

Anime Twin Cities, Inc., (hereafter referred to as ATC) is a Minnesota not-for-profit corporation. Founded in 2003, ATC's stated purpose is to conduct educational, charitable and social activities related to the promotion and study of Japanese culture, specifically animated movies, television programs ("anime") and graphic novels ("manga"), as well as the study of the Japanese language as it is used in anime and manga.

To this end, ATC stages an annual convention, Anime Detour, in order to raise funds for its charitable, educational and social efforts. The first Anime Detour (2004) attracted over twelve hundred fans of anime and manga; the second grew to over sixteen hundred members. The 2005 convention increased that figure by more than ten percent. Planning is underway for the 2006 convention.

In 2004, ATC's Board of Directors dispensed approximately seven thousand dollars in grants.

Scholarships

Currently the Board sponsors donations to the Gordon R. Dickson Scholarship Fund, and a local artist studying at the Minneapolis College of Art & Design. This year the Board plans to establish a scholarship fund; these scholarships will assist artists as well as other students of Japanese culture. The Board also plans to continue supporting the Gordon R. Dickson Scholarship Fund.

Promoting Japanese Culture

The Board is in the process of acquiring a membership in the Japan-America Society of Minnesota and to establish relationships with the Bloomington, Minneapolis and St. Paul Sister City Organizations. We are currently arranging additional displays at upcoming Japan-America Society centering on films and animation that have had a cultural impact on Japan.

Reaching Out To The Community

The Board has also appointed an events co-coordinator/community outreach position to better enable us to reach out to the local community, and to aid them in education about what we enjoy. Current programs include assembling a lecture series on Japanese culture and art for use at local libraries. Once assembled, libraries will be able to contact us to have one of our members come and deliver lectures and presentations on various aspects of Japanese culture in an effort to engage children with an appreciation and interest in Japanese culture and the current influx of said culture into our own cultural landscape.

Enabling Artists

As part of our convention, we also hold several workshops as a regular part of programming that concentrate on writing. For example, at the 2006 convention, our guests include several people who are considered notable artists in the field. We are bringing in Rebecca Marjesdatter and Joan Vinge as our guests of honor to participate in several of these workshops, with the aim

of continuing the development of authors and creative minds like them.

We also have Robert DeJesus and his wife, Emily, attending. Bob DeJesus is a manga-themed commercial artist who will also be presenting his work and speaking at several events throughout the convention.

The Board has also giving several grants to animemusicvideos.org to help them with the ongoing costs of hosting and displaying the art of thousands of creators in this unique form of expression. We also bring the creator of the site, Kris McCormick, as an on-going guest of honor who explains the history of the site, as well as some basic primers involved in entering this challenging art form.

These are only a few examples of the speakers that attendees will be able to listen to; although the guest list will vary from year to year as times and availability vary.

Giving Back

Our community of like-interested individuals also wishes to pursue philanthropic avenues. For example, as part of these upcoming and further conventions, we have made arrangements to have a blood drive onsite in the hopes of helping the medical community with a valuable service. This will serve a dual purpose, as it will also allow us to present on the topic of blood drives in Japan, and how until recently giving blood in Japan was a social taboo before an advertising campaign to try and reverse cultural mores.

ATC believes that the education and philanthropy begins with education, and combined with entertainment is eminently more effective. As we grow more experienced with our activities, the possibilities of increasing are scope is happily within reach.