



Study Japanese in Arlington

Annual Report 2022

Fiscal Year 2022

November 30, 2022



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Introduction

Study Japanese in Arlington (SJA) was founded to promote and support the study of the Japanese language and Japanese culture by students of all ages in Arlington, Virginia and the greater Washington, D.C. metropolitan area.

Fiscal Year 2022 (July 2021-June 2022) marked SJA's fourth year as a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization, following its founding in September 2018. This is the second annual report SJA has issued. Our first one released in Fall 2021 covers the first three years. Building on the previous years, SJA continued to strive on sharing the Japanese language and culture. In-person events and gatherings have been resumed and new initiatives have been launched in FY22.

The SJA's strategic plan focuses are education, outreach and advocacy. These three pillars of SJA guide its activities. In education, Origami workshops continued to be popular, as well as adult beginner Japanese language classes. In Outreach, a series of seasonal events were organized, together with a major fundraising event, a spring festival with a "Setagaya-style" boroichi, or outdoor flea market. In Advocacy, SJA continued its dialogue with APS Board and Administration and stayed engaged with Virtual Virginia which is managed by the Virginia Department of Education.

Notable this year is the support SJA expressed towards Peace in Ukraine through the fund-raising event "You-Crane" in partnership with a YouTube channel "Fold It". Proceeds have been donated to the World Central Kitchen that has been actively providing meals to families in Ukraine and those that fled to neighboring countries. SJA and its volunteers folded one thousand (1,000) yellow and blue color cranes and presented them to the Ukrainian Embassy in Washington D.C. The thousand cranes, a symbol of peace, are still hanging in the Ukraine House.

We continued to introduce interested students to opportunities for studying at Japanese colleges. Through the Arlington-Setagaya Partnership Committee that SJA helped to develop, SJA also supported regular online exchanges with youth and adults in Setagaya City, one of Tokyo's 23 wards. The Arlington Career Center High School also has a sister school relationship with Tokyo Engei (Horticultural) High School in Setagaya since 2018.

We truly appreciate your interest in and support for SJA and its activities.

Sincerely,

SJA Board Members, FY2022



Key Highlights of FY 2022 (July 2021-June 2022)

SJA resumed outdoor in-person activities focused on a series of seasonal events to celebrate Japanese culture while continuing virtual language and origami classes.

Events and Outreach



1. **SJA kicked off FY22 with the Tanabata Star Festival on July 11, 2021.** Despite the July heat in Arlington, the event attracted more than 250 engaged participants who enjoyed the Japanese summer festival and made Tanabata wishes on paper streamers that they could tie to bamboo stalks. Other fun activities included origami, calligraphy, yukata dressing, kendama and more. This was the first in-person event since the COVID-19 pandemic that turned all our activities virtual in March 2020. The event followed COVID-19 protocol and was held outdoors in the Ballston area.

2. **SJA hosted the 2021 Japanese University Information Nights online on July 14 and 15, 2021.** The University of Tsukuba (one of the most prestigious national universities in Japan) and International Christian University (ICU) (the oldest liberal arts college in Japan) participated. On the first night, interested American students chatted with current students from both universities on various topics such as Japanese college life. On the second night, each university provided an introductory presentation of the university and a mini lecture, followed by a Q&A session and a Kahoot quiz session about both universities. Over 30 students in the DMV area attended the event. It was a great opportunity for them to hear directly from current students about their universities, to listen to the presentation and a mini lecture from each university and ask questions directly to university officials about the admission process, among various topics.

2021 ONLINE
Japanese Universities Information Nights
Registration: <https://tinyurl.com/2P3m8h3s>
<https://www.tsukuba.ac.jp/en/> <https://www.icu.ac.jp/en/>
Day 1: July 14 (Wed) 7:30-9:30 pm (EST)
• Chat with students from University of Tsukuba and ICU (International Christian University)
Day 2: July 15 (Thu) 7:30-9:30 pm (EST)
• Introduction of University of Tsukuba and ICU
• Online Mini Lectures
(1) "Japan's Curious Brand of Religious Pluralism"
Prof. Stephen Edward Eskildsen from ICU
(2) "Privacy and security within smart cities"
Prof. Siromu Yasuhide from University of Tsukuba
• Q and A session with University of Tsukuba and ICU students
• Raffles
Hosted by SJA (Study Japanese in Arlington)
<https://sjaodc.org/>

SJA **Harvest** **SJA**
JAPANESE TEA CEREMONY
BROUGHT TO YOU BY SJA AND OMOTESENKE DOMONKAI EASTERN REGION USA
REGISTER HERE
WHEN? SUNDAY, OCTOBER 17 2-4PM.
WHERE? SIDE GARDEN OF FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH, ARLINGTON, 601 N VERMONT STREET, ARLINGTON
ALL AGES ARE WELCOME FOR TEA CEREMONY. JUST MAKE SURE TO PRE-REGISTER. IT'S FREE!
10 YEARS AND UNDER MUST BE ACCOMPANIED BY PARENT/GUARDIAN BY ATTENDING THIS EVENT. YOU AGREE TO BE PHOTOGRAPHED AND/OR FILMED AND GIVE PERMISSION TO USE YOUR LIKENESS IN PROMOTIONAL AND/OR MARKETING MATERIALS.

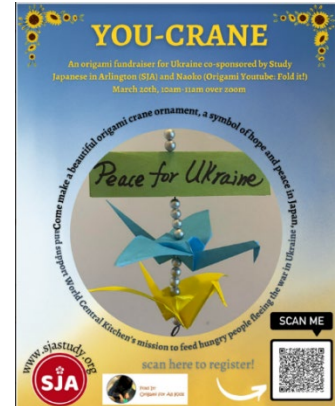
3. **Japanese Harvest Moon Tea Ceremony was successfully held on October 10, 2021.** The event was organized in collaboration with Omotesenke Domonkai Eastern Region. Together we offered an authentic tea ceremony experience for about 50 guests and had over 100 visitors and volunteers. Beautiful Ikebana displays and the autumn story telling also attracted many visitors. A professional kimono dresser also offered her services to guests.

4. **On January 22, 2022, SJA had planned an in-person Ikebana event,** but due to the rise of the Omicron variant, it was shifted to an online event. About 15 participants enjoyed a new year's ikebana talk from Yukari Mire sensei, a professional ikebana teacher, and created origami models with the SJA origami team to complement the ikebana new year's theme.

5. **SJA had a booth in the National Cherry Blossom Kite Festival on March 26, 2022.** SJA was invited to participate in celebrating the National Cherry Blossom Festival at the Virginia Highlands Park in Arlington. Many people from the community came and enjoyed origami and kendama. SJA also volunteered for the Children's Corner of the Japan America Society Sakura Matsuri in Washington, DC on April 9 and 19.



6. **“You Crane” - SJA organized a Ukraine origami fundraising event for Jose Andres’ World Central Kitchen on March 20, 2022.** SJA mobilized to show support for Ukraine at the start of the war by hosting an online origami ornament making fundraiser. Over 20 people participated, and we raised almost \$2,200 of which 100% was transferred to World Central Kitchen for support in providing meals in Ukraine and for Ukrainians who had fled to neighboring countries for safety.



7. **Origami senbazuru (1,000 cranes for YOU-CRANE) in April 2022.** Following the online fundraiser workshop, SJA created a beautiful piece of art which was presented to the Ukraine Embassy. It was displayed front and center in Ukraine House with other pieces of art made by Ukrainian children and photos of the war. While SJA’s mission is promoting Japanese language and culture, the symbolism of “senbazuru” for world peace and one free of nuclear weapons runs deep in Japanese culture since World War II. Furthermore, Arlington has a sister city in Ukraine, Ivano-Frankisk, and we would like to show solidarity and support to them even as we pursue a sister city agreement for Arlington with Setagaya, Tokyo.



8. **Further, SJA continued its peaceful wishes through Origami board for peace in Ukraine and in the world.** SJA started a community art project, making origami doves and hearts and pasting them on two art panels.



9. **SJA organized its first Spring Festival with raffles on May 22, 2022.** The event celebrated Japanese culture with a focus on martial arts, and organized a “boroichi” flea market. Featured martial arts included aikido, kyudo, karate and judo in a special outdoor exhibition. Taiko performance was beautifully organized by the Taiko club of Thomas Jefferson High School in Fairfax, Virginia. Furthermore, the event offered raffle items for local Japanese restaurants, Japanese cooking classes, Japanese goods and snacks, OtaCon entry tickets, among others. Refreshments were offered through the sale of Japanese snacks from dagashiyabox.com, serving hot matcha and cold drinks. In addition, local non-profits and the Japanese embassy/MAATJ hosted informational booths. Around 300 people and 50 volunteers attended this event.



10. **Awesome Con on June 3-5, 2022.** For the first time, SJA hosted an information booth at Awesome con at the Washington, DC convention center. This was a great opportunity to raise awareness about SJA in the con community. We are looking forward to participating in other Cons in the future.



Education

1. **SJA Language Classes:** SJA continued to offer free virtual language and culture classes throughout FY2022. Adult Beginning non-progressive classes continued to be offered once a month online with two professional teacher volunteers - one in Arlington and one in Japan. The class continues to be popular with some regular attendees.



2. **Origami classes:** SJA continued to offer free monthly virtual origami workshops throughout FY 2022, usually attended by 5-10 adults and children. This continues to be one of the SJA signature classes, taught by Taro's Origami Studio trained artists and teachers.

3. **Arlington Community Learning (ACL)** continued to offer multiple levels of Japanese classes and even expanded to 6 levels for adult evening classes. These classes were taught by SJA affiliated teachers. There are plans to add levels in 2023. Furthermore, ACL continued to offer after-school Youth Education Program (YEP) programs in School Year (SY) 2021-22. SJA affiliated teachers taught three beginner origami classes and three beginner Japanese language classes, including one anime themed and two basic introductions. The beginner origami classes were taught by Taro's Origami Studio-certified teachers and language classes taught by SJA affiliated teachers.



Beginners Origami for 4th to 6th Graders

Origami is one of the oldest arts of Japanese culture. It focuses on basic folding techniques that will provide a lifelong skill to transform a piece of square paper into intricate sculptures. Origami is also useful in enhancing basic skills in mathematics, geometry, identity, focus and patience. This class will also incorporate elements of Japanese traditions and teach upon the importance of proper posture, respectful listening and respect. Simple Japanese vocabulary, such as the names of models we create, are also introduced.

List of class supplies and link to purchase:

- 1) Origami paper: (8" x 8" size) Origami is available at Michael's, Target and online- we recommend Taro's Origami Studio: <https://origami.com/usa/020>
- 2) Colored markers.

Register at www.apsva.us/yep CLASS IS TAUGHT ONLINE

Dates: July 6, 7, 8, 9
Time: 10 - 11am
Course Code: 2109FA28
Tuition: \$00

ARLINGTON PUBLIC SCHOOLS
YEP Youth Enrichment Program

Holiday Origami

Are you ready for creative fun to make these adorable Origami models for the holiday season? Origami is one of the oldest arts of Japanese culture. Our classes focus on basic folding techniques that will provide a lifelong skill to transform a piece of square paper into intricate sculptures. Simple Japanese vocabulary, such as the names of models we create, are also introduced. December classes will focus on the Holiday season themed models to make stars, wreaths, gift boxes, and some Japanese new year related models. Visit www.apsva.us/yep to register.

Dates: December 6, 13, 20
Time: 4:30 - 5:30pm
Tuition \$49
Course Code: 21FYPA20

YEP Youth Enrichment Program
ARLINGTON PUBLIC SCHOOLS



Advocacy

1. **SJA is pleased to observe the continued increase in enrollment in the APS Japanese program over the past four years.** We believe that SJA has contributed to this expansion by raising awareness of Japanese language and culture in Arlington. Enrollment in Japanese I, II, and III has more than tripled since SJA started in 2018, from just over 50 students in 2017-18 to close to 160 students in 2021-22. The 2021-22 enrollment is the highest ever since APS began offering Japanese language classes two decades ago. SJA is also pleased that APS hired a second Japanese language teacher (part-time) in Summer 2021 to meet the increased demand in SY 2021-22, enabling all interested students at Wakefield, Washington-Liberty, and Yorktown High Schools to pursue Japanese language study. Now the Japanese program has two full time teachers in APS.
2. **SJA will continue supporting the APS Japanese program’s expansion.** With increasing enrollment and associated demand for higher level Japanese language programs such as Japanese IV and AP Japanese, SJA hopes that APS will start offering these courses. At the same time, Japanese is one of the only two world language programs offered in APS that is not available in Middle School. SJA hopes that middle school students in APS will have an opportunity to select Japanese as a world language study in the near future along all the other world language programs except German. Virtual Virginia has started the curriculum development of the Japanese program and this can be another option for APS or other students in Virginia to study Japanese language when it cannot be offered in person at their schools.
3. **SJA continues to place support provided to Arlington youth wishing to study Japanese as a critical priority.** SJA started as “Save Japanese in Arlington” in May 2018, after the Arlington Public Schools system (APS) announced its intention to consolidate and phase out the Japanese language program. Students in Arlington led a grassroots campaign (supported by the greater DC area Japan-related communities), organized a petition, and appealed the decision at the school board meeting. As a result, APS reversed its decision and saved the Japanese program at its high schools.

Arlington-Setagaya Partnership Committee

1. **Arlington-Setagaya Partnership Committee rejoined SJA until a friendship agreement with Setagaya City (Ward) and Arlington County is signed in the future.** The Arlington Setagaya Partnership Committee began in 2019 with visits to Setagaya City and Arlington Career Center’s sister school there, Tokyo Horticultural (Engei) High School. In Fall 2020 the Arlington Sister City Association (ASCA) and County Board approved working toward signing a friendship agreement. In 2021, ASCA requested that the “Setagaya Committee” become independent of SJA financially in order to prepare to become an ASCA committee. However, by spring 2022, it became clear that it would take several more years to sign a friendship agreement with Setagaya City. Thus, the committee requested to rejoin SJA in May 2022 until a friendship agreement can be signed with Setagaya City.

	setagaya	arlington
Area	22 mi ²	26 mi ²
Population	920,000	240,000
Household Income	Top 7 in Japan	Top 5 in US
Education Level	Top 2 in Tokyo	Top 5 in US

2. **Monthly online youth exchanges have continued every third Saturday evening since summer 2020.** Participants from the US are mostly Northern Virginia students who are studying Japanese language and students from the University of Maryland. The main partner, Setagaya City Council Member Risa Kamio (and former staff of the Japan-America Society of Washington DC) and Setagaya volunteers help youth in middle and high schools there participate in these sessions. Some have been joining continuously for almost two years now.

Organization and committee structure of SJA

1. **The SJA board consists of up to 12 members, with 2 or more positions designated for youth in Arlington high schools who study Japanese or have interest in promoting Japanese language and culture.** The board members are volunteers brought together by their common interest of promoting Japanese language and culture in Arlington and the broader Washington, D.C. metropolitan area. The Board represents a diverse mix of backgrounds, both in ethnicities and in skills and competencies. Members are diverse in their linguistic backgrounds and cultural backgrounds. Their career backgrounds span fields such as media, law, education, finance, business, accounting, IT, and human resources. SJA has had three youth board members for the past three years. These youth board members have gone on to a college in Japan or studied Japanese at college in the United States or continue their studies in APS. Appendix B lists the present and past board members and executive committee members of the SJA in recognition of their service.
2. **SJA has an active committee structure and SJA's activities are carried out by the appropriate committees.**

The **Executive Committee** consists of the President, Vice-President, Secretary and Treasurer. The by-laws establish the Executive Committee and the **Finance Committee** as permanent committees. The rest are ad hoc committees created by the board. Ad hoc committees have been renamed over the years, but they have maintained similar functions as their activities. The FY22 had the following committee structure:

- a. The **Education Committee** is the largest year-round committee. Formerly the Language Committee, it meets almost monthly to plan and evaluate SJA's language and culture classes and support.
- b. The **Japanese Language Advocacy Committee** became a full committee in FY21 given its importance to SJA's mission.
- c. The **Event and Outreach Committee** met regularly and organized activities throughout the year. This is the former **Japan Day Committee**.
- d. The **Youth Committee** coordinates youth input in SJA programming. Youth Committee members also write posts for the SJA Youth Blogs, posted to the SJA website.
- e. SJA created an **IT and Communications Committee** in FY21 to handle all of its growing online activities and communication needs.

Over the past years, SJA has strengthened its committee structure as a way to recruit leaders and volunteers and to enable former volunteers and board members to stay involved when they leave the Arlington area. Appendix C lists the old and new committee structure.

Appendix A: Financial Report of Revenue and Expenses for FY 2021-22 (July 2021-June 2022)

Total Revenue	6,844.70	(USD)
	Arlington Arts Program	1,005.83
	7/11 Tanabata Event	413.64
	7/14-15 University Event	300.00
	Tea Ceremony 2021	40.00
	You Crane 2022 for Ukraine	2,142.59
	Spring Festival Raffle	2,719.13
	Others (revenues from other events)	223.51
		<hr/> 6,844.70
Total Expenses	5,814.61	
	Global Equity (Facilitator Fee for Retreat)	500.00
	United States Liability Insurance	1,433.00
	7/11 Tanabata Event	223.60
	You Crane 2022 for Ukraine	81.56
	World Central Kitchen (Donation from the fundraising event" You Crane 2022")	2,142.59
	Awesome Con June 2022	104.64
	Spring Festival 2022	270.18
		<hr/> 5,814.61
Net Income	1,030.09	
Bank Statement Ending Balance as of June 30, 2022		
	13,575.47	

Appendix B. SJA's Board and Executive Committee Members, FY 2018-22

FY 2018-19

President	Mine Sasaguri
Vice President	Miki Terasawa
Treasurer	Yuri Ellison
Secretary	Seiko Kyan-Reich
Members	Winnie Brent, Satoko Kajima-Best, John McLaughlin, Jack Nelson, Sabrina Nelson,

FY 2019-20

President	Mine Sasaguri
Vice President	Miki Terasawa
Treasurer	Yuri Ellison
Secretary	Seiko Kyan-Reich
Members	Sophia Field, Maya Green, Satoko Kajima-Best, John McLaughlin, Sabrina Nelson, Jennifer Swanson

FY 2020-21

President	Miki Terasawa
Vice President	Jennifer Swanson
Treasurer	Yuri Ellison
Secretary	Mine Sasaguri and Anna Fry
Members	Sophia Field, Junko Katada, John McLaughlin, Yoshimi Muto, Sabrina Nelson, Emiko Todoroki

FY 2021-22

President	Jennifer Swanson
Vice President	Emiko Todoroki
Treasurer	Yoko Scanlen
Secretary	John McLaughlin and Dylan Vasquez
Members	Anna Fry, Junko Katada, Yoshimi Muto, Sabrina Nelson, Alea Ortiguerra, Ninjin Purev-Erdene, Mine Sasaguri

FY 2022-23

President	Jennifer Swanson
Vice President	Emiko Todoroki
Treasurer	Yoko Scanlen
Secretary	John McLaughlin
Members	Sophia Field, Junko Katada, Grace Kim, Yoshimi Muto, Joe Recht, Kamryn Sauri, Yuta Toda, Dylan Vasquez

Appendix C: SJA Committee Structure

Former (FY 2018-22)	Current (FY 23)
Executive Committee	Executive Committee
Finance Committee	Finance Committee
	Fundraising Subcommittee
	Education Committee
Japanese Language Committee	Japanese Language Advocacy Committee
Program Advocacy Subcommittee	
Japan Day Committee	Setagaya Committee
Outreach Committee	Outreach and Events Committee
Youth Committee	Youth Committee
Recruitment Committee	Communications Committee

Appendix D: Acknowledgement of SJA Grants and Donors, FY 2018-21

Organization	Purpose
Arlington County Arts	Grant for arts programs (2020 and 2021)
Japan Foundation Japan Foundation Los Angeles	Teaching Materials Japan Day 2021
Embassy of Japan JCAW (Japan Commerce Association of Washington, DC) Foundation Inc	Japan Day 2020 Japan Day 2020
JCAW (Japan Commerce Association of Washington, DC) Foundation Inc Embassy of Japan/MAATJ	Programming 2019 Japan Day 2019

The above grants ranged from \$1,000 to \$20,000 for a total of \$37,782.15. SJA wishes to thank our funders for their generosity.

SJA also wishes to thank the many donors who have attended our events and made cash donations or responded to our crowdfunding appeals.