

# NEWS RELEASE



**Consulate-General  
of Japan in Chicago**

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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## **The Foreign Minister's Commendations for 2025**

On August 28<sup>th</sup>, 2025, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan announced the recipients of the Foreign Minister's Commendations for 2025. This year, commendations will be awarded to 173 individuals and 58 groups.

Within the Consulate-General of Japan in Chicago's jurisdiction, the following two individuals have been selected for their contributions in strengthening the relations between the United States and Japan.

### 1. Ms. Urayama Yoshiko, Former President, Editor & Chief of the *Chicago Shimpo*

In 2000 Ms. Urayama assumed the positions of President and Editor-in-Chief of the *Chicago Shimpo*, the only Japanese-English bilingual newspaper in the American Midwest. For nearly 25 years since then, she has dedicated herself to reporting that meets the needs of the Japanese residents and Japanese American community in the Chicago area. Her coverage included news from the Chicago area — such as events organized by the Consulate-General of Japan — as well as news and interviews from Japan, and commentaries on Japanese current affairs. Additionally, in collaboration with the Hoover Institution Library & Archives at Stanford University and the University of Chicago Library, she has also been making efforts to digitize and make publicly accessible the entire archive of the *Chicago Shimpo*.

### 2. Ms. Negi Naomi, Coordinator, *Tampopo Kai*, Japanese American Service Committee

Ms. Negi joined *Tampopo Kai*, a preschool program operated by the Japanese American Service Committee, in 1987, and has served as its coordinator for approximately 35 years since 1990. The program nurtures children through songs, hand games, exercises, picture books and *kamishibai* storytelling, educational games, arts and crafts, while also providing opportunities to experience traditional Japanese culture such as *taiko* drumming, Japanese dance, *ikebana*, tea ceremony, and *judo*. In addition, Ms. Negi established the *Tampopo* Library by donating her personal book collection for the benefit of children of long-term Japanese residents in Chicago.

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

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