SHARING AWARENESS OF JAPANESE CULTURE

2018-2019

JOI ANNUAL REPORT

ASIA SOCIETY TEXAS CENTER

JAPAN OUTREACH INITIATIVE COORDINATOR
NINA SHIMAGUCHI

Asia Society Texas Center
After I settled in, I started to reach out to local schools and community. Once I reached one elementary school, I had many opportunities to reach out to schools and local communities. I reached out not only to schools and libraries but also Cub clubs, Girl Scouts, ladies book club, youth group, church and international festival at some big companies.

I created JOI web page on Asia Society Texas Center in which helps people access me and ask for outreach opportunities. The web page has ideas of what I can bring to communities.

Thanks to Harris County Library outreach, I had opportunities to reach out outside of Houston area. People are really interested in Japanese culture no matter what ages they are.

In this report, I would like to highlight top three outreach activities.

**TOP THREE ACTIVITIES**

**BIG IMPACT FOR PEOPLE WHO LIVE IN TEXAS, HOUSTON**

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<th>Activity</th>
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<td>SPRING BREAK EVENT AT ASIA SOCIETY TX TX</td>
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<td>LIBRARY OUTREACH HARRIS COUNTY PUBLIC LIBRARY</td>
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*This distance is almost same distance as Japan from north to south.*
Free Japanese Spring Event for All

My biggest project my first year was creating one week event at Asia Society Texas Center. This event was held on March 11th through 15th collaborating with Consulate General of Japan in Houston. The goal of this event was giving people a sense of spring Japanese culture. I prepared more than 15 activities throughout the week such as spring origami, leaning spring Japanese characters, and bento and onigiri activity for cherry blossom viewing.

Thanks to Consulate General of Japan in Houston, this event was able to screening 5 different movies every day.

Everyday Activity
Monday: Origami Spring Flowers
Tuesday: Japanese Spring Characters
Wednesday: Origami and Bento
Thursday: Doll’s Festival
Friday: Children’s Day

Everyday Movie Screening
Lu Over the Wall(2017)
Pokemon the First Movie (1998)
Oblivion Island
-Haruka and the Magic Mirror- (2009)
Mirai (2018)
Astro Boy (2009)

This event was open to public for free during spring break, so that many people visit Asia Society and spend fun times. Through the activities, participants learn about and understand Japanese culture. Most of the visitors were not families with Japanese culture. After they spent time at the event, they became interested in Japanese culture.

Newspaper article about this event

I also put my effort another event at Asia Society such as Persian and Japanese paper cutting workshop and Night market-Japanese Matsuri Booth etc. Including Japanese element to the event is very important and big impact to the community.
Library Outreach

As part of celebration of Asian Pacific American Heritage Month, I had the opportunity to reach out to 17 different Harris County Library in May. Harris County Library is widely spread, having many branches outside of the Houston area. Since Houston is a diverse area, this outreach project was very important to give people experience of Japanese culture. I brought many different programs to each library. Audience was K to adult.

Asien Pacific American Heritage Month

Harris County Public Library highly spotlighted Japanese program. My outreach schedule and big poster was displayed each library branches. Thanks to this program, I could have so many connection with each librarian. So that librarians can easily reach out to me having Japanese related program.

Programs that I brought to the community
- Kamishibai
- Tea Ceremony
- Japanese Etiquette (chopsticks challenge)
- Pop Culture
- Calligraphy
- Origami
- Paper Dyeing
- Japanese Games and Rhythm Activity
SCHOOL OUTREACH

ONE OF THE MAINLY FOCUSED ACTIVITY IN MY FIRST YEAR

Since Asia Society Texas Center has school tour for the exhibition learning of Asian culture including Japanese culture for students (3-K), my main focus of first year was school outreach. My outreach program could bring many students to host site as a school trip. Students will learn global issues and history from contemporary arts.

Class visit, After School and International Festivals

School outreach has a variety way to reach out to students. Sometimes I took over usual class, and sometimes school prepared special class for students. Another time I had table for representative of Japan for some International Festival and cultural night. Each time activity and way to share the Japanese culture has to be changed depends on numbers of students or to meet the school curriculum. It was challenging sometimes but it was also fun to think of audience to enjoy and learn Japanese culture.
FOR THE NEXT YEAR

SUSTAINABILITY WAY OF GIVING AWARENESS OF JAPANESE CULTURE IN TEXAS

I have been thinking about what is a sustainable way to share the Japanese culture to the community. I have done training or sharing Japanese culture to office members. Office member create program for the public. To tell them about real Japanese culture would give them some ideas of making some programs. However, I think I should do something more big scale. My second year of JOI carrier will be more focus on find and create sustainable way to share Japanese culture in Texas.

Some of my ideas are creating web site to share Japanese culture then share the link to the teaches, training university students as a cultural leader of Japan or building annual big event at Asia Society Texas Center. These are still just ideas but if I can accomplish some of these big goals, that would be a great impact for community.

COMMENT FROM SUPERVISOR

Nina done an excellent job of planning and executing activities both at Asia Society and throughout the Houston metropolitan area. Her spring break program at our center was extremely successful, bringing in 700 visitors to learn about Japan through games, crafts, and food. Her library outreach brought her into rural Houston communities. Her work at our summer camps has enhanced learning about Japan for the campers. I am looking forward to working with her during year two, as she as many exciting ideas for programming such as a Sports Day, a Bento workshop, and Kabuki activities. She is also very interested in making her work sustainable beyond her tenure with us, and I hope to support her in making her vision a reality.

Jennifer Kapral
Director of Education and Outreach
Asia Society Texas Center