

# **Sakura Festival: Cherry blossoms, friendship, optimism**

Clark College celebrated its annual Sakura Festival on April 20. Rain and cool temperatures moved the community event from underneath a canopy of cherry blossoms to inside Gaiser Student Center. The event was presented by Clark College, the city of Vancouver and Vancouver Rotary.

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## **Clark College hosts Dr. Fumiaki Kubo**



Dr. Fumiaki Kubo

Clark College will host a renowned Japanese academic for a lecture on Japan-U.S. relations on Thursday, December 6, at 11:00 a.m. This event, which is free and open to the public,

will be held in Gaiser Hall room 213, located on Clark College's main campus at 1933 Ft. Vancouver Way. The closest parking is in the Green Lot. Directions and maps are available online.

Dr. Fumiaki Kubo will give a lecture entitled "U.S.-Japan Relations under Trump and Abe: Challenges and Hopes." This event is sponsored by the Consular Office of Japan in Portland.

Individuals who need accommodation due to a disability in order to fully participate in this event should contact Clark College's Disability Support Services (DSS) Office at 360-992-2314 or 360-991-0901 (VP). The DSS office is located in room 013 in Clark's Penguin Union Building.

## **About Professor Fumiaki Kubo**

Dr. Fumiaki Kubo has been the A. Barton Hepburn Professor of American Government and History at the Graduate Schools for Law and Politics of the University of Tokyo since 2003. He is affiliated with the Japan Institute for International Affairs as a Visiting Scholar, as well as the Tokyo Foundation as a Senior Research Scholar. He studied at Cornell University in 1984-1986, Johns Hopkins University in 1991-1993, and Georgetown University and the University of Maryland in 1998-99. In addition, he was an Invited Professor at SciencesPo in Paris in the spring of 2009, and a Japan Scholar at the Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars in 2014.

Dr. Kubo attended the Faculty of Law at the University of Tokyo and received his B.A. in 1979 and Ph.D. in 1989. He is the author of many books which include: *Modern American Politics* (with Hitoshi Abe), *Ideology and Foreign Policy After Iraq in the United States*, and *A Study on the Infrastructure of American Politics*. In 1989, he received the Sakurada-Kai Gold Award for the Study of Politics and the Keio Gijuku

Award.

In 2001 and 2002, Dr. Kubo served on the Prime Minister's Commission on the Study of Direct Election System of the Prime Minister. Since 2007, Dr. Kubo has been a member of the U.S.-Japan Conference on Cultural and Educational Interchange (CULCON). In February, 2015, he became a member of the Japan-US Educational Commission. From June, 2016, he is the President of the Japanese Association for American Studies.

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## Beyond the Limits to Growth



“I believe we live now in a period of very great transition for human civilization,” said Dr. Hiroshi Komiyama as he began

his presentation to a full Gaiser Student Center on October 28.

Titled “Beyond the Limits to Growth: New Ideas for Sustainability from Japan,” the far-reaching lecture began with the premise that the Industrial Revolution had triggered a massive increase in the gap between developed and developing countries—a gap that is now beginning to shrink, as developing countries begin to have access to the same technology and goods as developed nations, and developed nations begin to hit economic and environmental limitations to their growth. Japan, Dr. Komiyama said, began to encounter those limits earlier than other developed countries due to its limited size and natural resources.

“Japanese problems are the future problems of the world, I believe,” he said, going on to map out strategies he considered successful for combatting those problems, including aggressive pollution control measures; increased fuel efficiency; a focus on renewable and re-used resource; and social and technological changes to help keep older members of society active.

Dr. Komiyama is a prominent academic, scientist, engineer, and leading authority in global sustainability. President Emeritus of the University of Tokyo, his major fields of research include environmental engineering, advanced materials science, and knowledge sharing. He is also an advisor to the Japanese Government on subjects ranging from education to aging. In 2010 he founded the Platinum Society Network, dedicated to achieving a sustainable society that solves environmental, aging, educational, and economic issues.

A video of Dr. Komiyama’s presentation will be available on Clark’s YouTube channel by the end of November.

*Photos: Clark College/Jenny Shadley*

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# **Celebrating Spring and Friendship**

As he introduced the opening ceremonies of this year's Sakura Festival, Clark College President Bob Knight called the 100 shirofugen trees whose blossoming the festival celebrates "a gift rich with symbolism." As dignitaries from both Japan and Vancouver rose to speak, it became clear how rich that symbolism is.

Vancouver Mayor and Clark College alumnus Tim Leavitt said that here, as in Japan, the annual blossoming of the cherry trees has come to mark the beginning of spring, as well as of the historic bonds between Vancouver and Japan. "The City of Vancouver has long had an affinity with Japan," he said. "We've hosted cultural exchanges, art exhibits, and have business relationships with firms headquartered here, including Kyocera and SEH America. We've also enjoyed our formal sister city relationship with Jojo for 18 years. For me, the annual Sakura Festival serves as a poignant reminder of our longstanding friendship and the meaningful opportunities that it provides."

Guests from Japan—including America Kotobuki President John

Kageyama, Joyo Mayor Toshiharu Okuda, Portland Consul General for Japan Hiroshi Furusawa, and SEH America Inc. Executive Vice President Tatsuo Ito—spoke movingly about the role that *sakura* (cherry blossoms) play in Japanese culture. The blossoms' ephemeral beauty, often lasting just a week or two, symbolizes rebirth, transformation, and the importance of appreciating each moment of life. Additionally, as Consul General Furusawa pointed out, cherry trees have been planted in many prominent locations in the U.S. to symbolize friendship between this country and Japan.

“These magnificent cherry blossoms symbolize the close friendship between the cities of Joyo and Vancouver, as well as between the U.S. and Japan,” he said. “May they continue to grow and thrive.”

Also present at the event were members of the Rotary Clubs of both Vancouver and Joyo; Clark College trustees Sherry Parker and Jack Burkman; former Vancouver mayor Bruce Hagensen; Vancouver City Councilmembers Bart Hansen, Larry Smith, and Alishia Topper; and Vancouver City Manager Eric Holmes.

The opening ceremony included performances by Yukiko Vossen on the *koto*, a traditional Japanese stringed instrument, as well as by the Clark College Women's Ensemble. Afterward, entertainment included a traditional dance performance by the Clark College Japanese Club, a drum performance by Portland Taiko, and a kimono fashion show with beautiful kimono modeled by Clark students and staff, as well as by children from Clark's Child & Family Studies program.

Begun in 2006, Clark College's Sakura Festival celebrates John Kageyama's donation of 100 shirofugen cherry trees to the City of Vancouver. The trees were planted on Clark's main campus in 1990; each year, their beautiful pink blossoms transform the campus and prompt a flurry of picnics and picture-taking. Due to rain, this year's festival was held indoors in Gaiser Student Center.

*Photos: Clark College/Jenny Shadley*

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## Friendship Blooms Anew



Portland Taiko drummers perform.

Friendship, like all living things, requires regular tending to keep it thriving. And Clark College's 2013 Sakura Festival did just that, strengthening the bonds of friendship that led to Clark receiving a gift of 100 shirofugen cherry trees from John Kageyama, president of America Kotobuki.

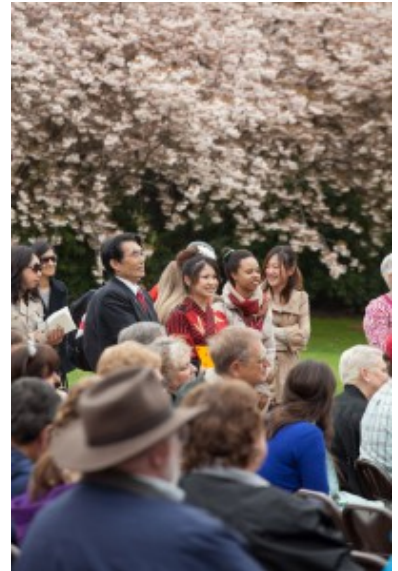




Clark College President Robert K. Knight, John Kageyama, President of America Kotobuki Electronics, Inc., and Tim Leavitt, Mayor of Vancouver.

Kageyama was present at the opening ceremony for the festival, held April 18. He expressed joy in seeing the trees he had donated in 1990 now mature and blossoming. "At the time, I didn't realized how beautiful these trees would grow," he said during his speech to the crowd that gathered under gray but rainless clouds.

Other dignitaries who spoke during the ceremony included Clark College President Bob Knight; Vancouver Mayor Tim Leavitt; Tatsuo Ito, Executive Vice President of SEH America Inc.; and Toshiharu Okuda of the Kyoto Prefecture Assembly. Joyo, Vancouver's sister city in Japan, is located within Kyoto Prefecture.



Maho Muto, *in red kimono*, was the first recipient of the Dr. Kanagawa scholarship.

The ceremony took place next to the Royce E. Pollard Japanese Friendship Garden, yet another gift of friendship cementing the ties between Vancouver and Japan. The garden was a gift to the city of Vancouver from Dr. Chihiro Kanagawa. During its dedication at the 2012 Sakura Festival, President Knight announced the Dr. Kanagawa Scholarship providing full tuition and fees to Clark College for one academic year to an international student from Japan.

Maho Muto, the first recipient of the scholarship, also spoke during the ceremony. Clad in a traditional kimono, she expressed her thanks for the opportunity to study at Clark. "I feel like I have a big, big family in Vancouver, Washington," she said. "You have made me so happy to have the opportunity to study here and I am thankful for so many people's support."

Before the ceremony, Yukiko Vossen performed on the *koto*, the national instrument of Japan, with flute accompaniment. The ceremony ended with a performance by the Clark College Women's Choral Ensemble under the direction of music professor April

Duvic. President Knight concluded his remarks by saying, “As we celebrate the beauty of our flowering cherry trees, let us also take a moment to celebrate the friendships that have brought us here today. May they too continue to bloom and flourish for years to come.”

After the formal ceremony, guests walked to Gaiser Student Center to enjoy cultural displays and activities hosted by Vancouver Rotary, the Clark College Japanese Club, International Programs, and the Anime and Manga Club. Onstage entertainment included a demonstration of a formal Japanese tea ceremony and a lively performance by the Portland Taiko drummers.



Michiyo Okuhara, Japanese professor, *second from the left*, with her students.

Newly tenured Japanese professor Michiyo Okuhara, who serves on the Sakura Committee, circulated among her students and among the children from Child & Family Studies who were attending the festival. “For our program, it’s a wonderful way to have community members come to Clark and get to appreciate the friendship we have with Japan,” she said. “I’m from Japan, and so when people understand Japanese culture, it’s wonderful for me both on a personal level and as a Japanese teacher.”

See more photos from the event on Clark’s Flickr site.

*Photos: Clark College/Jenny Shadley*