

April 2, 2016

Dear Friends!

Thank you for your support in attending the Eleventh Annual Nihon Matsuri!



As a member of the first Nihon Matsuri committee, I have seen the continued and strengthened support from governmental leaders and the community at large. The significance of the location for this event is that it is held on First South -- the last vestige of what was once Utah's vibrant Japantown.

Coinciding with the planning of the first Nihon Matsuri, was the formation of the Japanese Community Preservation Committee (JCPC), chaired by Raymond Uno and made up of members from the Japanese Church of Christ, Salt Lake Buddhist Temple, Japanese American Citizens League chapters and community members. Our efforts led to legislative efforts to protect our community against future expansions by the Salt Palace, naming of this street as "Japantown Street", placement of a garden to honor the legacy of our community, as well as strengthened partnerships with the greater community. We have made small, but significant accomplishments, as well as lasting friendships and alliances.

The above efforts succeed and continue to succeed because of events such as Nihon Matsuri where people can enjoy themselves, but also celebrate the culture which exists in this area, alongside other nearby, ethnic communities. This festival is about diversity, as well as our commonality and connections that we share. It is also about grassroots efforts in the community, with the entire community working side by side—different religions, different generations, different ages – giving back to the community.

Thank you to those that work tirelessly on this event, year after year. And thank you for your ongoing support by attending this festival.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Jani Iwamoto". The signature is fluid and cursive.

Jani Iwamoto  
Senator, District 4