What is Japanese Outreach Initiative — J.O.I.?

The Japan Outreach Initiative (J.O.I.) is a joint program of the Global Partnerships Department of the Japan Foundation in Japan and the Laur-Asian Institution, USA, that brings volunteer Japanese coordinators to regions of the United States where Japanese culture has been less accessible.

This two-year program provides JOI coordinators an opportunity to engage their American community in Japanese-theme programming; from lectures to hands-on elementary school activities to events focusing on traditional Japanese art forms.

West Liberty University, through the Rollie Williams International Center, has been selected as a host site for J.O.I. Program from 2022 through 2024. In August 2022, Manami Kawazoe arrived from Kyoto, Japan and will stay in West Liberty for two years. While in West Liberty, her mission is to promote awareness and understanding of Japan through activities and events for culture exchange.

What is the People's University?

In keeping with the mission of public libraries as sanctuaries of free learning for all people, the Ohio County Public Library created The People’s University, a free program for adults who wish to continue their education in the liberal arts. The People’s University features courses—taught by experts in each subject—that enable patrons to pursue their goal of lifelong learning in classic subjects such as history, philosophy, & literature.

Library-Sponsored Programs Policy

The purpose of Ohio County Public Library-sponsored programs is to provide education, information, and entertainment for library patrons. The Library reserves the right to exercise sole discretion in selecting and inviting presenters for its programs. In selecting presenters, the Library does not discriminate on account of race, color, age, sex, sexual orientation, physical or mental disability, political affiliation, religion, ancestry or national origin, and the views expressed by presenters of Library-sponsored programs, or by any person in attendance at the programs, do not necessarily reflect the views of the Library, its staff, and/or its representatives.
May 4, 2023 at 7 pm: Class 1-Basic Introduction to Japanese Culture with Yukata try-on
This interactive program will survey different aspects of Japanese culture, such as popular food, anime, travel destinations, and Japanese alphabets and language. It will feature a try-on of a Yukata, a type of Japanese traditional clothing that is lighter, more casual, and versatile than a standard kimono; a garment somewhere between breezy summer dress and robe.

May 11, 2023 7 pm: Class 2-The Art of Origami
Origami is the art of paper folding. In Japanese, "ori" means folding and "gami" means paper. Origami is more than just paper folding. It's art. Origami can range from the super complex with realistic models to the simple models that are easier to fold.

May 18, 2023 7 pm: Class 3-Japanese Calligraphy
Japanese calligraphy is one of the most celebrated and revered forms of artistic expression with writing. The tradition of calligraphy was first brought to Japan by China in the 6th century A.D. Since then, a style and technique unique to Japan has formed, and it has been practiced by samurai, nobility, and ordinary people ever since.

May 25, 2023 7 pm: Class 4-The Japanese Tea Ceremony
Tea ceremony is a way of preparing and drinking green tea typically in a traditional tea room with a tatami (straw mat) floor. Beyond just serving and receiving tea, one of the main purposes of the tea ceremony is for the guests to enjoy the hospitality of the host in an atmosphere distinct from the fast pace of everyday life.

June 1, 2023 7 pm: Class 5-Making Onigiri
Onigiri are a quick easy meal, much like sandwiches in the United States, eaten for lunch, dinner, a snack – even breakfast! Fillings can include fish, veggies, herbs - truly whatever you like. They are also an important comfort food, a symbol of love and caring, in Japan. Like a plate of warm chocolate chip cookies or a bowl of chicken soup, rice balls remind one of home and feeling cozy.

ALL CLASSES ARE HELD IN THE LIBRARY AUDITORIUM & BROADCAST LIVE ONLINE ON tiny.cc/PU-YouTube tiny.cc/PU-Facebook