



Washington Japanese Heritage Center (Keisho Center)

ワシントン日本語継承センター

keisho.org / P.O. Box 142 Cabin John, MD 20818

June 10, 2023

Dear Keisho Center Families:

Each year the Board of Directors of the Washington Japanese Heritage Center (Keisho Center) reports on our organization's status, operations, and future plans. We are sincerely grateful for the continuous support from Keisho family members, our donors, our partnership organizations, and the education community in the DMV area. We would appreciate receiving any feedback or suggestions you may have.

1. **Enrollment and Staffing Status:** During the 2022-23 school year, Keisho Center enrolled 132 pre-K-12 students and 16 family members in the adult program. We expanded the preschool program this year after the successful incorporation of Sakura Yochien into Keisho Center in the fall of 2021. The General Manager worked with the Education Team, which included the Curriculum Coordinator, seven teachers, and eight teaching assistants (TAs). We also employed a Treasurer, Webmaster, and Admissions Assistant. The Board welcomed two new members: Professor Anne Crescini and Ms. Mitsue Steiner.
2. **Curriculum and Learning Methods:** Youth classes were divided into 11 homerooms and most of the activities followed a project-based, student-centered curriculum. With a good balance of hands-on activities and linguistic lessons, students learned Japanese language and culture while discovering their multicultural identities. By mixing younger and older students together for class activities, teachers used the “tatewari” approach to deepen the students’ sense of belonging to the Keisho Center community. Keisho Center also continued to offer an adult program for family members and alumni to involve the entire family in studying Japanese, which is one of the Center’s roles as a heritage language program.



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3. **Cultural Workshops and External Events:** Keisho Center held various activities throughout the year to learn Japanese culture and traditions, such as *undoukai*, *mochitsuki*, *setsubun*, *sakura-mochi making*, *wagashi-making*, *koinobori crafts*, *kite-flying*, *shogi-games*, *tea-ceremony* sessions, as well as an all-school field trip to the Smithsonian. During Sakura Matsuri, Keisho Center students and families performed onstage and staffed a popular arts and culture booth. We hosted two guest lecturers in 2022-23: Professor Anne Crescini from Kitakyushu University and Dr. Makoto Suwa from the World Bank.
4. **Academic Competitions:** Keisho Center students continue to join in competitions that enrich their learning of Japanese: this year 14 students took the Kanji Kentei, six took the Japanese Language Proficiency Test (JLPT), and 21 took the National Japanese Exam (NJE). 25 Keisho Center students competed against 385 students from across the country in the virtual Junior Japan Bowl and one Keisho Center student took home 1st prize in their age category. Another student won the silver medal in the J.LIVE Talk Japanese language competition. 7 students advanced to the final round of the United Nations International Student Haiku Contest. Keisho students also joined a Nengajo contest and an exhibition of haiku and paintings at the Japan Information & Cultural Center (JICC).
5. **Family Involvement:** We are sincerely grateful for the help from our family members. With your support, Keisho Center is able to provide so many rich learning experiences to our students. In 2022-23, families dedicated hundreds of volunteer hours in the classroom and for many other activities. Parent volunteers taught calligraphy, tea ceremony, and cooking lessons; created the yearbook; organized pot-luck activities; and managed the library. One onigiri-making session garnered the “Most Creative Onigiri” prize from Onigiri Action, a campaign against world hunger.
6. **Partnerships:** Keisho Center maintained strong partnerships with the Embassy of Japan, the Japanese Commerce Association of Washington (JCAW), the Japan



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Foundation, the Japan America Society of Washington, D.C., and many other local non-governmental organizations and schools in the region. We are proud that in 2022-23 Keisho Center was selected by the JCAW and the Japan Foundation Los Angeles (JFLA) to receive grants in the amount of \$700 and \$500 respectively. This is the fourth time Keisho Center has received a grant from JCAW and the third time from JFLA, and we are very grateful for their continued support.

7. **Financial Aid:** The Board of Directors wants to ensure that financial concerns are not a barrier to enrollment for any family. The Board recognizes that some families may be experiencing economic hardship and would like to make financial assistance available based on need. Although the threshold for eligibility is based on three times the federal poverty guideline, we also look at extenuating circumstances on a case-by-case basis. Feel free to contact any Board member, the Treasurer, or the General Manager for additional information on financial assistance. All requests are kept strictly confidential.

8. **Financial Management:** Since our founding in 2004, Keisho Center's goal has been to provide an affordable, equitable, and quality education to all families. Keisho Center has remained fiscally strong which resulted in an accumulated surplus. To manage challenges post-covid and in a rapidly changing economic environment, a thorough and in-depth analysis of our financial management was conducted. As a result, the Board concluded that in order to keep up with inflation and cost hikes, it has become necessary to increase tuition for the 2023-2024 school year. Further, in order to attract and retain talented staff and compensate them adequately, we intend to raise staff salaries in 2023 based on the rise in the cost of living. We will continue to offer discounts for siblings and those who pay the entire amount at the start of the school year and incentives for parents taking the adult program. The Board of Directors will continue to closely monitor the financial status and will take action as needed. The summary of Keisho Center's operating budget for the 2022-23 school year is attached at the end of this letter. We are committed to continue offering valuable learning activities to all our families while serving as good financial stewards.



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As Keisho Center continues to grow and change, we remain strongly committed to our mission: to inspire a lifelong love for Japanese language and culture in our students. As we celebrate our 20th anniversary in 2024, we, the Keisho Center Board of Directors, are proud of all that Keisho Center has accomplished and how our organization is evolving. We look forward to serving our community, working with our students, families, and partners, and continuing to grow together as a community. If at any time you have any questions, comments, or suggestions, we encourage you to present them to a Board member.

Sincerely,

Keisho Center Board of Directors

Tomomi Miyajima, President

Anne Crescini

Margaret Ghobadi

Peter Farrell

Donald Harrison

Marc Hitzig

Ken Knight

Mitsue Steiner

Shigeo Yoshikawa



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	2022-2023 Actual (Sep-August)
REVENUE (in US \$)	Budget
Grant	700
Tuition	202,196
Donations	555
Fundraising	364
Interest	181
Miscellaneous Income	1,724
Subtotal	205,719
EXPENSE (in US \$)	
Payroll	119,614
Rent	42,203
Distance Learning	36
Supplies including t-shirts	9,337
Insurance	6,063
General operating expenses/fees	8,551
Professional Development	1,400
Financial Aid and reimbursed tuition	6,054
Gifts, gift cards, and donations	1,613
Misc. Expense	605
Subtotal	195,475
Surplus	10,244