

GREETING FROM THE NEW OFFICERS



Miyoko von Adelung

2026, Greeting from the President of the Utah Okinawa Kenjinkai

PLACE OF BIRTH: Ishigaki Island, Okinawa, Japan

WORK EXPERIENCE:

- Worked for over a decade as a Registered Nurse
- Kitchen assistant at a local school in Utah
- Chair of the safety committee and school health nurse in Utah Japanese supplementally school

FAMILY/HOBBIES

- Husband (Retired from the Air Force)
- One daughter
- Two sons
- One dog
- Jogging (Completed the Okinawa Marathon twice)
- Enjoys sports in general

Hello, My name is **Miyoko von Adelung**, It is my great honor to have been appointed President of the **Utah Okinawa Kenjinkai for the 2026–2027 term**. First, I would like to sincerely thank the friend who recommended me, everyone who voted for me, and all those who have supported and sustained our Kenjinkai over the years. In order to live up to your expectations, together with our new board members I hope to work toward the following goals:

1. Creating a Kenjinkai where members can **experience and enjoy Okinawan culture even while living in Utah**
2. Passing down **Okinawan traditions and culture to the next generation**
3. Building a community **where members of all ages—from long-time supporters to young children—can actively connect and interact with one another**
4. Introducing the beautiful Okinawa culture to Utah state

In 2027, the Worldwide Uchinanchu Festival, which is held once every five years, is also scheduled. I am very much looking forward to it. Let us continue to strengthen the Utah Okinawa Kenjinkai with the spirit of **“Yuimaru” (mutual help)**, **“Ichari-ba Chode” (once we meet, we are brothers and sisters)**, and **“Nankurunaisa” (things will work out in the end)**. I may have much to learn in this role, but I would greatly appreciate your warm support and guidance. Thank you very much, and I look forward to working together with all of you.

GREETING FROM THE NEW OFFICERS



MIKARI LEBLANC
VICE PRESIDENT/BOOKKEEPER

Haitai! I am from Haeburu, Okinawa. I moved to Utah in 2010 after marrying my husband. We lived in Utah for 7 years, but had to move out of state for 7 years for military assignments. When we were deciding where to settle down after my husband's retirement from the military, we easily agreed on moving back to Utah since we loved everything Utah offered for us; great places for skiing and snowboarding, camping, hiking, and awesome friends who we can enjoy those activities with!

Okinawa, of course, is my ultimate home that holds the largest and most special place in my heart no matter where I live. I love Okinawan culture, people, food, and the atmosphere of the island. But Utah is a pretty close second! I cannot be more excited that I now get to be the bridge between 2 of my favorite places as Vice President of Utah Okinawa Kenjinkai.

I want to make the organization fun for everyone who loves Okinawa, no matter where they were born, how old they are, or what language they speak. I hope to create events for all generations, and also cross-generational events where we can learn about Okinawan culture from each other and discover new ways to keep it alive here in Utah.



LAUREN MAGUIRE
VICE PRESIDENT/WEBSITE MANAGER

Hello everyone. Being half Okinawan, exploring this part of my heritage has been really meaningful to me.

The Utah Okinawa Kenjinkai has been such a wonderful place to connect with the culture and community, and it's helped me see how important groups like this are in keeping traditions alive and shared.

I've especially enjoyed learning traditions like Ryukyu Buyo and Eisa, and I'm really grateful for the chance to be part of this community and support it however I can.

In my spare time, I enjoy spending time with my son, family and friends, hiking, gardening, playing games, working on creative projects, and trying new things—like rock climbing.

GREETING FROM THE NEW OFFICERS



BOONE NAKASONE
EVENT MANAGER

Haisai gusuuyoo! I am so excited to be able to help out with Utah Okinawa Kenji Kai, and I'm honored to serve with my fellow board members!

I am a student at Weber State University studying zoology with minors in geology and chemistry. I love the natural world, and I am working towards a career in paleontology.

In my free time, I volunteer helping prepare fossils in a local paleontology lab.

I also like to dance, play sports like swimming, and study languages.

I am really excited to be able to share with Utah about Ryukyu/Okinawan culture and, in the process, learn more about it myself.



KAZUE MICHAELS
EVENT ORGANIZING STAFF

Hello! I was born in Miyagi prefecture but since my maiden name was Ishigaki, I always felt some connection with Okinawa.

I've been living in Utah for 32 years and working in South Ogden as a hair stylist for 30 years. I have two sons who are 16 and 17 years old. My hobby? Well, I like to challenge and do whatever I feel peace or exciting!

I was influenced by my friends from Okinawa who are putting so much effort practicing the Okinawa dance. When I came to see their performance last year, not only the performance was wonderful, I was touched by the songs, Koto music and people who shared their thoughts.

I felt the president's efforts and who were there to support this organization.

I was invited to be a part of the Kenjin Kai and I'm happy to help keeping this wonderful tradition of Japan.

MESSAGE FROM THE UCHINA GOODWILL AMBASSADOR



SEIKO MIYARA OKUBO

In 2006, at the 4th Worldwide Uchinanchu Festival, I was honored to be certified as an Uchina Goodwill Ambassador by Governor Inamine.

I have also been actively involved in the Utah Okinawa Kenjinkai and have supported Japanese students visiting Utah.

Looking ahead, I hope to share—modestly—my knowledge and skills, developed through many years of experience in Utah, with the younger generation, including by lending out taiko instruments such as the pārankū.

Thank you very much for your kind consideration.



MITSUKO CHINEN DAVIES

I have been serving as an Uchina Goodwill Ambassador for approximately 20 years.

In addition, I started Yamada Ryu Davies Chinen Mitsuko Ryubu Kyoshitsu, where I have been teaching Ryukyu Buyo (received teaching certificate) for 28 years.

Over the years, I have performed at major multicultural events in Utah, including the Japan Festival, Living Traditions Festival, and the Asian Festival.

If you are interested in learning Ryukyu Buyo, please contact the Utah Okinawa Kenjinkai.

MESSAGE FROM THE UCHINA GOODWILL AMBASSADOR



MAIKO MUNDELL

I hope to pass on the beauty of Okinawan culture to the next generation—our children—as well as to our local community through sanshin music and Eisa. Thank you.



ETSUKO CHIDESTER

I was appointed as an Uchina Goodwill Ambassador in 2016. I currently live in West Bountiful with my husband. We have four children—two sons and two daughters—and five grandchildren. I am originally from Kume Island in Okinawa.

Since there had never been an event organized by Kumejima residents at the World Uchinanchu Convention before I became the Ambassador, I took the lead in organizing the first-ever World Kumejima Conference in 2016.

Since then, I have been involved in small-scale support activities for the island's elderly, and about five years ago, I participated in a tree-planting activity organized by the Kumejima Firefly Museum.

Last month, in February of this year, I visited the Kumejima Town Hall and held the first meeting with staff from the General Affairs Division to discuss next year's events. We are planning a Family History Fair for next year.

I have also reconnected with my childhood friends from Kumejima Elementary School, and for the first time, we have created a group chat on LINE to discuss ways to revitalize the island.

As the ambassador, I hope to continue exploring what I can do and taking action. I look forward to your continued support.

MESSAGE FROM THE UCHINA GOODWILL AMBASSADOR



MAYUMI COLE

Being Okinawan is the core of my identity and my greatest source of pride. Originally from Naha, I now reside in Atlanta but remain deeply connected to the Utah Okinawa Kenjinkai. My heartbeat is synchronized with the rhythm of Okinawan music and the grace of traditional dance; I am driven by the spirit of Ichariba Chode—the belief that once we meet, we are family.

I have served as President for both the Utah Okinawa Kenjinkai (2024–2026) and the Atlanta Okinawa Kenjinkai (2007–2009, 2011–2013).

My journey in cultural advocacy includes chaperoning U.S. youth for the 2007 Junior Study Program and being appointed a New Uchina Goodwill Ambassador by then-Governor Hirokazu Nakaima in 2014.

I am a practitioner of Miyagi-ryu dance and a dedicated mentor, with over 20 years as a Miss America Organization judge and a board member for Who's Who in Asian American Communities (WWAAC).

As a retiree in the U.S. Army Signal Corps, I blend my military leadership with a lifelong commitment to cultural diplomacy, ensuring our vibrant "Uchina" spirit flourishes for generations to come.



**MAKI TROLIO
PUBLIC RELATIONS COORDINATOR**

I've been living in Utah for 24 years.

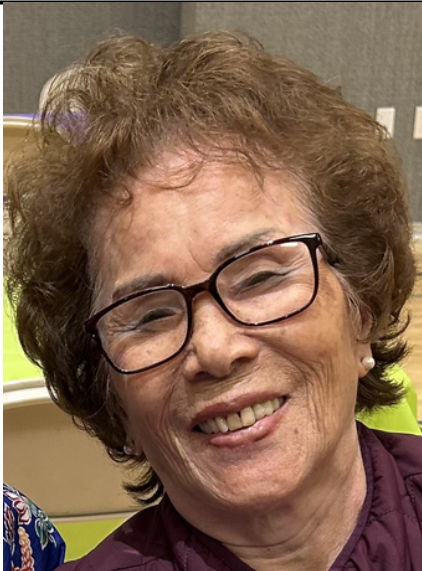
I'm a freelance writer. I also join NHK radio programs and write for Japanese media, sharing stories about life in Utah and the beauty of its great outdoors.

In 2022, I was certified as an Uchina Goodwill Ambassador by Governor Denny Tamaki.

I'll be helping as the Public Relations Coordinator for the Utah Okinawa Kenjinkai, working with the new officers.

I'm excited to share news about our activities and events, and I hope to help our community stay connected and continue growing together.

INTRODUCTION OF AN OKINAWA PREFECTURE DISTINGUISHED OVERSEAS CONTRIBUTOR



MICHIKO MAGUIRE

She was recognized as an Okinawa Prefecture Distinguished Overseas Contributor in commemoration of the 6th Worldwide Uchinanchu Festival in October 2016, honoring her contributions to preserving and sharing Okinawan culture abroad.

While still in Okinawa she studied traditional Japanese arts, including Ikebana through the Ikenobō school, as well as tea ceremony and sewing, becoming a certified Ikebana instructor.

She has been in Utah since 1976 and shared these traditions through cultural demonstrations.

She became active in the Utah Okinawa Kenjinkai (UOKK), where she also learned Eisa drumming and Okinawan dance. She later served as president of the UOKK for several years, helping strengthen and expand Okinawan cultural activities throughout the Salt Lake area.

Her home served as a welcoming space for cultural practice and community gatherings.

She is now 91 and resides in memory care, holding cherished memories of a life dedicated to cultural exchange and community.

CONTACT INFO

