



Japanese American
Friendship Doll

NDSU NORTH DAKOTA STATE UNIVERSITY

JOI PROGRAM
JAPAN OUTREACH INITIATIVE

PLAINS ART MUSEUM

Did you know that there's the Friendship Japanese Doll in Fargo, ND?

The 1927 Friendship Doll Exchange In 1927, a heartfelt exchange of dolls between the United States and Japan symbolized a hope for peace and friendship during a time of strained international relations. The initiative began in 1926, when Dr. Sidney Gulick founded the Committee on World Friendship Among Children, encouraging American children to send dolls to Japan as a gesture of goodwill.

To North Dakota, the U.S.

Miss Okayama



A total of 12,739 dolls were sent from the U.S., greeted warmly by Japanese children with festive ceremonies across the country. In return, under the leadership of Eiichi Shibusawa, Japanese children collected donations to create 58 beautiful "Torei Ningyō" (Dolls of Gratitude), which were sent to the United States. These dolls toured the country and were later placed in museums and institutions as lasting symbols of friendship between the two nations.

At North Dakota State University, two charming Japanese dolls dressed in beautiful traditional attire are preserved in excellent condition. One is named Miss Okayama, and the other is Miss Konko.



Okayama is known as the birthplace of the Momotarō (Peach Boy) legend. There's a famous Momotarō statue at Okayama Station and Airport.

Miss Okayama and Miss Konko's hometown OKAYAMA in Japan



Okayama is called the "Land of Sunshine" because it has mild weather and many sunshine-filled days.

Miss Okayama's young sister, Miss Konko, is coming JUST for Japan Art Festival in Plains Art Museum.

ONLY 3 DAYS (July 31 - August 2) 2025



Miss Konko was created as the "younger sister" of Miss Okayama, a Japanese Friendship Doll, as part of a commemorative project and a symbol of hope for peace. The Konkōkyō Children's Association raised funds to produce the doll, continuing the spirit of friendship into the 21st century.

Miss Okayama and Miss Konko were in the historical costume resource room of the Apparel, Textiles and Interior Design Department at North Dakota State University. At the university, they became educational resources for learning about peace and a foreign culture.