



## President's Message

By Brad Reynolds



Hello supporters, welcome!

### **Bunka-Sai**

Bunka-Sai was fantastic this year. Thank you to all who participated in putting it on, and thank you to those that came to support the fund-raising efforts. Also thank you to the many people I had wonderful conversations with!

### **KIRA Torrance Committee updates**

We are excited to again feature two articles from our Sister organization, the KIRA Torrance Committee. It has been a busy time for them as they prepare for our students' arrival in a few short weeks!

### **Student Exchange**

At this point in the year, now that Bunka-Sai has come and gone, we as an organization turn our attention to our student delegation that is preparing for their trip to Kashiwa in July, and are equally excited about our August activities while we host the students from Kashiwa! If you'd like to experience being a host family for our visitors, please reach out as we still need families. It is an enriching experience, and a wonderful hands-on way to participate in the TSCA mission.

Thank you for supporting us!

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# MEMBERSHIPS & DONATIONS LIST

Compiled by Alyssa Yamauchi, Membership Chair

## INDIVIDUAL (\$20)

Mori, Jared  
Tsurukame, Aki  
Wang, Andrew

## FAMILY (\$40)

Ghuman, Mandeep and  
Navdip Gil  
Shetti, Mayoore, Navin,  
Jeena and Ruchi

## BENEFACTOR (\$125+)

Murphy, Carrie Beth

## DONATIONS

\$150 Lin, Eddie and  
Pauline  
\$ 10 Shetti Family

Questions about membership?

Email [tscamembership@gmail.com](mailto:tscamembership@gmail.com)



**MARK YOUR  
CALENDAR**

## Monthly Association Meeting

City Hall West Annex

@ 7:00 PM

June 16, 2026

July 21, 2026

## Host Family Orientation

July 15, 2026

@ 7:00 PM

City Hall West Annex

## Welcome Reception

August 3, 2026

@ 5:30 PM

George Nakano Theater

## Kashiwa Ambassadors

in Torrance

August 3-20, 2026

## Sayonara Banquet

August 19, 2026

@ 5:00 PM

Toyota Meeting Hall

## Torrance Sister City Association

### **PRESIDENT**

Brad Reynolds

### **VICE PRESIDENT**

Alyssa Yamauchi

### **SECRETARY**

Aimee Arreygue

### **TREASURER**

Steve Warner

### **Newsletter Editor**

Maureen Ortega

### **Content Submissions:**

[tscanewsletter@gmail.com](mailto:tscanewsletter@gmail.com)

**TSCA**



[www.torrancesistercity.org](http://www.torrancesistercity.org)



TorranceSisterCityAssociation

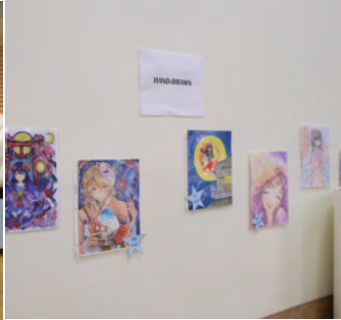


TorranceSisterCity

# Bunka-Sai 2026



# Bunka-Sai 2026





## 2026 Bunka-Sai Silent Auction and Flag Donors

*Thank you to the following companies and individuals that generously donated gift cards and products for the silent auction and flags. Please show your support by shopping locally—it's the best way to let these donors know how much we appreciate them!*

- |  |                                     |   |
|--|-------------------------------------|---|
| <b>Adventure City</b>                        | <b>A Noise Within Theater</b>       | <b>Aquarium of the Pacific</b>                  |
| <b>Azuma Japanese Restaurant</b>             | <b>Beach Cities Volleyball Club</b> | <b>Bluewater Grill</b>                          |
| <b>Bishop Montgomery High School</b>         | <b>BJ's Restuarant</b>              | <b>Bonnello's Torrance</b>                      |
| <b>Bollywood Zaika</b>                       | <b>California Pizza Kitchen</b>     | <b>Creative Cuts</b>                            |
| <b>The Broad Museum</b>                      | <b>Cherrystones</b>                 | <b>Country Touch Cafe</b>                       |
| <b>Creative Cuts, Intl</b>                   | <b>Freiler Family</b>               | <b>Gardena Bowl Coffee Shop</b>                 |
| <b>Dave &amp; Busters</b>                    | <b>Fresh Brothers</b>               | <b>Gorjana</b>                                  |
| <b>Dig It Torrance</b>                       | <b>Griego Hair Salon</b>            | <b>Hank's Italian Restaurant</b>                |
| <b>Good Stuff Restaurants</b>                | <b>Honey Baked Ham Company</b>      | <b>Hollywood Wax Museum</b>                     |
| <b>Giuliano's - Torrance</b>                 | <b>Islands - Redondo Beach</b>      | <b>In-N-Out</b>                                 |
| <b>Giuliano's - Gardena</b>                  | <b>Islands Torrance</b>             | <b>Tsuiko Kikuchi</b>                           |
| <b>Huntington Library</b>                    | <b>Joyce Carol Jewelry</b>          | <b>Lazy Dog Restaurant &amp; Bar</b>            |
| <b>Pacific Park on the Santa Monica Pier</b> | <b>Kendra Scott Jewelry</b>         | <b>Lomeli's Italian Restaurant</b>              |
| <b>Paul Krumpe Soccer Academy</b>            | <b>Keith Glassman</b>               | <b>Mezontle Grill</b>                           |
| <b>Paint and Unwine</b>                      | <b>Leonard Kim</b>                  | <b>Mimi's Cafe</b>                              |
| <b>Rakkan Ramen</b>                          | <b>Mama Says</b>                    | <b>Paul's Photo</b>                             |
| <b>Shin Sen Gumi</b>                         | <b>Mexican Riviera</b>              | <b>Pauline Lin</b>                              |
| <b>Skechers</b>                              | <b>Brandon &amp; Jay Matsumoto</b>  | <b>PRP Wine</b>                                 |
| <b>Spirit Cruises</b>                        | <b>Philz Coffee - Del Amo</b>       | <b>Rascal's Teriyaki Grill</b>                  |
| <b>South Coast Repertory</b>                 | <b>Riviera Hall Lutheran School</b> | <b>Santa Ana Zoo</b>                            |
| <b>Touchstone Climbing (Class 5)</b>         | <b>SNAX</b>                         | <b>Shirley Takeuchi</b>                         |
| <b>Torrance Theater</b>                      | <b>Sports Basement</b>              | <b>South Coast Botanic Gardens</b>              |
| <b>Total Wine &amp; More</b>                 | <b>Tanaka Farms</b>                 | <b>StoneFire Grill</b>                          |
| <b>TSCA Members</b>                          | <b>The Brews Hall @ Del Amo</b>     | <b>Sunflower Farms</b>                          |
| <b>Urban Air</b>                             | <b>The Little Gym - Torrance</b>    | <b>Torrance Cultural Arts Center Foundation</b> |
| <b>VCA Kennel Club Resort &amp; Spa</b>      | <b>Trader Joe's - Torrance</b>      | <b>USS Midway</b>                               |
| <b>Western Museum of Flight</b>              | <b>Villa Hermosa Plant Shop</b>     | <b>Vinera</b>                                   |
|  | <b>Yoshie Photo</b>                 | <b>...and donations from many TSCA members</b>  |

*Donations as of April 16, 2026*

# 2026 Bunka-Sai Anime Art Contest Winners



Mayo N. (Hand Drawn)  
Jefferson Middle School



Tara S. (Hand Drawn)  
Torrance High School



Anne O. (Digital)  
Hull Middle School



Lauren T. (Digital)  
Bishop Montgomery High School

# The 2026 Kashiwa Delegation

Adult Leader /Student Ambassadors			
			
	YUMIKO UENO	ASATO MARUOKA	YUKA TAKANO
Grade	Adult Leader	10 <sup>th</sup> grade	10 <sup>th</sup> grade
School	—	Meikei High School	Reitaku High School
			
	YUZUKI YAMAMOTO	SOSUKE OMIDERA	TAKUMA HIRAHARA
Grade	10 <sup>th</sup> grade	10 <sup>th</sup> grade	11 <sup>th</sup> grade
School	Higashikatsushika High School	Sugamo High School	Kashiwanoha High School
			
	HARUNO KAGEYAMA	KOKORO ISHI	YUKI YOSHIOKA
Grade	11 <sup>th</sup> grade	First year	First year
School	Tsukuba Kaisei High School	Toyo University	Tokyo University of Science

# Kashiwa's Future Ambassadors Prepare for Torrance

## *Selection Complete & Orientations Underway*

By Hiroko Sugiyama, Chairperson, KIRA Torrance Committee Selection Team

Following a rigorous selection process—including group interviews and essays about their hopes for the program on April 19, and individual interviews on April 26—eight students have been chosen for 2026 exchange program to Torrance. They are currently dedicated to a series of six orientation sessions and several team meetings. These students are "delegates-elect" until they complete the full training program; they will be officially recognized as Student Ambassadors at the ceremony on July 6.



### **2026 Kashiwa Delegation**

**Back, L-R:** Yumiko Ueno, Yuka Takano, Haruno Kageyama, Kokoro, Yuzuki Yamamoto  
**Front, L-R:** Sosuke Omidera, Takuma Hirahara, Asato Maruoka, Yuki Yoshioka

The first orientation was held on May 6.

Though a bit nervous at first, the students as well as their parents are already beginning to bond as a team. The orientation sessions to follow involve comprehensive preparation. The students practice English conversation and speeches with support from the Torrance ALTs, learn the Kashiwa Odori, and rehearse their party performances. The training also covers practical essentials, such as travel documentation, "Do's and Don'ts," and safety education. The students also learn home-stay etiquette with sincere respect and gratitude toward their host families.

Above all, the most vital part of this preparation is for the students to learn our sister-city relationship and deepen their knowledge of Torrance and Kashiwa.

The ultimate goal is to foster in them the awareness and responsibility that they are visiting Torrance not as mere tourists or participants in a language training program, but as Goodwill Ambassadors representing our city.

With the pride of representing Kashiwa in their hearts, we hope these students will enjoy their stay, help a beautiful "flower of friendship" bloom in Torrance, and return home this summer having grown significantly from the experience.



*The first orientation session for the 2026 Torrance exchange program. The students and their parents listen intently to the program overview.*

# Art Underfoot: Discovering *The Rose of Versailles* in Kashiwa

By Yoko Wakana, Member of the KIRA Torrance Committee

In Japan, many stories begin as manga and later expand into anime, films, and stage productions. One well-known example is *The Rose of Versailles* by Riyoko Ikeda, created in the early 1970s. Set during the French Revolution, it follows Marie Antoinette and Oscar, the fictional Commander of the Royal Guard. While celebrated for its lavish beauty, it inspires readers to explore history and culture. A new animated film released in 2025 proves this story still touches new generations.

Oscar's dramatic premise—a woman raised as a man to inherit her father's military role—made the work a perfect match for *the Takarazuka Revue*, Japan's famous all-female theater troupe. Since its 1974 premiere, the stage adaptation has been performed repeatedly and remains one of Takarazuka's most definitive masterpieces.

Kashiwa shares a special connection to this cultural phenomenon: Ms. Ikeda lived here while creating the story. To honor that bond, the city installed colorful *Rose of Versailles* manhole covers in 2024 as part of its 70th anniversary celebration.

For visiting students from Torrance, spotting the manhole covers could be a small but unique way to experience Japan. Culture is not just in museums or on screens; it breathes in the most casual corners. Even a single manhole cover tells a beautiful story.



*The Rose of Versailles* blooms in Kashiwa. Riyoko Ikeda beside Kashiwa's special manhole cover.\*

\*Photos and the rare proof sheet (page 8) were generously provided by Mutsuko Tsukamoto, Chair of KIRA Torrance Committee, and Ms. Ikeda, who have been close friends since high school.

\*\*Want to see the covers in person? Check out the short video guide: Kashiwa City Official YouTube—

<https://www.youtube.com/shorts/MGB1TxarV8>



One of three manhole covers and manhole covers' location map.\*



# Chitchat in the Bathhouse

By Yuko Wilson

Asst. Language Teacher at Kashiwa Municipal High School (Ichikashi) and former TSCA Student Ambassador

What is your go-to icebreaker activity? Maybe the classic: “What is your favorite ice cream flavor?” Well, I recently had the chance to experience what Japanese ice-breaker activities look like, and it was not what I had expected!

During the recent 3-day national holiday in Japan, I packed my bags and hopped on a train to the bustling city of Shibuya. My destination was the National Olympics Memorial Youth Center, a conference center nestled in the vibrant greenery of Yoyogi Park. The conference center was originally built for the 1964 Tokyo Olympics, and features lecture halls, dormitories, and of course, Japanese-style public baths.

I was there for a national Christian young adult conference (Japanese Baptist Bible Fellowship), which was being held to promote community and networking among churches across Japan. In a country where the Christian population is estimated to be less than 1%, such a gathering of young adult Christians is a rare sight to behold. With curiosity and a goal to make some new friends from various prefectures across Japan, I signed myself up and prepared for an immersive lesson in Japanese culture.

After finishing my nice-to-meet-you’s and **yoroshiku-onegai-shimasu’s** with 300 other participants from Okinawa all the way to Hokkaido, my eyes scanned the itinerary and came to a screeching halt at the activity planned for the end of the day: “Public Baths.” We were skipping over the ice cream flavors and going straight for self-introductions across shower stalls and shampoo bubbles. I had visited public baths in Japan before, but never while making small talk and making new friends, which somehow seemed like a quite different experience. Despite my initial sense of panic, I learned how perfectly comfortable my native Japanese fellow attendees were in socializing at a bath setting, and how public baths are often seen as a bonding or ice-breaking environment. This notion is captured in the phrase “**hadaka no tsukiai**,” which is the idea that going to a public bath together equalizes everyone despite their age, body type, or social status, thereby allowing for more meaningful bonding.

In addition to the public bath segment, the conference included many other activities that helped me achieve my goal of making friends from across Japan. During the small group discussion time, participants had the opportunity to share recent burdens and pray for each other, with topics such as faith, work, or future plans being commonly shared about. In a culture where struggles are often handled within one’s family rather than with strangers or people you just met, it was a unique and refreshing experience to be able to discuss candidly with my newfound Japanese friends. Other icebreaking activities included an intense game of flag football that had me reminiscing about my middle school P.E. days. Overall, the conference was a wonderful opportunity to receive encouragement and make friends from so many different prefectures. As I get to know my new neighborhood and community in Kashiwa, I hope to continue to have an openness to make friendships in new ways, even when baths may be involved!



*Photo: Group photo with the Funabashi church*

## English Teacher Selection Committee Update

By Lori Chong Eurich, Chair

A sincere **thank you** to the English Teacher Selection Committee for its valuable support in choosing Jared Mori to be the next English teacher at Kashiwa Municipal High School. He begins his new position at the beginning of August. He will be advised by Yuko Wilson, who will be his "senpai" to mentor him as he becomes familiar with school, co-workers and students. Yuko is a former exchange student on the TSCA program. Chris Pigao will be returning home in August after a four-year stint. Chris recently had a video chat with Jared to tour the apartment he will move into. The selection team included: Mark Roulette, vice principal at Torrance High; Stephanie Ewing-Warner, former TSCA treasurer, adult leader, and exchange student who teaches at Poly High; Keiko Clark, a music and Japanese teacher at North High; Steven Ihde, a former adult leader and math teacher at Miraleste Middle School; and Kai Long, 2025 student ambassador and CSU Dominguez Hills student.

TSCA has had two English teachers at Kashiwa Municipal High School aka, Ichikashi, since 1973. These teachers make learning English fun and interesting through engaging lessons while sharing American culture and forging friendships with staff and students. Grassroots diplomacy at its finest. Our teachers have supported TSCA as ambassadors-in-residence at KIRA events, meetings, and teaching adults English. They appreciate the opportunity to live and work in our sister city while traveling throughout the country and welcoming visitors from home.

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**Hello! My name is Jared Mori**, and I am honored and excited to be representing the Torrance community as the new English teacher in Kashiwa. I completed my undergraduate courses at El Camino College before transferring to California State University, Fullerton to earn my degree in Computer Science.

Outside of school, I've developed a strong interest in working with students. In the past I worked as a math tutor as well as with Palos Verdes Peninsula High's Avid program. More recently, I have been working as an after school tutor at Fleming Middle School, and as a coding instructor at a local learning center. In the past I also volunteered as a youth mentor for middle and high school students.

As a Japanese American, I have always had a strong connection to Japan and Japanese culture. Having spent 3 years now learning Japanese in my free time, I have a greater appreciation for the challenges and rewards that come with learning a language. I am looking forward to how this experience can help me relate to students learning English and improve my teaching ability.

Once again, I am grateful and honored to be able to participate in Kashiwa's community. I hope to contribute to the cultural exchange between the two cities while also providing an engaging and enjoyable learning environment.



# STUDENT TRIP REPORT

Summarized by Gail Roulette

*When our seven Student Ambassadors and Adult Leader went to Japan last July, each one picked a topic of Japanese life to research, experience, and then write a report about their findings. I have been given the task of condensing their reports for the next few newsletter issues.*

## Adult Leader, Clay Bakhoun: The Quiet but Consistent Gift of Japan

Clay came to Japan with the expectation that the country would be tailored toward tourists, with signs in English and other tourist conveniences. What he learned was that the essence of Japan is actually attention to detail that would enhance their lives, in or outside of the home.

For example, home meals were prepared perfectly neat and thoughtfully organized. “Breakfasts were often identical, everyone at the table eating a perfectly mirrored plate.” Meal detail. Train stations and city streets were comparatively



clear of litter and graffiti. Cleanliness detail. Stores had their own wrapping paper for gifts; cities had specialty dishes.

Individuality detail. Tea ceremonies were carried out in perfect detail whether performed in a middle school setting or formal garden.

Tradition detail.

Clay was aware of a sense of respect among the culture, and a week into the trip came to name the feeling: responsibility.

Consideration for the group is taken by each individual. One example



happened at a train station when one of the group “opened their umbrella under a roofed walkway and was politely reminded by two citizens to wait until stepping out into the rain, not for the sake of rules, but out of respect for those nearby.”

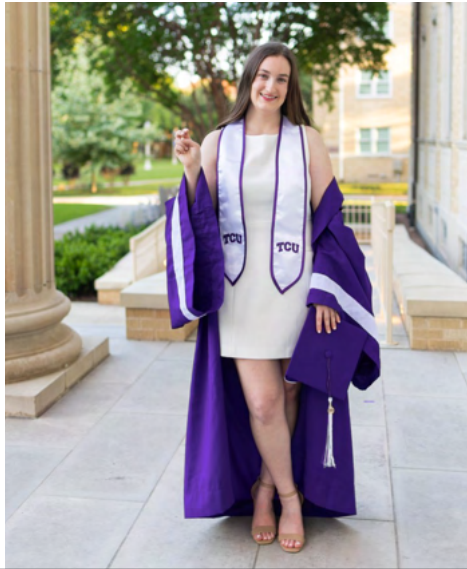
This trait of responsibility that “just exists, quietly and consistently” has stayed with Clay back home in California, to the extent he finds himself more aware of his actions around others. “What I thought would be a trip tailored to outsiders turned out to be an invitation inward – into a culture where detail is a form of dignity. And now, I find myself looking for those same quiet details here at home. Not because I have to. But because I want to.”





*Congratulations!*

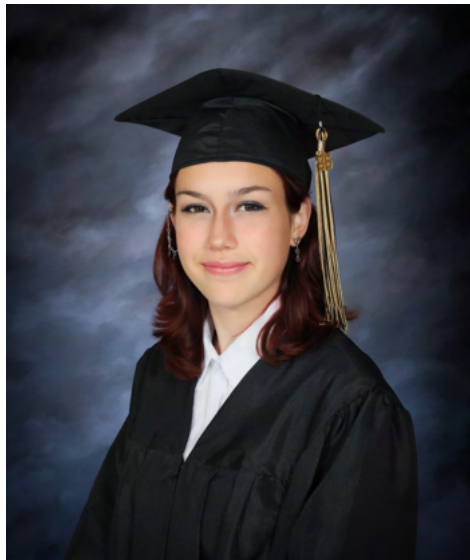
# CLASS OF 2026



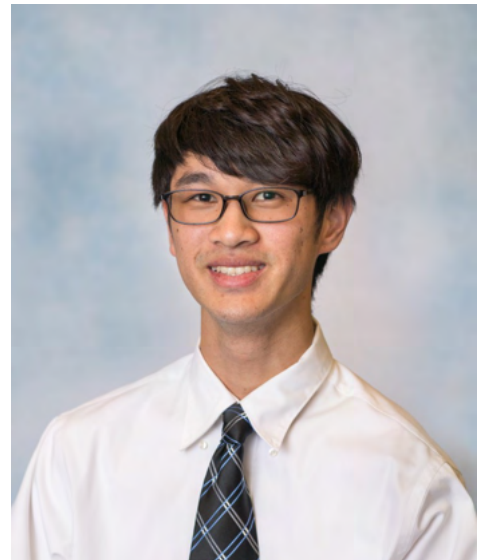
**Abigail Trattner** ~ 2020/2022 Student Ambassador  
**Graduated** Summa Cum Laude from  
Texas Christian University with a B.A. in  
International Relations and a Minor in Asian Studies



**Maria Nadsady** ~ 2024 Student Ambassador  
**Graduated from** Bishop Montgomery High School  
**Up next:** University of California, Berkeley,  
Majoring in English



**Isa Freiler** ~ 2025 Student Ambassador  
**Graduated from** Bishop Montgomery High School  
**Up next:** Savannah College of Art and Design,  
Majoring in Illustration - Visual Development



**James Lin** ~ 2026 Student Ambassador  
**Graduated from** Bishop Montgomery High School  
**Up next:** University of Washington,  
Majoring in Biology

## Hometown Hero - Franco Lee

### 2023 TSCA Delegate to Hometown Hero

As a 2023 TSCA Student Ambassador, Franco Lee represented Torrance with curiosity, friendship, and cultural appreciation during his exchange experience in Kashiwa, Japan. Through the delegation, he built lasting memories, expanded his global perspective, and strengthened the bonds of international friendship that are at the heart of TSCA's mission.

Today, Franco is continuing his journey of leadership and service as a Midshipman at the United States Naval Academy (USNA). His appointment to USNA reflects years of dedication, hard work, and commitment to serving something greater than himself.

Franco's story is a reminder that the experiences gained through cultural exchange can help inspire confidence, leadership, and a spirit of service as he moves toward becoming a future officer in the United States Navy and Marine Corps.

Congratulations, Franco!



----- Cut and return the below with your check payment. -----

### 2026 TSCA Membership Application Form

Mail your check and this form to: Torrance Sister City Association, c/o Community Services Dept, 3031 Torrance Blvd., Torrance, CA 90503



**TORRANCE  
SISTER CITY  
ASSOCIATION**

3031 Torrance Boulevard • Torrance, California 90503

*Except for the Lifetime Membership\* all dues are in effect from January 1 to December 31.*

- \$20 Individual   
  \$40 Family   
  \$75+ Supporting   
  \$125+ Benefactor  
 \$200+ Corporate   
  \$2,000+ Lifetime Membership\*

Donation to TSCA (in addition to annual dues): \$ \_\_\_\_\_

I am Interested in TSCA activities, specifically: \_\_\_\_\_

For the TSCA Directory, only include my: \_\_\_\_\_

**Total Enclosed:** \$ \_\_\_\_\_

*Please make your check payable to: TSCA*

### Member Information

*Please complete your contact information directly below and to the right.*

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

### Additional Contact Info

*\*\*TSCA Newsletters are sent to all members via email.*

Email\*\*: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

If you have questions about membership, please send an email to: [tscamembership@gmail.com](mailto:tscamembership@gmail.com)



**Torrance Sister City Association**  
**3031 Torrance Boulevard**  
**Torrance, CA 90503**