

*Remarks by Consul General of Japan in Miami, Mr. Eiichi Kawahara at
Morikami Museum & Japanese Gardens
At Conferment Ceremony of Japanese Decoration to Mrs. Chieko Mihori
On June 26 from 12:00 at the Morikami Auditorium*



Today is a day of joy and celebration at the Morikami Museum and Japanese Gardens! We are celebrating the Morikami's 35th anniversary and performing a conferment ceremony of Japanese decoration to a super active lady, Mme. Chieko Mihori, V.P. of the Morikami Board in charge of cultural affairs for many years.

I am very happy to deliver remarks on this occasion, as I am one of Mme. Mihori's admirers for her splendid demonstrations and teachings of Ikebana, tea ceremony and Japanese dance. And I appreciate today's audience for showing with your presence your committed support to the Morikami, and their appreciation for Mme. Mihori as well.

Mme. Mihori came to USA in the 1950s and started teaching Ikebana to her neighbors free of charge. In 1960, she became the Sogetsu Director of Florida and started teaching Ikebana in a professional manner. Mihori-San has been very active in promoting Ikebana ever since.

For over half a century, Mihori-san has been spreading the art and beauty of Ikebana, its spirit and culture. It is fascinating and remarkable for one Japanese lady to be so active and continuously engaged in promoting Japan's culture for so many years here in

Florida, for both Floridians and Japanese.

Mme. Mihori received a letter of commendation, 8 years ago, from the Japanese Foreign Minister for her outstanding activities towards the promotion of Japan's culture. The City of Delray Beach presented her also with a letter of appreciation and commendation for her contributions several years ago.

I am very grateful to Mme. Mihori for her contributions to the Morikami, and for introducing visitors to Japanese traditions and culture. The Morikami Museum and Gardens is the only public museum in the United States dedicated to the promotion of Japanese culture.

Last January, I visited the Morikami for its New Year celebration and witnessed one of Mme. Mihori's Japanese tea ceremony. I was much impressed with her well refined manner of introducing in English this Japanese tradition. I observed a very long line of people waiting outside the tea house for the next demonstration. This amply showed how popular Mihori-San's tea demonstration was.

I wish to commend and congratulate you, Mme. Mihori, for your dedication and magnificent contribution to promoting the understanding of Japanese culture and traditions in Florida. I wish to express my profound appreciation to you for building a bridge between Japan and the United States through your dedicated efforts for so long.

On behalf of His Majesty the Emperor of Japan, I now wish to confer the Japanese decoration, the Order of the Rising Sun, Gold and Silver Rays to Mme. Chieko Mihori. Congratulations!