



President's Message

Aloha HJJCC Members,

It is my privilege to be the 71st President of the Honolulu Japanese Junior Chamber of Commerce.

I joined the HJJCC after participating as a contestant in the 61st Cherry Blossom Festival, and I am truly grateful to this organization for the personal and professional opportunities it has offered me, as well as the wonderful friendships.

Each year, our organization is faced with different challenges and unfortunately for us, that happens to be a COVID-19 pandemic and most recently, escaping a close call with Hurricane Douglas. With the challenges already presented to us, it is evident that this year will be different. While many are rightfully worried and concerned about activities we cannot do or events we may be unable to participate in, I challenge the members of this organization to be positive, and to change our mindsets to focus on all the great things we can do and to continue to work together to overcome these obstacles.

Our board of directors, along with their committees are working hard so that we may provide many virtual and in-person activities to look forward throughout the year, including membership mixers, community service projects, Young Business Roundtable events, unique activities with our Japan sister cities, leisure and sport activities with our newly introduced Sports Director, and of course, the 69th Cherry Blossom Festival. We also hope to host our annual Nijikai fundraising event next year!

This year as President, my goals are to engage and provide value for members, build and create leadership opportunities, and support the community. Although we had a rough start to 2020, it is important for us to continue to progress and move forward and I hope to safely and successfully lead us through these unprecedented times.

If you have any questions, ideas or are interested in joining any of our committees, please feel free to contact me at president@hjjcc.com. Thank you for being a member of the Honolulu Japanese Junior Chamber of Commerce. I'm looking forward to a very unique, exciting year together!

With gratitude,

Crystine Ito, 71st HJJCC President



Community Development

By Ross Kohara - VP of Community Development

A new year like no other. The COVID-19 pandemic severely impacted our way of life here in the islands, and with it came the cancelation of many of our community service events. While our State faced many challenges, the HJJCC remained committed to serving our community while keeping the safety of our members in mind.

As the State re-opened, we continued our search for ways to give back, and July brought our first event. We started our new Clean School Happy School Initiative. Our first project would be at Pohakea Elementary School in Ewa Beach as they began to prepare their campus to welcome students back. It was clear that our members were eager to get back to work as we had a fantastic turnout! Our members, along with members of our 68th Cherry Blossom Festival Court, worked together to place social distancing markers around the entire school. Thanks to our strong numbers, we completed our task much quicker than the School expected! We then proceeded to assist by rearranging the desks to accommodate the space for faculty meetings and safe learning.

August brings the second edition of our Clean School Happy School Initiative at Daniel K. Inouye Elementary School on Saturday, August 8th. We will also be lending volunteers to the Hawaii Foodbank at the end of the month for their monthly food-boxing event on Saturday, August 29th.

The new fiscal year also brings with it the introduction of our new Community Development Committee! We held our first meeting in July and we are still looking for new members to fill our team! If you have a desire to learn more about the HJJCC and our community service opportunities, we invite you to join us!

As the pandemic continues to affect our State, we continue our search for organizations or businesses to which we could lend a hand. We have awesome projects in the works for the coming months, but are still looking for new opportunities.

If you would like to join the new committee or know of any local organizations needing assistance, please contact us at community.service@hjjcc.com.



International Relations

By Garrett Lau – VP of International Relations

If you are interested in joining our International Relations Committee, please email Garrett Lau at international.relations@hjcc.com!

As everyone knows, COVID-19 has made it difficult to travel this year, and unfortunately, that meant our Japan sister chapters were unable to visit us here in Hawaii.

The HJCC is fortunate to have Japan sister city relationships with the Kobe, Kurashiki, Tamashima, Kojima and Odawara JCs. For the first time, our HJCC President Crystine Ito, EVP Kari Kiyota, Vice President of International Relations Garrett Lau and YBR Chair/Translator Masa Itoh held virtual Zoom meetings with each chapter to discuss future plans, brainstorm ways to stay connected, and to see how everyone was doing in their respective cities. We are happy to report that they are all well and in good spirits!

The International Relations Committee has started working on creative ideas to connect to our Sister cities during these difficult times. Some of the ideas involve virtual hangouts and various activities, all to strengthen our bond and promote friendships together. We are excited to share these ideas with everyone so please stay tuned!

Membership Development

By Sheri Morishige – VP of Membership Development

We started off the new fiscal year with our first Membership Committee meeting on Wednesday, July 22nd. Our meeting began with introductions of Ross Kohara, VP of Community Development, Garrett Lau, VP of International Relations, and Kat Fujitani, Historian and Marketing Committee Chair. They shared information regarding their respective committees and invited anyone interested to join their committees as well. With a group of 13, we then introduced ourselves to each other and while many of us had a little extra free time during the stay at home order, we each shared a TV show series/movie recommendation with the group!



Next, we reviewed our Membership Survey results, which was taken towards the end of this past fiscal year. The results showed that our members are interested in networking, making new friends, helping their community, professional development opportunities, and learning about the Japanese culture. With this in mind, we brainstormed and discussed ideas for upcoming events while of course, taking into consideration our current health and safety guidelines.

The Membership Committee will be actively planning a variety of virtual and in-person events throughout the year. All HJCC members are welcome to join our Membership Committee! **If you are interested in coming up with fun ideas or helping to plan these upcoming events, please email Sheri Morishige at membership@hjcc.com.**

HJCC Virtual Game Night - Tuesday, August 18th at 6pm

We are excited to announce our first membership event of the fiscal year - a virtual game night! Members will attend via Zoom and participate in playing simple, virtual games with the chance to win prizes from the comfort of their own homes! **If you are interested in attending this virtual gathering, please RSVP to membership@hjcc.com by Thursday, August 13th!** This event is FREE for all HJCC Members! We look forward to seeing you at our first event!

Installation Ceremony

By Claire Fukuoka – VP of Management Development

Given the current local and worldwide impacts of COVID-19, the annual HJJCC Installation Banquet looked a little different this year. While traditionally a formal, suit-and-tie dinner event with VIPs, guests, and members in attendance, this year's Installation was held on July 18th as an intimate and casual outdoor gathering in Manoa.

To get their hearts pumped up for a new year of HJJCC planning and activities, the HJJCC Board started the day strong with a group hike up the Pu'u Pia trail. Donning face masks throughout proved to be a little more challenging than anticipated, but they powered through together and made it to the top in good time! As they looked out over the city of Honolulu, they kanpai'd (with sparkling cider of course) to a new year of service, camaraderie, and good health.

The official Installation ceremony followed the hike at Manoa Valley District Park. Although VIPs, guests, and members were not able to come to the ceremony, we were grateful to have the 68th Cherry Blossom Festival Queen and Court, JCI Chairman Nhut Pham, 2019-2020 HJJCC Board members, and four HJJCC past-presidents (also 2020-2021 HJJCC Board members) in attendance!

After an introduction of the 68th Cherry Blossom Festival Court and speech by Queen Jewel Mahoe, event photographer Brandon Miyagi gave the traditional kanpai to kick-off the ceremony. Chairman Nhut then officially installed the 2020-2021 Board of Directors. The 70th HJJCC President message was given by Kristin Alm Kamakahi on behalf of 70th President Kristine Wada, who was unable to attend. Legacy awards were presented to deserving members who made outstanding efforts towards the HJJCC within the past year. Congratulations to HJJCC Member of the Year, Kathryn Fujitani; Director of the Year, Kim Takata Endo; and 68th Cherry Blossom Festival Steering Co-Committee Members of the Year, Sarah Kamida-Nakagawa and Kirstie Maeshiro-Takiguchi!

After the traditional president's gift exchange, Crystine Ito addressed the gathering with her first speech as the 71st HJJCC President.

To close out the event, a traditional sake barrel ceremony was performed, representing an opening to good health and fortune at the start of the HJJCC year. Finally, 64th HJJCC President, Neil Kuioka, led the *tejime*, a Japanese hand-clapping custom adopted by the HJJCC to close such a special event as Installation.

Thank you to the outgoing HJJCC Board of Directors for all your service over the past year, and congratulations to the 2020-2021 Board of Directors! Looking forward to a great year ahead!



68th Cherry Blossom Festival

By Kim Takata Endo – 68th CBF Queen and Court Advisor

The Cherry Blossom Festival Ball is the culminating experience for Queen Contestants and was originally scheduled to be held at the Sheraton Waikiki on March 21, 2020. Unfortunately, with the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic in early March, the HJCC Board made the difficult decision to cancel Festival Ball and to postpone the selection of the 68th Cherry Blossom Festival Court.

On June 29, 2020, the fifteen Queen Contestants participated in a private, virtual ceremony. Each contestant had the opportunity to give her speech and answer an impromptu question for the panel of judges who were connected remotely. Though they missed the opportunity to perform in front of family and friends in furisode kimono and play taiko, the contestants were happy for the opportunity to conclude their contestant journey.

The Cherry Blossom Festival also held its first online silent auction from June 13th - 17th. The silent auction is normally held at Festival Ball, but the online format was a welcomed change, as it allowed many more supporters to bid and get in on the action!

The 68th Cherry Blossom Court will undoubtedly have a different set of experiences this year. While the annual trips to visit sister festivals, Nisei Week in Los Angeles and the Northern California Cherry Blossom Festival in San Francisco, will not be possible, the court is truly excited for the opportunity to support the local community and CBF sponsors during these unprecedented times.

In their first month as the 68th Cherry Blossom Festival Court, the court members participated in two virtual Meet & Greet events with prospective CBF applicants, created a video for Read to Me International's read aloud fundraiser, volunteered with the HJCC at the Clean School Happy School event at Pohokea Elementary, created a video message for the Nisei Week Virtual Series, attended the HJCC Installation Picnic and recorded video messages for the HJCC sister chapters in Japan. Additionally, Queen Jewel Mahoe, attended virtual visits to thank the sponsors of the 68th Cherry Blossom Festival and participated in several media interviews.

In August, the Court is looking forward to volunteering with the Hawaii Foodbank, Manoa Cliffs Restoration Project, and another Clean School Happy School event with the HJCC. On September 5th, the court will be the champions for a Blood Drive at Waikale Center. Whether you can make it on that day or not, please consider supporting the Hawaii Blood Bank with a blood donation!

With a whole collection of face masks added to their wardrobe, the Court is eager to promote and live by the theme of the 68th Cherry Blossom Festival, *Kaizen*, meaning continuous growth!

Introducing the 68th Cherry Blossom Festival Court!



(L to R): Princess Kelsey Toshie Uyeda, First Princess and Miss Popularity Sophia Aiko Teruya, Queen and Miss Congeniality Jewel Kahiwalani Miyuki Mahoe, Princess Lauren Elizabeth Holt, and Princess Alyssa Mika Nakamoto.



Young Business Roundtable

By Masato Itoh - YBR Chair

I'd like to introduce your 2020-2021 YBR committee - Tobie Wada, Mark Saiki, Brandy Okuda, and me, Masa Itoh as Chair. We are in the works to hold four events this year for professional development and networking, informed by your feedback from the Membership survey. Details of our first event on the topic of Negotiations are forthcoming, so keep an eye out for the invite!

Although the COVID-19 pandemic has limited our ability to meet and learn in person, our May Young Business Roundtable, titled "Growing in Place: Effectively Managing Our Time at Home," provided members the opportunity to virtually learn while sheltering in place. Our virtual guest speaker was Jan Kaeo, President of Dale Carnegie Hawaii, who has trained and coached hundreds of participants to realize their best, develop new skills and become even more successful in their sales and leadership positions.

The interactive meeting utilized WebEx Training features and allowed everyone to actively participate and contribute to discussions on productivity and time management while working from home. HJCC members and guests had the opportunity to identify their individual "time robbers" and fight back against the "Tyranny of the Urgent" by prioritizing. We are thankful to Jan, who allowed us to grow our time management skills while adjusting to our "new normal." Big thanks to Chelsea Okamoto, past YBR chair who organized the virtual event and set us up for success in the new fiscal year.



**Jan Kaeo, President
Dale Carnegie Hawaii**

For more information on YBR, please contact ybrhawaii@hjcc.com.

Sports Committee

By James Odan – Sports Director

2020 marks the return of the Sports Committee! The Sports Committee is designed to provide our membership with a blend of active and educational events throughout the year. The emphasis this year is to host both virtual and safe in-person events, that will allow our members to learn something new, get some exercise, and network. Our first event is scheduled for the end of August (virtual yoga!), so please be on the lookout!

Join the HJCC Marketing Committee

Are you interested in marketing, social media, graphic design and/or photography? Join the brand-new Marketing Committee to help plan and create social media content, manage the HJCC website, and design marketing collateral!

Email Kat at historian@hjcc.com to join.

Follow the HJCC!



Happy Birthday!

AUGUST

Kirstie Maeshiro-Takiguchi
David Ota
Masato Itoh
Kyson Morikuni
Aaron Muraki
Kayla Nakayama
Lori Kim
Toby Yamashiro
Lauren Horikoshi

SEPTEMBER

David Torigoe
Laron Miyashiro
Crystine Ito
George Takase
Shelby Meador
Tobie Wada
Brandon Miyagi
Grant Kobayashi
Amy Fujiwara

OCTOBER

Kim Takata
Kenneth Kim
Neil Kuioka
Sydette Higuchi

Japanese Culture

Obon

Obon is an annual Japanese holiday for commemorating ancestors. It is believed that during this time, spirits return to visit their relatives. Customs will vary from region to region, but typically, *chochin* (lanterns) are hung to guide the ancestors' spirits home and *bon odori* (bon dances) are performed. Families will gather, visit graves, and place food offerings at home alters and temples. At the end of Obon, floating lanterns are released into rivers and seas to help guide spirits back to their world.



Obon is observed from the 13th to the 15th day of the 7th month of the year, which some celebrate in mid-July based on the solar calendar. Others base it off the lunar calendar and celebrate it in mid-August. Japan's official 2020 dates are August 13th – 15th.

The Obon week is one of Japan's three major holiday seasons (with New Year and Golden Week), making it one of the busiest times of the year for traveling. Many Japanese people will leave their cities around August 10th and return back around August 17th.

Be a Queen Contestant in the 69th Cherry Blossom Festival



The Cherry Blossom Festival is one of the longest, continuously running ethnic festivals in Hawaii. Our Queen Contestants come from diverse backgrounds across the state. They are professional, well-educated women who strive to advance their careers, build leadership skills, serve their community and learn about their Japanese heritage and culture.



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APPLY TODAY!

Applications due
August 15, 2020!

Visit www.cbfhawaii.com/apply
for qualification requirements and
application!



A project of the Honolulu Japanese Junior Chamber of Commerce