

Two South Floridians awarded 2016 Japan Foreign Minister's Commendations



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Omedetou gozaimasu in Japanese, and congratulations in English, to two South Floridians for being awarded 2016 Japan Foreign Minister's Commendations.

Miami resident Jose Keichi Fuentes and Plantation resident Yoshiko Tokuda Carlton were recognized by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan for their “contributions to the promotion of friendship between Japan and other countries and areas.”

Fuentes, of Cuban and Japanese descent, has served as the chairman of the Miami Kagoshima Sister Cities Committee since 2002. He is a senior government relations consultant with Becker & Poliakoff and received this high honor for his work “facilitating mutual understanding between Japan and the United States by vigorously participating in developing the sister cities relationship between the City of Miami and Kagoshima.” Additionally, he has helped organize youth exchange visits for high school students from both cities.

Carlton was honored for her work promoting mutual understanding between Japan and the U.S. through music. She has assisted the Consulate General of Japan with events, and has given lectures and demonstrations at local schools, art galleries and museums to promote understanding of *koto*, a traditional Japanese stringed musical instrument.

Carlton also is a member of Fushu Daiko. Since 1990, the group has been training musicians and performing Taiko, a musical art form based on the more than 2,600-year-old tradition of Japanese drumming. Carlton is a longtime member of the Miami Kagoshima Sister Cities Committee, and she has welcomed delegations from Kagoshima and volunteered as a member of the Miami delegation to Kagoshima.

Both Fuentes and Carlton traveled with Miami City Mayor Tomas Regalado to Kagoshima City in November 2015 to commemorate the 25th anniversary of the sister cities’ relationship.

Kagoshima City Mayor Hiroyuki Mori and his delegation visited Miami in July and the awards were presented during a welcome reception at the home of Consul General of Japan Ken Okaniwa.

GOLFING TO HELP KIDS

The results are in and the fifth annual Billy Shockett Memorial Charity Golf Tournament, held in May, raised almost \$12,000 for the Miami Beach Kids’ Golf Program.

A record 20 teams competed to help fund the Normandy Shores Youth Clinic Programs in Miami Beach. The programs include free twice-weekly clinics and free golf training equipment for deserving children in Miami Beach.

The tournament also funds a newly formed PGA Junior League team that represents Normandy Shores. The team of 10 Miami Beach young golfers plays against other club teams in fun competitions as an introduction to the formal competition structure.