



International School of Portland

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INTERNATIONAL SCHOOL OF PORTLAND FOLDS 1000 PAPER CRANES FOR PEACE

Local school carries on Japanese origami tradition to honor Asian American Pacific Islander (AANHPI) Heritage Month, support efforts against anti-Asian hate

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Portland, OR May 6, 2023: Students and members of the International School of Portland community folded 1000 paper cranes to celebrate Asian American Pacific Islander (AANHPI) Heritage Month, support efforts against anti-Asian hate, and ultimately come together to represent peace, kindness, and action-taking in these challenging times.

International School of Portland, a thirty-three year old independent school in downtown Portland, offers language and cultural immersion programs in Japanese, Mandarin Chinese, and Spanish. This week, as the school celebrates Asian American Pacific Islander (AANHPI) Heritage Month and Japanese Children's Day (Kodomo No Hi), the cranes were assembled into an art piece, hung centrally in one of the school's main buildings, Learners' Hall. The timing is significant, as today also marks the second annual Oregon Rises Above Hate event in Portland. The cranes spell out "Peace" in the school's four languages: Japanese, Mandarin, Spanish, and English.

“Here at the International School of Portland, we are incredibly proud of the tremendous talents in our community, and celebrate the vibrant and diverse traditions and contributions of Asians, Asian Americans, and Pacific Islander community not only this month, but all year long,” says Bodo Heiliger, Head of School. “ISP’s mission is to inspire children to become global citizens. Part of that goal is to equip students with the knowledge and skills to value difference; to challenge hate and discrimination; to act positively for change, and to embrace an international perspective across all aspects of learning. To that end, we embarked on a community project to fold 1,000 paper cranes in celebration and solidarity with the AAPI community.”



“One Thousand Cranes” is a Japanese origami tradition where people fold one thousand paper cranes as a way to express empathy and wishes for strength and health, as cranes are believed to be the symbols of good luck and longevity. This tradition started with a young girl named Sadako Sasaki. After being exposed to radiation from the atomic bomb dropped on Hiroshima in 1945, she developed leukemia. Sadako believed in the legend and folded origami cranes with the hopes of recovering. After her death, her friends and families completed the remaining cranes to make a thousand. With their continued collective effort, the story

of Sadako spread across the world, and she is now known as a global symbol of Peace.

The school’s thousand cranes project began in May 2022, at the school’s annual Japanese Children’s Day (Kodomo No Hi) celebration, where students began folding cranes in response to the recent rise in anti-Asian hate and bias crimes. Students continued the project in the weeks following, quickly completing power one thousand cranes. Several Japanese track classes lead the charge, not only folding hundreds of cranes themselves but sharing Sadako’s story and the symbolism of the crane project to others around campus.



About the International School of Portland

Since 1990, the International School of Portland has offered full language and cultural immersion in a warm, loving environment that encourages curiosity and kindness. One of only two schools in the United States to provide three full language immersion programs under one roof, the International School of Portland is also home to the longest-running Chinese immersion program in the Pacific Northwest. It is also the only program in the country to offer full Japanese language immersion. It was the first school in the Pacific Northwest to adopt the renowned International Baccalaureate Primary Years Programme.

The International School of Portland's world-renowned professional faculty and staff—hailing from more than 17 countries—lovingly engage the school's nearly 400 students in academics, PE and the arts. With its multilingual and cultural environment, the International School of Portland's campus is a global microcosm, helping shape children who are open-minded, confident, empathetic and inclusive—traits that encourage them to take responsible action within and beyond our school community. intlschool.org

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