connect with the newly crowned 2021 Nisei Week Court and the Northern California Cherry Blossom Festival Court. They enjoyed spending time and bonding with their sister courts.



69th Cherry Blossom Festival Queen & Court (Cont.)

The Court also had a chance to participate in the Hawaii United Okinawa Association’s virtual Okinawan Festival as well, where they shared about their contestant experience with the Okinawan cultural classes and past memories of the Okinawan Festival.

This fall, the Court planned a canned food drive to support the Hawaii Foodbank to help demolish hunger in Hawaii. They were able to surpass their goal of over 500 cans (over 1,000 pounds of food), thanks to all of you who donated! Before delivering the donations to the Hawaii Foodbank, the Court made a “CBF” (Cherry Blossom Festival) can-sculpture representing how our community came together for this project.

In October, the Court also had a chance to clean up the Ehime Maru memorial with Sakura Hawaii Alumnae at Kaka’ako Waterfront Park and learned about the history of the memorial.

For Halloween, they were able to host a trick-or-treat event at Rainbow Drive-In Kapahulu for the community. The Court dressed up as sushi and had fun giving out treats!

In the spirit of Kibou, or Hope, the 69th Cherry Blossom Festival Court is excited and hopeful for the next few months and excited to continue giving back!



Japanese Culture

Shichigosan

By Ashley Higa – Director at Large

While Shichigosan literally translates to “seven, five, three,” it means much more to Japanese families with young children.



This coming of age tradition that began during the Meiji Era in Japan, was brought to Hawaii with Japanese immigrants and has become a popular tradition in both countries. Many temples in Hawaii and Japan hold blessing ceremonies during mid-November for families to bring their young children at the ages of seven, five, and three. The children have the opportunity to get dressed in traditional Japanese Kimono and get their photos taken for their parents and grandparents to remember. After getting dressed up, the children will get blessed at the temple in hopes of driving away any evil spirits and parents pray for a long and prosperous life for their child.

70th Cherry Blossom Festival

By Kirstie Maeshiro-Takiguchi and Ruth Taketa – 70th Cherry Blossom Festival Co-General Chairs

The Cherry Blossom Festival provides young women of Japanese ancestry the opportunity to strengthen their connection and appreciation of the Japanese culture, create lifelong friendships and memories, and develop leadership and public speaking skills that they can incorporate into their personal and professional lives. Because of the generosity and dedication of our sponsors, donors, volunteers, and supporters over the past 70 years, the Festival has enriched the lives of 1,100 women and will continue its mission for future generations.

The theme for this year is 調和 “Chōwa,” the Japanese value of harmony and balance. As the pandemic is continuing longer than we all have expected, we hope chōwa will remind us to live and work together harmoniously as a community and to maintain balance within our lives. Our steering committee has been working very hard in the spirit of chōwa to create a meaningful and authentic experience for the contestants.

In September, we were excited to welcome the 15 Queen Contestants to our CBF steering committee and HJJCC Board of Directors. For six months, the Contestants will be taking professional development training and cultural classes in preparation for the annual Festival Ball where the 70th Cherry Blossom Festival Queen and Court will be selected. Since the beginning of their contestant journey, they have participated in ramen making, virtual etiquette, CBF history, Japanese American history, manju making, visual presentation, and communication classes.

We invite you to support our 70th year and join us at our various events in 2022! Please follow us on Instagram [@cherryblossomfestivalhawaii](https://www.instagram.com/cherryblossomfestivalhawaii) or visit our website www.cbfhawaii.com for event details. Our Festival t-shirt and annual Souvenir Book are now available to purchase on our website.



This year's t-shirt is designed by Laron Miyashiro, 70th CBF T-Shirt Chair. The silhouette of the Festival's logo is created in a typographic design with all the past festival themes to symbolize the passion, dedication, and hard work of the contestants, volunteers, and supporters who have worked harmoniously together to perpetuate the Festival and its mission for the past 70 years. Available in unisex size S – 3XL.

SAVE THE DATE!

UPCOMING EVENTS AND APPEARANCES

Please check our Instagram [@cherryblossomfestivalhawaii](https://www.instagram.com/cherryblossomfestivalhawaii) for updated event information.

- **Opening Ceremony at JCCH's Virtual Ohana Festival - January 2022**
- **Contestant Public Appearances:**
 - Royal Hawaiian Center - January 15th
 - Windward Mall - January 22nd
 - Kahala Mall - January 29th
 - Ala Moana Center - February 19th
- **CBF Golf Tournament at Hawaii Prince Golf Course - February 18, 2022**
- **Festival Ball at Sheraton Waikiki - March 19, 2022**

