

President's Message



Aloha HJCC Members,

Wow! It's hard to believe we are over four months into 2021! We have again seen a lot of great member activities such as Bowling for Tots benefiting Toys for Tots, Cookie Decorating hosted by A Cake Life, a virtual New Year Pau Hana, golf at Bay View Driving Range, our annual Anne Namba Fashion Show, and a Furoshiki Workshop by Lotus Wrapping Co. We also partnered with organizations including the Hawaii Foodbank, Daijingu Temple, Hawaii Health and Harm Reduction Center, Blood Bank of Hawaii, and Waimea Valley. We held a financial planning Young Business Roundtable event and stayed connected with our Japan sister cities virtually and held an international holiday gift exchange. And to top it all off, the highlight was of course, our signature Cherry Blossom Festival!

On April 3rd, we successfully completed our 69th Cherry Blossom Festival Ball, held at the newly renovated Sheraton Waikiki, where our new 69th Cherry Blossom Festival Queen and Court was crowned. I'd like to extend heartfelt congratulations to our 69th General Co-Chairs, Lauren Dookchitra and Eryn Muraoka and their CBF Steering Committee. I'm grateful for all of their hard work, perseverance and commitment in continuing the legacy of the Cherry Blossom Festival.

I would also like to thank our 68th Cherry Blossom Festival Court for being amazing representatives of the HJCC. We are proud of everything they accomplished this year, along with their flexibility, willingness to adapt to ongoing changes, and commitment to serving the community. I had the pleasure of joining the Court on their trip to Kauai and enjoyed reflecting with them during their virtual event for the HJCC. We now look forward to welcoming them as new members of the HJCC!

I continue to be impressed and with our Board of Directors and their committees. They continue to align their projects and activities with our goals to engage and provide value for members, build and create leadership opportunities, and to support the community. Each committee continues to be creative and positive when making adjustments to our existing events, finding new ways to keep us connected as members, and helping to give back to our community. We are excited to share all of these activities and opportunities with everyone!

This organization would not be what it is today without its members. I would like to thank all of you for being members of the HJCC and for your continued involvement. And to our many new members, welcome! I hope that you find value, great opportunity, and new friendships in our organization and I look forward to meeting and getting to know all of you at our upcoming events!

With gratitude,
Crystine Ito, 71st HJCC President

If you have any questions, ideas, or are interested in joining any of our committees, please contact me at president@hjcc.com.

Community Development

By Ross Kohara – VP of Community Development

We started the holiday season with several opportunities for our members to have fun, give back and get into the holiday spirit! In December, we held our first in-person membership event of the fiscal year! It was a joint project with our Membership Committee called Bowling for Tots, a bowling event at Aiea Bowl combined with a toy drive benefiting Toys for Tots and children in need. Later that month, we followed this event up with our second food boxing event at the Hawaii Foodbank where members teamed up with other volunteers to pack over 2,100 “healthier choice” food boxes for local seniors.

With new hope for a better 2021, members kicked off January by assisting the Daijingu Temple of Hawaii with their New Year’s Day Blessing omamori sale over the New Year’s weekend.

In February, we were able to provide another opportunity for members to support our community from a distance, with an organization that is new to the HJJCC. We had our first supply drive supporting the Hawaii Health and Harm Reduction Center (HHHRC). Members generously donated hygiene and first aid supplies, clothes and water bottles to support the HHHRC’s efforts.

In March, the HJJCC sponsored “HJJCC Week” at all Blood Bank of Hawaii locations in an effort to assist the Blood Bank in filling as many donation slots as possible. Members could personally donate blood, and were invited to spread the word to friends and family.

We closed out March with a chance for our members to interact with nature and its elements at Waimea Valley. It was the first time many of our volunteers had visited the valley. We had the opportunity to work in their Ogasawara Garden Collection, clearing invasive species along with debris left by the torrential rain and floods that hit Hawaii in mid-March.

As we enter the final quarter of our fiscal year, please continue to be on the lookout for new service projects. As life around us progresses toward normal, we continue to be open to new opportunities or organizations to support.

If you have any suggestions for organizations or businesses that we can lend a hand to, or if you’d like to join our committee, please contact Ross Kohara at community.service@hjjcc.com.



Membership Development

By Sheri Morishige – VP of Membership Development

Offering members a variety of events is what we've been striving for this year to keep everyone busy during the heavy restrictions we've experienced due to the pandemic. Since our last newsletter, we were so happy to finally be able to offer members a chance to get out of their houses at the beginning of December for the first in-person Membership event of the year, Bowling for Tots! Partnering with our Community Development's Toys for Tots drive, members came out to Aiea Bowl to enjoy two hours of free bowling with the donation of a new toy. Attendees got a chance to mingle with the other members assigned to their lane all while supporting a good cause.

The following week, members who did not get all of their holiday shopping done, got a shopping opportunity from another Cherry Blossom Festival Award Donor, Ten Tomorrow. Exclusive to HJJCC members, Ten Tomorrow offered 15% off purchases made online and in-store.

With 10 days left until Christmas, we partnered with A Cake Life and held a Virtual Cookie Decorating Class. Owner, Kristin Kato, taught our members and friends how to ice cookies showing us tips and tricks on how to get our designs looking like the professionals'. With 26 people in the class, we got our cookies decorated nice enough to give away as gifts (although some of us couldn't wait and enjoyed them right after the cameras were turned off)!

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Membership Development (cont.)

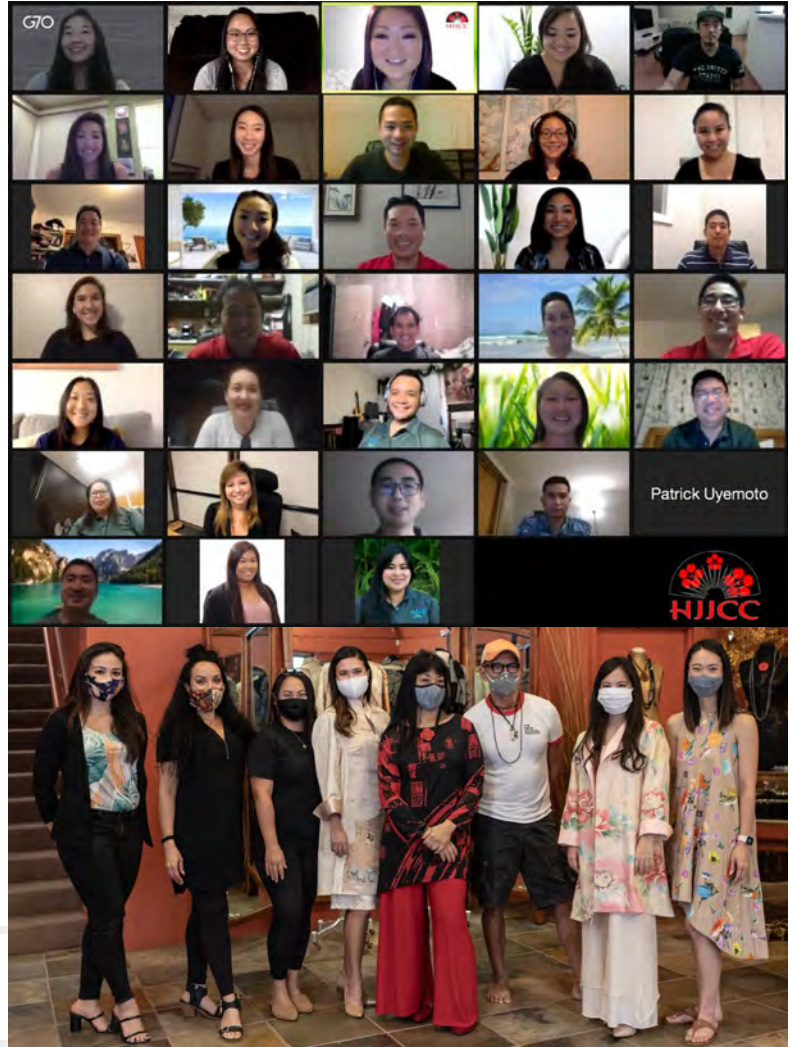
By Sheri Morishige
VP of Membership Development

To kick off 2021, we hosted a New Year, New Connections Virtual Pau Hana. Attendees got a chance to learn about the history of the HJJCC, what each committee has done in previous years, how they have transitioned their events to follow current guidelines, and what's in store for members in the upcoming months. Thank you to our presenters Crystine Ito, Ross Kohara, Garrett Lau, Claire Fukuoka, Lori Higashi, Kathryn Fujitani, George Takase, and Tobie Wada! Attendees were all entered into a drawing and lucky member, Mark Saiki, won \$25 off his membership renewal!

In February, we transitioned our annual Anne Namba Fashion Show to go virtual via Instagram. The Court was photographed by Brandon Miyagi, drawn live by Leonard Cadiente, and had their makeup done by Liana Veda of Trish McEvoy, all while Kirstie Maeshiro-Takiguchi captured behind-the-scenes footage. A big shout to all of these volunteers and of course, long-time Cherry Blossom Festival Award Donor, Anne Namba! Also, congrats to Sydette Higuchi who participated in our IG contest and won an Anne Namba Designs face mask and CBF prize pack!

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View behind-the-scenes footage of the Anne Namba Fashion Show here!



May Day Haku Lei Making Social Saturday, May 1, 2021 at 11am Manoa Valley District Park

May Day is Lei Day!

Join us and learn how to make beautiful lei po'o with fellow HJJCC members. Cost is \$15 for HJJCC members or \$20 for non-member guests. Lei supplies and light refreshments will be provided. Click here for more information.

RSVP to Sheri at membership@hjcc.com by Friday, April 16th!

Membership Development (cont.)

By Sheri Morishige
VP of Membership Development

Wrapping up the first quarter of 2021, members got a chance to learn how to wrap gifts from our very own HJCC Membership Committee member, Jadyne Yomono, Owner of Lotus Wrapping Co. Our virtual Furoshiki Workshop was aimed at educating our members in the traditional art of Furoshiki wrapping, while providing an elegant, sustainable, and economical alternative to single-use wrapping materials.

To get our members ready for “Spring Cleaning,” members gathered to hear Certified KonMari Method Organizer and Owner of Tidy Evolution, Mia Keenan, for our KonMari for the Home Virtual Seminar. Attendees learned the benefits of organization and learned to fold their own clothes in a way that would save space while being easy to identify in their drawers or bins.

Be sure to check your emails and follow us on Instagram and Facebook to stay updated on what the Membership Committee has in store for you next!

**Interested in helping to plan future Membership events?
Email Sheri at membership@hjcc.com to join the HJCC
Membership Committee and get involved!**



Sports Committee

By James Odan – Sports Director

On February 19, 2021 we were very fortunate to host our first in-person Sports Committee event! This event was at the Bay View Driving Range and included special golf experience from Hawaii standout golfer Pomaikai Shishido. Attendees were able to learn about the game, practice their swings, and network with both members and guests (socially distant of course!).

A huge thank you to all of the committee members and Pomaikai for helping to plan this event. Given the success of the event, we plan to have another one in early May and will send the details out soon!

Please email James at directors@hjcc.com if you are interested in learning more about the Sports Committee or our upcoming event.



Tennis Social - Wednesday, April 21, 2021 at 6pm

Want to get out and get some exercise? Join us for a FREE and fun evening of tennis at Pearl Ridge Elementary tennis courts! Click here for more information.

RSVP to Curt at directors@hjcc.com by Friday, April 16th!

Management Development

By Claire Fukuoka – VP of Management Development

The Management Development Committee has been hard at work, planning some exciting new fundraising activities this year! Please see below for more details:

- Thursday, April 15 at The Hi Brau Room – Our first fundraising event of the year will be a night at The Hi Brau Room with of food, drinks, lucky draw, and networking! Sorry, RSVPs are full, but please join our next one on May 30 (see below)!
- Saturday, May 10 – Official sales launch of our new fundraiser this year, the HJCC Discount Card! The HJCC Discount Card will be a collection of offers and discounts from various businesses on the island and on the web, exclusive to those who purchase our card. Please support and spread the word to make our new venture a success!
- Sunday, May 30 at Beer Lab (University location) – Please save the date and spend a night during Memorial Day weekend with us! We'll have food, drinks, lucky draw, and networking at this private HJCC event. More details and RSVP information to come.

All proceeds from the fundraising activities will benefit the HJCC and our programs, so please support if you can!

If you are interested in getting involved or have any questions about the activities mentioned here, please contact Claire at management.development@hjjcc.com.



HJCC Discount Card sales will launch on May 10!

Young Business Roundtable

By Masato Itoh - YBR Chair

To kick off the new year with resolutions to get our finances in order, members got an introduction and refresher on personal finance in January. Financial planners, Steve Adams and Dane Sako with Royal Alliance Associates, shared their expertise in budgeting, retirement planning, and answered all of our questions. In addition, our members were able to catch up with each other for a period of virtual networking following the event.

Thank you to our members and speakers for a great first YBR event of 2021. We hope to see you at our future events!

Your YBR committee is hard at work planning our next event on the topic of Japanese business and social etiquette! Keep an eye out for the invitation email and announcement on HJCC's Facebook and Instagram.

For more information on YBR, please contact Masa at ybrhawaii@hjjcc.com.



69th Cherry Blossom Festival

By Lauren Dookchitra and Eryn Muraoka – 69th Cherry Blossom Festival Co-General Chairs

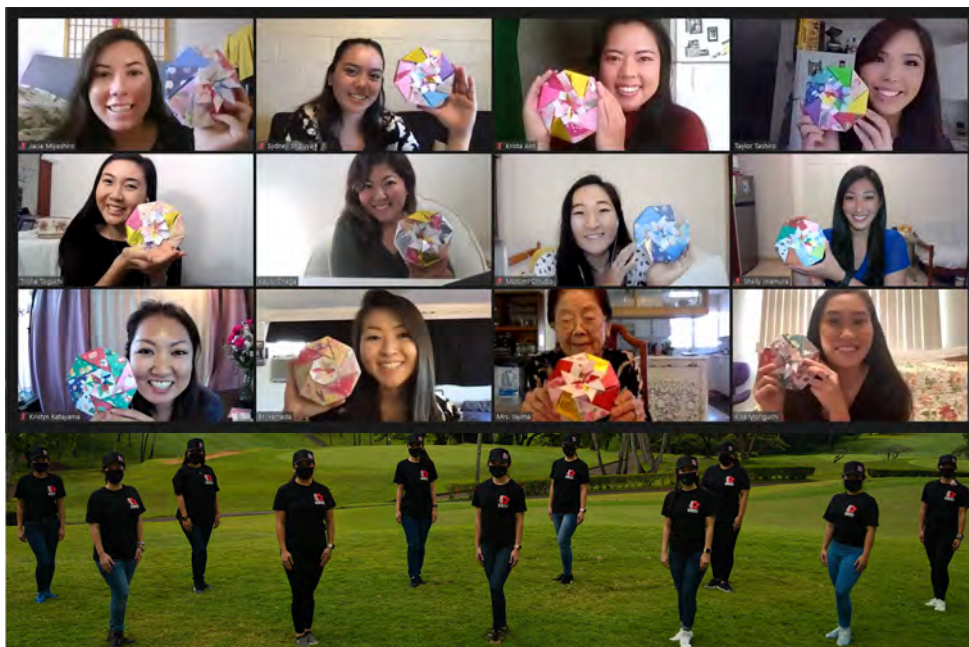
This year's Cherry Blossom Festival theme "Kibou" or hope encompasses the entire feeling of the Festival. Our hope, rooted in the enduring traditions and values of the Japanese culture in our community is what sustains us through times of adversity. Amid the pandemic, we were faced with fulfilling the mission of the Festival to perpetuate the Japanese culture and enrich the lives of young women of Japanese ancestry.

The contestant experience was adjusted this year to keep the contestants, instructors, and volunteers safe and socially distanced. Before the selection of our new Queen and Court at Festival Ball, preparations for the Festival began well before the New Year. With over 25 cultural and personal development classes, taught by a dedicated team of skilled instructors, each Contestant was given the opportunity to experience different aspects of their Japanese Culture while developing themselves both personally and professionally.

For the first time ever, our Queen Contestants participated in three virtual appearances. The appearances allowed our Queen Contestants to introduce themselves, promote the Festival and to showcase different aspects of the Japanese culture to the community through various performances. The highlight of each public appearance was the introduction of our Queen Contestants, where each individual was asked a question on a variety of subjects, allowing them to practice their public speaking and appearance skills.



Other events included Contestant Reception held exclusively this year for our generous Sponsors and Award Donors, as well as our annual Golf Tournament. This year, Contestant Reception was held virtually and Festival Sponsors and Award Donors were able to interact with the Contestants and hear first-hand about their Contestant experience. Luck would have it that we were able to once again partner with Pearl Country Club to host our Golf Tournament in person in March. It featured four-man teams and a virtual banquet to end the evening. On the course, golfers enjoyed food and drinks from various vendors while our volunteers and Queen Contestants facilitated course games and cheered them on.



69th Cherry Blossom Festival (Cont.)

By Lauren Dookchitra and Eryn Muraoka
69th Cherry Blossom Festival Co-General Chairs

These events all lead up to the highly anticipated Festival Ball which was held on Saturday, April 3, 2021 at the newly renovated Sheraton Waikiki Hawaii Ballrooms. Festival Ball was the culmination of months of classes and rehearsals by the 11 Queen Contestants and also months of planning and dedication by the steering committee.

This year was unlike any other – our guests were able to view the show from the comfort of their own hotel room. Our Queen Contestants opened the evening with a taiko performance followed by the Western phase, where they presented their prepared speech while wearing a sparkling navy-blue evening gown. During intermission, our Contestants prepared for the Eastern phase of the evening. Each Contestant graced the stage in an authentic silk Furisode kimono specifically chosen for each individual by Watabe Wedding Corporation, a Diamond Sponsor. During this phase, our Contestants put their public speaking skills to the test as they answered an impromptu question. At the end of the night, a panel of judges selected the 69th Cherry Blossom Festival Queen, First Princess, and three Princesses. Miss Popularity and Miss Congeniality were also announced to complete the 69th Cherry Blossom Festival Court. This was also the last official appearance of the 68th Cherry Blossom Festival Queen Jewel Mahoe and her Court.



We would like to extend our congratulations to all of the 69th Cherry Blossom Festival Contestants on an outstanding performance and welcome our newly crowned 69th Cherry Blossom Festival Queen and Court. We would also like to congratulate Krista Ann Lee, the recipient of the Violet Niimi Oishi Scholarship. This award was established by Dr. Scott Oishi in memory of his mother who was crowned the first Cherry Blossom Festival Queen. This \$5,000 award is given to one Contestant for their continued education. They are selected for their educational excellence, essay submission, and community service involvement.



69th Cherry Blossom Festival Queen and Court

(From Left) Princess Shelly Teruko Imamura; Princess Motomi Otsubo; Queen, Miss Popularity and Miss Congeniality Brianne Kehau Yamada; First Princess Taylor Kaydi Onaga; Princess Taylor Emi Tashiro

As the 69th Cherry Blossom Festival ends, we look back and reflect on the hard work and generosity of everyone who supported this annual tradition. Our hope is that this Festival has inspired our Contestants, volunteers, supporters and the community to not only learn and explore the beauty of their history and culture, but to share it with others while making positive differences in the community.

Thank you to our Sponsors, Award Donors, Instructors, Honorary Advisors, HJJCC Board of Directors and members, CBF Steering Committee members, and our family and friends for supporting this Festival. The hard work and dedication by these groups and individuals is what will allow the Festival to thrive for many years to come. 🌸

68th Cherry Blossom Festival Queen & Court

By Kim Takata Endo – 68th Cherry Blossom Festival Queen & Court Advisor

While the 68th Cherry Blossom Festival Court was not able to travel to visit our sister Festivals in Los Angeles and San Francisco or to visit the HJJCC sister chapters in Japan, they had the opportunity to spend a weekend on Kauai, to explore and serve the local community. The Court was accompanied by HJJCC President Crystine Ito, and 68th Cherry Blossom Festival Queen and Court Advisor, Kim Takata Endo. The Court participated in community service projects, including a beach clean-up at Baby Beach in Kapa'a, planting produce at Nonaka Farm, and making and delivering greeting cards and posters to patients at Mahelona Medical Center. The group was also fortunate to meet with Councilmember Bernard Carvalho, and Mayor Derek Kawakami to hear about their experiences as community leaders. While the trip was short it was also packed with some fun activities, from shopping around Old Kapa'a Town to horseback riding along the beach in Po'ipu. The court made lots of new memories together on this trip and were grateful for many new experiences as well!

In the last couple of months of their reign, the court continued projects and events back on Oahu. Each year the HJJCC partners with long-time Cherry Blossom Festival award donor, Anne Namba, for a fashion show fundraiser. Though we couldn't have a live fashion show this year, the court was excited for the opportunity to wear Anne's beautiful pieces for a virtual fashion show.

The Court also folded origami cranes for each of the residents at the Waikiki Plaza. They gave them cards, noting that the cranes were a symbol of hope and healing. Typically, the Court folds cranes to take to Japan for the HJJCC Goodwill Tour, but given the circumstances, the court was happy to share this tradition with our local kupuna.

The court also participated in the virtual Public Appearances for the 69th Cherry Blossom Festival, the virtual Contestant Reception and virtual awards ceremony for the Golf Tournament.

In March, Queen and Miss Congeniality Jewel and Princess Lauren, HJJCC President, Crystine and CBF Court Advisor, Kim had the opportunity to meet with Mayor Blangiardi. We shared with him the purpose of the HJJCC and Cherry Blossom Festival, and discussed the impact of the pandemic on our state.

The court also participated in a virtual panel discussion, for members of the HJJCC. The event allowed HJJCC members to learn more about the Cherry Blossom Festival, how they can get involved, and gave the court an opportunity to share reflections about their experience as contestants and court members.

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68th Cherry Blossom Festival Queen & Court (Cont.)

By Kim Takata Endo – 68th Cherry Blossom Festival Queen & Court Advisor

Finally, they ended the month volunteering with the HJJCC at Waimea Valley and hosting a virtual book drive and fundraiser for Books 4 Keiki, a local non-profit organization that donates books to pre-kindergarten students to help them build at home libraries.

Finally, the court attended the 69th Cherry Blossom Festival Ball on April 3rd, to celebrate the journey of the Queen contestants and to welcome the new court! They are grateful for the opportunities they've had to serve the community during their reign and for the many organizations they were able to support. They've gained new perspectives, memories and friendships; and look forward to joining the HJJCC!



Japanese Culture

Boys' Day

By Kari Kiyota – Executive Vice President

May 5th is synonymous with Cinco de Mayo, but in Hawaii and Japan, on May 5th we also celebrate Boys' Day (tango no sekku), or the renamed, Children's Day (kodomo no hi). Throughout neighborhoods, you'll often see houses with carp shaped windsocks or koi no bori on display starting to appear around mid-April. This tradition was brought over from Japan and is still celebrated today in Hawaii. Previously, families with sons fly the koi no bori in the front of their houses to symbolize the hope that their sons will grow up strong and in good health. More recently, in celebration of Children's Day, there are koi no bori to represent not only the sons, but also father, mother, and children in the family. In Japan, Children's Day is celebrated as a National holiday and caps off the Golden Week festivities.



Similar to the Girl's Day celebrations on March 3rd, Samurai dolls (gogatsu ningyo) and warrior helmets (kabuto) are often put on display for the boys in the family. Traditionally, depending on what area of Japan you are from, kashiwa mochi, which is mochi filled with anko paste and wrapped in an oak leaf, or chimaki, which is steamed mochi rice wrapped in bamboo leaves, are eaten on this day.

While the name was officially changed in Japan to Children's Day back in 1948, here in Hawaii, many people continue to celebrate May 5th as Boys' Day.

International Relations

By Garrett Lau – VP of International Relations

If you are interested in getting more involved in our sister city relationships, please contact Garrett at international.relations@hjjcc.com.

In December, we conducted a Secret Santa Gift Exchange with our sister city chapter Kobe. We exchanged gifts by mail and held a virtual Zoom party to present our gifts to each other. We also gifted the Kobe JCs with a framed scenic photo of Waikiki to display in their boardroom. Everyone had fun and was very happy with their gifts, just in time for the holidays!

Our friends in Kobe also gifted our newly crowned 69th Cherry Blossom Festival Court with beautiful Kobe pearl necklaces. These necklaces represent respect and friendship between the Kobe JCs and the HJJCC Cherry Blossom Festival Court members.

In January, we completed our Junior High School Drawing Exchange with one of our sister city chapters from the San JC, Kojima. We had Hawaii students and Kojima students exchange drawings, letters and video messages that illustrated how to confront COVID. According to our Hawaii student responses, they enjoyed the exchange and were happy to participate!

In March, we met with the San JC chapter presidents to discuss future events for this year. We hope we will be able to do more events as we continue to coordinate with all of our sister chapters Kobe, Kurashiki, Tamashima, Kojima and Odawara! Please look forward to it!



Happy Birthday!

MARCH

Cheryl Sora
 Kari Kiyota
 Kayla Ueshiro
 Ryan Sakai

APRIL

Ashley Higa
 Brandon Lam
 Garrett Matsumoto
 Holly Fujishige
 Joseph Furutani
 Ruth Taketa

MAY

Colin Shinsato
 Daniel Koge
 Kelly Ann Takiguchi
 Kristine Wada
 Lynn Miyahira
 Megan Tabata
 Pierson Oyama
 Tyson Yamada