

**For Immediate Release**

## **Japanese Heritage Night Comes to the East Coast for the First Time**

New York Mets Host Japanese Heritage Night on Friday, August 27<sup>th</sup>, 2010

**New York, New York** – When Japanese Heritage Night comes to Citi Field, it will be the first time an East Coast team hosts such an event, signifying the growing influence of the Japanese and Japanese American communities in the region. New York City is home to about 30,000 Japanese Americans, and many Japanese American Organizations. Ambassador and Consul General, Shinichi Nishimiya, of the New York Japanese Consulate will play an active role during Japanese Heritage Night.

*“Recently, there has been a most welcome surge in activity by various Japanese American organizations in and around New York, one of the aims being to engage the expat and long-term Japanese community of New York. I think the first Japanese Heritage Night at Citi Field is an excellent attempt to pull together all those interested in furthering such causes, in a most enjoyable setting,”* said the Ambassador.

Ambassador Nishimiya will present Mets Spirit Awards to Japanese or Japanese-American individuals excelling at community activism, the sport of baseball, or who are veterans or members of the military.

In addition to the awards ceremony, Japanese Heritage Night will feature Taiko drumming, a Samurai performance and traditional Japanese dancing. Pre-game entertainment begins at 6:30p.m. and concludes with the singing of the national anthem by Kurt Sanchez Kanazawa.

The event’s participating organizations include The U.S.-Japan Council (USJC), The Japanese Association of New York (JAA), Japanese American and Japanese in America (JAJA), and the National Japanese American Memorial Foundation. USJC Member, Ann Harakawa was motivated to bring Japanese Heritage Night to New York.

*“As a member of the Japanese-American Leadership Delegation co-sponsored by the Japanese Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Japan Foundation Center for Global Partnership, I have a responsibility to facilitate productive relationships between our countries on a commercial and cultural level. Having worked with the New York Mets and their owners, the Wilpon family, on design projects for many years, I perceived the opportunity for them to host one of the best and most enjoyable ways I can think of to help promote Japanese-American relations,”* said Harakawa, who is also the principal at Two Twelve, the corporate sponsor of the event.

Tickets for New York Mets vs. Houston Astros, Japanese Heritage Night at Citi Field are available at: <http://newyork.mets.mlb.com/nym/ticketing/gtw.jsp?loc=japan>

To learn more about the Mets Spirit Award recipients or Japanese Heritage Night at Citi Field please visit [www.usjapancouncil.org/Japanese\\_heritage-night](http://www.usjapancouncil.org/Japanese_heritage-night).

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