

Welcome to Japan Week 2026

Kindness: Our Universal Language

Japan Week 2026 aims to give students and communities the opportunity to obtain a better understanding of Japanese culture and demonstrate the University's ongoing commitment to building bridges between cultures and bringing together people of different customs, religions and ethnic backgrounds. Japan Week seeks to continue to promote diversity and unity and hopes that participants will become leaders in a flourishing dialogue between Japan and the United States and will work towards building a more peaceful global community. The goal of Japan Week is to support an inclusive environment for students and community members of all backgrounds.

Japan Week 2026 Committee

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<https://www.shu.edu/languages-literatures-cultures/japan-week/index.fcm>

JAPAN WEEK 2026

Kindness: Our Universal Language

March 23 (Monday)

11:30 a.m. –12:30 p.m. University Center
Kendama Contest



Kendama (Lit. sword and ball) is a traditional Japanese toy. It consists of a handle (ken), a pair of cups (sarado), and a ball (tama). Kendama is a popular toy for developing skills such as hand-eye coordination, focus, and perseverance. Currently, people use Kendama as a means of improving their concentration or as a stress-relief tool. Test your Kendama skills. Hosted by Advanced Japanese Class.

March 24 (Tuesday)

2:00 p.m. –3:15 p.m. Fahy Hall 203
Interwoven Ties: Japan-U.S. Relations

Makiko Ai is the Deputy Consul General and Director of the Japan Information Center (JIC), the public relations and cultural department of the Consulate General of Japan in New York. In this role, she oversees cultural outreach, educational programming, and information services for the Japanese government within the New York jurisdiction. She will share her experiences as a diplomat and discuss the current state of Japan-U.S. relations.

March 24 (Tuesday)

3:30 p.m. –4:45 p.m. Fahy Hall 203
Study Abroad and Beyond



What is the true meaning of study abroad? There are many interpretations, including the opportunity to immerse yourself in a different culture, allowing you to view your own country objectively from the outside. Engaging with people from diverse backgrounds develops flexible thinking—the kind that is not bound by a single "correct" answer. Furthermore, being exposed to "turbulence," such as language barriers or cultural differences, fosters mental resilience, while the experience of solving problems independently builds unshakable self-confidence. Ultimately, building friendships that transcend borders erases prejudice and lays the foundation for a more peaceful international community. In this panel, four participants, Matt Barros, Toko Kobayashi, Mana Yamamoto, and Angel Leonor, will share their experiences from the SHU–Japan Exchange Programs.

March 25 (Wednesday)

11:30 a.m. –12:30 p.m. Fahy Hall 203
*Japanese Language & Digital
Storytelling Awards Ceremony*



The Japanese Program is pleased to honor our motivated and hardworking language learners. For the 2025-2026 academic year, 70 students have dedicated themselves to the study of Japanese language and culture, pursuing a challenging curriculum within one of the most internationally recognized language programs. Congratulations to all of the awardees! Hosted by the Department of Languages, Literatures, and Cultures (LLC) and the Global Learning Center.

All events are open to the public (The program is subject to change)

Sponsorship for Japan Week 2026 is provided by Seton Hall University's Department of Languages, Literatures and Cultures, College of Arts and Sciences Dean's Office, Office of International Programs, LLC Global Learning Center, Asian Studies Program, Japanese Program, The J.C.C. Fund of the Japanese Chamber of Commerce and Industry of New York, and Consulate General of Japan in New York.

March 25 (Wednesday)

2:00 p.m. –3:00 p.m. University Center
Chopstick Contest



Would you like to demonstrate the world's most elegant dining etiquette? Chopsticks are not just tools, they are a work of art at your fingertips. In this contest, you will be able to show off your chopstick skills by competing in bean-carrying and precise gripping techniques! For many Americans, mastering the use of chopsticks is a sign of cool intelligence and dexterity. Prizes available: Top winners will receive gifts. Everyone from beginners to veterans is welcome. Show us the magic of your fingers!

March 26 (Thursday)

2:00 p.m. - 3:15 p.m. Fahy Hall 203
The Art of Mizuhiki Knots Workshop



Mizuhiki is a traditional Japanese craft featuring intricate cords made from a paper core. Since the 7th century, these cords have been used to weave together respect, gratitude, celebration, and prayer. Tying a Mizuhiki knot is more than just a craft; it is a unique cultural experience that symbolizes human connection and intention, reflecting the very heart of Japanese aesthetics. In this workshop, hosted by Satoi Kobayashi, she will explore the fundamentals of Mizuhiki. You will learn to create a charm using the Awaji knot—a foundational technique in the craft. Each charm features a gentle bell, making it a perfect keepsake for your bag or personal belongings.

March 26 (Thursday)

3:30 p.m. - 4:45 p.m. Fahy Hall 203
What actually is sushi?



What comes to mind when you hear the word "sushi"? While most people think of "raw fish," that is not its defining characteristic. This presentation begins by exploring the true origins and culinary definition of sushi. We will then examine its transformation from an exotic novelty into a mainstream global favorite, found in both luxury eateries and local supermarkets. To conclude, we will cover various sushi styles and the etiquette for enjoying them, followed by a tasting of traditional sushi rice. Hosted by Matthew K. Barros.

March 27 (Friday)

12:00 p.m.- 1:30 p.m.
One Table. Endless Connection



Amid your busy daily schedule, why not make time for a delicious Japanese lunch with your colleagues this spring? In a world of over 8 billion people, there is something special about sharing a meal with the friends you have met at the right time and in the right place. The Japan Week Luncheon will be held at a local Japanese restaurant in South Orange. Space is very limited, and a reservation is required no later than March 15 at Fahy Hall 211.