
TABLE FOR TWO's 2023 ONIGIRI ACTION Campaign Provides 1.8 Million School Meals with 322,300 "Onigiri" Rice Ball Photo Posts in 45 Days

New York, NY – December 11th 2023 TABLE FOR TWO (TFT) USA, a non-profit organization that aims to tackle obesity and worldwide hunger, organized its 9th annual social action campaign called ONIGIRI ACTION to commemorate World Food Day. This year we were able to provide 1,809,860 school meals to children and far surpassed our goal of 300,000 total photos with 322,300! During the campaign, every photo of onigiri posted to the campaign website (<https://onigiri-action.com/en/>) or social media with #OnigiriAction helped provide five school meals to children in need. For TFT USA, a 25-cent donation is used to upgrade meals by adding nutritious



elements such as fruits and vegetables in socioeconomically disadvantaged neighborhoods in the U.S. TFT funds one school meal to a child in East Africa and Southeast Asia with the same 25-cent donation. This year we saw many creative Onigiri photos posted from 44 countries around the world. We continued the theme - Unite the States with Onigiri – into 2023 and received photos from all 50 states plus Washington D.C. for the first time! Our global effort to help children brings us together and grows year after year.

The campaign is generously supported by our partner organizations in the U.S. below and global partners: For every onigiri photo posted, five school meals will be donated through the generous support from our partners: J.C.C. Fund/Japanese Chamber of Commerce and Industry of New York, JFC International/Nishiki, JCAW Foundation, Zojirushi America, San-J, ITOCHU International, SMBC Global Foundation, Misuzu Corporation, MUFG Bank, Zensho Employees Association Network, Mishima Foods U.S.A., Q&B Foods, Inc., AUTEK Onigiri partners: BentOn, Onigilly, Sunny Blue, Omusubee, Onigiri Kororin

Nine "Best Onigiri Awards 2023" photos were selected to commemorate this success.

Best Onigiri Awards 2023

State Onigiri Awards



Punahou High School - Hawaii

Students learning Japanese at Punahou High School made Hawaii-themed onigiri. They are creating a just, compassionate, and sustainable world one onigiri at a time! They thank us for their opportunity to practice their kuleana (personal sense of responsibility).



Ivy and Alyssa - Texas

Students at Kealing Middle School's Japanese class had fun making and eating delicious onigiri. These two students made their onigiri into bobcats, a cat native to Texas!

Best Team Awards



nCino – North Carolina and global

nCino's company-wide Onigiri Action initiative started in their Japan office and reached worldwide. The AAPI Alliance ERG (Asian and Pacific Islander) led the effort and had a photo booth, a company-wide photo contest, a video on how to make onigiri, an onigiri making class and more! The onigiri photo frames are the biggest we've ever seen!

“R-E-gato” (President, Hudson Kaplan) - Florida

The Ransom Everglades School's Japanese Language and Culture Club in Miami called “R-E-gato” connected with many high school students on campus using “onigiri” props to inform them about the purpose of the Onigiri Action. As this is a new club, they are so proud to be winners which will excite their student body to join this meaningful initiative in 2024! Arigato!



Creative Onigiri Awards



Cafe Wisp - Pennsylvania

These Mario and Luigi onigiri were made with fillings based on burgers from the Toadstool Cafe located in the new Universal Studio's Super Nintendo World attraction. In fact, their caps come from the burgers there!

West Liberty University – West Virginia

This photo was taken at our Onigiri Action kit hybrid event with JOI Coordinators across the U.S. Those who attended the event had the opportunity to make onigiri from the kits and learned about all types of Onigiri from this unique poster created by the JOI Coordinator in West Virginia. Chris is featured in this photo :)



Onigiri Kids Awards



Dr. Lena Edwards Academic Charter School – New Jersey

Kindergarten students, including Mariah pictured here, participated in "Chef for a Day" by cooking onigiri! The program was created to teach students about healthy foods. The event was planned by Ms. G., the school's food service coordinator!

Luke and Hannah – Virginia

These young chefs love learning about other cultures and food! They paired Onigiri Action with learning about Osaka, Japan and made dinner for their whole family to enjoy!



Animal Onigiri Award



OniMon - California

This little dog is wearing an onigiri cape and even has an adorable face shaped like onigiri! The cape is the logo of a small pop-up called @onimon_ in California. How cute!

The ONIGIRI ACTION United the States!

Kids to adults from all 50 States and Washington D.C. supported Onigiri Action and made great contributions to the cause. By posting photos of onigiri, Americans were able to unify with the world to help children in



School Event

need. Year after year we are amazed by the creativity from simple but kawaii (cute) onigiri making, to onigiri arts and crafts, onigiri poses and props, and innovative decorations. Schools and organizations held several in-person events as well as virtual to spread Onigiri Action. We held special employee events with ITOCHU International and SMBC Global

Foundation. JFC International generously provided Nishiki rice and Mishima Foods USA provided rice seasoning, while MUFG Union Bank, N.A. and JCAW Foundation participated in events at schools. Thank you to all partner organizations for supporting the events.



SMBC Global Foundation Event

This year, we held three online **Onigiri Action kit** events with JOI Coordinators, college students and the Japan Societies with participants from across the nation. We additionally had two in-person Onigiri Action



Onigiri Action Kit Workshop at Anime Con Chibi

kit events in California at the Japanese Food EXPO with 80 participants and Anime Con Chibi with over 100 participants. Kits were provided through the partnership between TFT USA, The Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries of JAPAN (MAFF) and The Japan External Trade Organization (JETRO) Los Angeles. We had a new initiative called the “**US & Japan College Relay**

Baton Touch/バトンタッチ! where two teams comprised of clubs and associations from Japanese and American schools competed to finish the race first and submit creative photos. Yale University’s Japanese American Students Union were the recipients of the Creative Photo Award and the White Team comprised of groups from the following schools won the race: New York University, Yale University, Loyola Marymount University, University of Wisconsin- Milwaukee, University of Wisconsin- Superior, Gakushuin University, University of Marketing and Distribution Sciences in Japan,



White Team from the US & Japan
College Relay Baton Touch



Metaverse Virtual Event

Hitotsubashi University, International Christian University, and Japan Women’s University. Another new event we held was the **“Metaverse Experience”** where

participants could virtually visit Banda Village, Rwanda, the location of one of our aid recipients. Participants enjoyed avatar tours, videos, photo displays, quizzes and a mini game. For students at partner schools, we offered special **Mini Wa-Sho lessons** that focused on making onigiri and bento. The kids especially



Mini Wa-Sho Lesson



Onigiri Action at MLK Library

enjoy forming rice with their hands into riceballs and decorating them with condiments including yukari! There were several public Onigiri Action events, including one in San Diego where the participants enjoyed rice from Japan donated by Zensho USA and one in partnership with D.C. Central Kitchen and Globalize D.C. at MLK Library in Washington D.C. The event attracted many people who were enthusiastic to try onigiri for the first time!

Products with Donations: During the campaign, a portion of proceeds from the products below were donated towards providing school meals: Nishiki Rice (JFC International), Rice Cooker (Zojirushi America), Tamari Soy Sauce (San-J), Tamaki Gold (ITOCHU International), Inari (Misuzu Corporation), Nori Komi Furikake (Mishima Foods U.S.A.), KEWPIE Mayonnaise (Q&B Foods, Inc.), AUTEK (Onigiri Maker ASM545A), Okonomiyaki Pancake Mix (Otafuku Foods), over 100 onigiri items (Gohan Market), Onigiri/Omusubi (BentOn, Onigilly, Sunny Blue, Omusubee, Onigiri Kororin), and Seasonal Delights Care Package (Kokoro).



TFT USA is grateful to partner donor organizations and all the schools, organizations, individuals, restaurants, onigiri shops, and more that came together with onigiri to make a big impact in providing meals for children in need. Thank you!



About TABLE FOR TWO USA:

While about 1 billion go hungry, 2 billion suffer from obesity and other health issues related to unhealthy eating. TABLE FOR TWO USA (TFT USA) seeks to change both issues by educating about healthy eating practices and providing healthy school meals to those in need. TABLE FOR TWO started in Japan and now operates in 14 countries. As one of the most well-known NPOs in Japan, a country noted for the longevity of its people, TFT USA promotes Japanese healthy eating culture and has started the unique programs, "Onigiri Action" and "Wa-Shokuiku -Learn. Cook. Eat Japanese!-" featuring Japanese food culture to tackle on the critical health issues. For more information, please visit: <https://usa.tablefor2.org>.

Media Contact

Amy Fuentes TABLE FOR TWO USA

Email: a.fuentes@tablefor2.org