

Japan Focus



*Consulate General of Japan, Los Angeles
Japan Information & Culture Center
January 2024 Vol. 16 Issue 1*



2024 New Year's Greetings

The Consulate General of Japan in Los Angeles would like to wish all a Happy New Year! We would like to share [Prime Minister KISHIDA Fumio's New Year's Reflection](#), and a [New Year's Message from](#)

[Consul General of Japan in Los Angeles SONE Kenko](#).

January 4, 2024

We wish to express our deepest condolences to the families of those lost in the recent tragedies that have occurred in Japan. With this outpouring of support to the people of Japan from so many leaders, communities and friends across the United States, we are continually reminded of the critical and exquisite friendship we share with the United States. We are grateful to all who hold the people of Japan in their hearts at this time. Our thoughts and prayers are with the families of those who were lost, those affected, those who are displaced from their homes, and those who work to rescue and recover.



Introducing New Ambassador of Japan to the U.S. YAMADA Shigeo

YAMADA Shigeo is the new Ambassador of Japan to the United States. The latest posting marks his third time serving at the Embassy of Japan in Washington, D.C. His biography can be found [HERE](#).



Japan Stands with Ukraine

Japan has shown its support for Ukraine through financial support and other assistance to the country. Read about Japan's response to the situation in Ukraine [HERE](#).

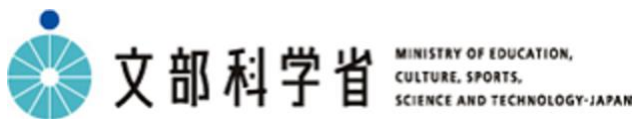
Check us out online!

The Consulate General of Japan in Los Angeles updates its activities on social media daily, so please follow us!



2024 Cultural Events Calendar

This events calendar is compiled and updated on a monthly basis by the staff of the Consulate General of Japan in Los Angeles for Southern California and Arizona. Generally, information about events hosted or sponsored by the Consulate's partner organizations is listed as it becomes available. To add your Japan-related event to this calendar, please learn more by clicking the title above. We are not able to support 'for-profit' events at this time.



Japanese Studies Students MEXT

Scholarship

For undergraduates: We are now accepting applications for the one-year, Japanese Studies Students MEXT scholarship. Deadline: Tuesday, Feb. 20, 2024, at 3:30 p.m. Pacific Standard Time.



Conferment Ceremony of Foreign Minister's Commendation for Mr. Toshio Ueno

On Dec. 6, Consul General Sone hosted the
Conferment Ceremony of Foreign Minister's

Commendation for Mr. Toshio Ueno in recognition of his activities promoting Japanese culture in the U.S. Mr. Ueno, who is also a Goodwill Ambassador to Promote Japanese Cuisine, helped found the Sake School of America in 2010. As the Executive Instructor, he conducts certification programs and has helped over 2,800 people become certified sake sommeliers and shochu advisors. Mr. Ueno has been a judge at sake competitions around the world and also organized competitions and certification courses outside of the U.S.



Commendation Ceremony of 2023 Japan Agricultural Achievement Awards

On Dec. 7, Consul General Sone hosted a
Commendation Ceremony of the Japan Agricultural
Achievement Awards for Ms. Akiko Freeman in

recognition of her achievements in agricultural development as a leader in her community. Ms. Freeman co-founded Freeman Vineyard & Winery with her husband Ken Freeman in Sonoma County, California in 2001. As a winemaker, Ms. Freeman oversees every aspect of Freeman's winemaking program and uses organic and biodynamic farming methods. Freeman wines are also used at the official residence of the U.S. Ambassador to Japan, contributing to the goodwill between the U.S. and Japan

Japanese American Community



Credit: City of Glendale

Sadao S. Munemori Square Unveiling

On Dec. 9, Consul General and Mrs. Sone joined the unveiling ceremony for newly designated [Sadao S. Munemori Memorial Square in the City of Glendale](#), honoring the Nisei veteran who is the only Japanese American Medal of Honor recipient

from the World War II era.



Celebrating New Year's Day at 'Oshogatsu in Little Tokyo'

Little Tokyo's Oshogatsu Festival to celebrate the new year was held at Weller Court on Jan. 1. The event kicked off with an LAPD helicopter flyover, followed by greetings from President of the Japanese

Chamber of Commerce of Southern California, Haru Takehana, and continued with remarks from many other prominent members of the Japanese American community. Consul General Sone also attended and participated in a celebratory *kagami-wari* sake barrel ceremony.

Entertainment, culture & others



Consul General, Mrs. Sone Attend Screening of 'Monster'

On Dec. 4, Consul General and Mrs. Sone attended a special screening of the award-winning “MONSTER”, at the TCL Chinese 6 Theatres. Afterwards, a Q&A session was held with acclaimed director Hirokazu Kore-eda and screenwriter Yuji Sakamoto. The event was then followed by a

reception at JAPAN HOUSE Los Angeles.



Promoting Tokyo's Seafood at 'Taste of Tokyo Island Fish'

On Dec. 18, Consul General Sone and Mrs Sone attended "Taste of Tokyo Island Fish", an event organized by the Tokyo Metropolitan Government to promote the charm of Tokyo's seafood, at Japan House Los Angeles.

Restaurant owners and influencers in Los Angeles were invited as guests to the event, which included tastings of dishes made with Tokyo seafood and sake tastings, as well as displays of Tokyo's representative crafts, such as Edo Kiriko Glass and Kihachijo Silk.



'Perfect Days' on Academy Awards Shortlist for International Feature Film

On Dec. 21, the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences announced shortlists in 10 categories for the 96th Academy Awards. Japan's 'Perfect Days,' a co-production between Japan and Germany directed by Wim Wenders and starring Koji Yakusho made the shortlist in the International Feature Film Category. Others in the running affiliated with Japan or Japanese talent include 'The Boy and the Heron' in the Music (Original Score) category; 'Godzilla Minus One' in the Visual Effects category, and 'Maestro' in the Makeup and Hairstyling category (Mr. Kazuhiro Tsuji).



'Boy and the Heron' Wins a Golden Globe

The 2024 Golden Globes were held Jan. 7, with Hayao Miyazaki's 'The Boy and the Heron' winning the Golden Globe for Motion Picture - Animated. It beat out another favorite from Japan, 'Suzume,' written and directed by Makoto Shinkai in the Animated Motion Picture category.

Coming Up!



Credit:Photo by AA+W/Adobe

Harnessing Quantum Technology for the Benefit of Society

On Jan. 18, The RAND Corp. is hosting a free and public conference on quantum science, covering such topics as how might new technologies change our everyday lives, applications that American and Japanese researchers are focusing on, and whether there are potential areas of cooperation. To attend in-person or online, learn more and register by clicking the title.

<http://www.la.us.emb-japan.go.jp> | info@ls.mofa.go.jp
Consulate General of Japan, Los Angeles