

NEWS RELEASE



**Consulate-General
of Japan in Chicago**

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Japanese Decorations Conferred upon Dr. Chikako Usui for her Outstanding Contribution to Japan-U.S. Relations

On April 29th, 2024, the Government of Japan announced the recipients of the 2024 Spring Decoration, which is conferred by His Majesty the Emperor of Japan.

Within the Consulate-General of Japan in Chicago's jurisdiction, Dr. Chikako Usui, Chairperson of the Japan America Society of St. Louis has been selected as a recipient of the **Order of the Rising Sun, Gold and Silver Rays** for her contribution in strengthening relations between the United States and Japan.

As the President of the Japan America Society of St. Louis in Missouri, Dr. Chikako Usui had spent many years making significant contributions to Japan-U.S. cultural relations and in activities introducing Japanese culture on the grassroots level through her proactive involvement in the St. Louis-Ishinomaki City cultural exchange program, the "Japan Update" Business Lecture Series, as well as the Japanese Festival hosted at the Missouri Botanical Garden.

Dr. Usui is also a high-ranking Ikenobo Ikebana instructor who has held workshops throughout the Missouri area and fostered a love for Ikebana and Japanese culture in many people. Furthermore, as an associate professor of sociology, Dr. Usui has taught classes on Japan-related topics including Japanese economics at the University of Missouri - St. Louis and Washington University in St. Louis, and she has written various publications on Japan.

Currently Dr. Usui serves as the Chairperson of the Japan America Society of St. Louis, continuing her active involvement in the society's activities and contributing to the further understanding of Japan in American society.

The Consulate-General of Japan in Chicago is honored to celebrate her accomplishment. Her remarkable achievement represents the diversity and depth of the relations between Japan and the United States.

For more information, please contact the Consulate-General of Japan in Chicago at 312-280-0400.

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