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Two awarded by America-Japan Society

STAFF REPORT - An American educator and a Japanese musician were recognized on Thursday by America-Japan Society Inc. for their longtime grassroots work toward deepening ties between Japan and the United States.

The two were honored with the third Kaneko Award, which was founded in 2017 to commemorate the 100th anniversary of the launch of the society and was named after its first president, Count Kentaro Kaneko.

The recipients are Helen Rindsberg, a 70-year-old arts teacher from Cincinnati, and 83-year-old country music singer Charlie Nagatani, from the city of Kumamoto.

Nogatani was honored for promoting global peace through country music. In 1961, he started a band named Charlie and Cannonball and has since toured across Japan and the U.S. In 1976, he opened a live music club in his hometown, where he still performs. He has also organized Japan's largest country music festival, in Kumamoto.

Rindsberg was recognized for familiarizing students in the United States with Japanese culture and history in her classes and through publications featuring photographs she had taken while traveling around Japan. She also has a large collection of kimonos and Japanese art works.

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