New York, NY, April 30, 2020 – The Japanese American Association of New York, Inc. (JAA) is pleased to announce the launch of Project Bento, a program in partnership with Sunrise Mart and Ito En that will offer bento to seniors and disabled members in New York’s Japanese American community. Sunrise Mart is donating weekly bento, and Ito En is providing Japanese tea with each delivery. Project Bento is set to begin on Monday, May 4, 2020 and continue until the foreseeable future.

Volunteers from JAA and other Japanese-related organizations will make phone calls to seniors and community members with disabilities to check on their well-being and to be a source of comfort during these uncertain times. They will also assist in delivering the donated bento under the supervision of Erina Yoshida, COO of Yoshida Restaurant Group, which operates the Japanese grocery store chain Sunrise Mart, several Japanese bars and restaurants, as well as Japan Village in Industry City, Brooklyn.

“These are very difficult times, and we are concerned for the safety and welfare of our senior and disabled members,” says Susan Onuma, President of JAA. “We are so happy and appreciative of Sunrise Mart for generously donating obento and to the volunteers who want to help. Special thanks to Ito En, who will also be donating tea to be included with the obento.”

Initially, this service will be offered only in the tri-borough area of Manhattan, Queens, and Brooklyn, with a maximum of 100 bento each week. JAA is in the process of fundraising and reaching out to other Japanese vendors to provide additional meals to reach even more seniors in need.
Restaurant and food industry representatives who wish to provide meals or supplies, please contact **Michiyo Noda**, Executive Director of JAA, at 212-840-6942.

Tax-deductible donations to support this Project Bento can be made at JAA’s website, [jaany.org/donate](http://jaany.org/donate). Please indicate that your donation is to benefit **Project Bento**. If you wish to make a donation by check, make your check payable to **The Japanese American Association of New York, Inc.** with **Project Bento** in the memo line and mail it to The Japanese American Association of New York, Inc., 49 W. 45th Street, New York, NY 10036.

Founded in 1907 by Dr. Toyohiko Takami, **The Japanese American Association of New York, Inc.** is the oldest and largest Japanese community service organization in the New York area. A 501 (c) 3 nonprofit, JAA is dedicated to connecting our community through social engagement, education, sports, and the arts. We provide relief efforts to disaster-stricken areas around the world, and closer to home, we have awarded more than $1 million in scholarships since 1971, encouraging the next generation of Japanese American leaders. While the beneficiaries of our services have changed over the years, our services have also evolved to meet those needs. Throughout, we remain true to our original mission to serve the Japanese American and Japanese Community. For more information, please visit our website at [jaany.org](http://jaany.org).