

NEWS

## U of M Crookston student's dream job is to be a translator for Japanese baseball players

Written by Jackie Calderon - March 10, 2024

Have you ever thought about what it would be like to travel to a foreign country to pursue a degree? Yusuke Matsuda, a senior at the University of Minnesota Crookston, can tell you what it's like. Matsuda is a [communications](#) major from Fukuoka, Japan, and has been in the United States for five years, transferring from Western Wyoming Community College to the U of M Crookston. He is looking forward to graduating Spring 2024 and plans to work as a summer camp counselor in Washington, where he completed his internship last summer before returning to Japan.

"By the time I return home to Japan I will have been away for five years," Matsuda said.

Matsuda has a younger brother who is 18 years old and is graduating high school this year. He also has a younger sister who was only seven months old when he left for college in the United States. His sister is now four years old and Matsuda says she talks "a lot." Matsuda calls and Facetimes his family at least once a week.

A big culture shock that Matsuda experienced when coming to the United States was how Americans communicate with strangers. This phenomenon influenced Matsuda to study communication as his major.

"In the States, strangers will talk to you and say 'hi' but that is not common in Japan," he noted.

Matsuda also says his biggest goal when pursuing higher education was to be able to speak another language.

"I'm trying to learn Spanish right now too," he says. "Funny enough, Japanese is in the top five languages to study on Duolingo and a lot of people are trying to learn Japanese which is really interesting to me."

He wasn't too sure about exactly what he wanted to do in the future, but he knew he wanted to work abroad. Matsuda explained that Crookston was an opportunity that "just happened" for him. All the variables aligned.

"The University of Minnesota Crookston is more affordable for international students than other universities," he clarified.

"U of M Crookston is a small campus and when I got here I found out that the people are very friendly and helpful, especially towards international students," Matsuda added.

Matsuda's dream job is to be a translator for Japanese baseball players who get drafted to play on a Major League Baseball team in the United States. This dream comes from Matsuda's love for baseball.

"I grew up watching baseball," Matsuda shared. "In Japan, baseball is one of the most popular sports."

His love for baseball magnified when he was in Washington and he met players from his favorite team, the Seattle Mariners. Matsuda says his favorite player is Julio Rodriguez.

"We are both only seven months apart in age," he explained. "Julio Rodriguez left the Dominican Republic and came to the United States by himself to conquer his dreams."

"He really motivates me because of how close we are in age and what Rodriguez has accomplished," he added. "I think we could be really good friends."

When Matsuda met Rodriguez in Washington, he had been practicing Spanish so that he could communicate with him and tell him how big of a fan he was of Rodriguez.

"I didn't even get to tell him I love him," Matsuda jokes.



While in the U.S. Matsuda has noticed other cultural differences, such as the food. He admits he doesn't really enjoy the food in the U.S. compared to the food in Japan. His favorite food is miso soup. He said it is a food that his grandmother had always cooked for him. He explained that the food in Japan is traditionally a lot healthier. They consume a lot of fish, shrimp, seafood, and lots of rice.

Want to learn more about Yusuke and experience different cultures without ever leaving Crookston? Yusuke Matsuda will be featured at the International Dinner on March 11 at the U of M Crookston. He will be presenting a few Japanese dishes including an appetizer of miso soup, an entree of Japanese curry, and shiratama-dango, which is similar to mochi, for dessert. Matsuda hand selected these dishes, and detailed the history of Japanese curry. Matsuda will also be speaking about his experiences and Japanese culture.

"Japanese curry is a very common meal, I really enjoy the story of how it came to Japan," Matsuda says. "The United Kingdom's Royal Navy brought curry from India, which then made its way over to Japan. The Japanese Navy has a tradition now to eat curry every Friday because it is easy to lose track of the day when you are on a ship. It's kind of like a routine, and having curry every Friday serves as a reminder of the day for people who are on the ship."

Reserve your seat to the International Dinner on March 11, 2024 by visiting [z.umn.edu/MIC2024Dinners](https://z.umn.edu/MIC2024Dinners). Contact Rae French via email at [rfrench@crk.umn.edu](mailto:rfrench@crk.umn.edu) for more information.

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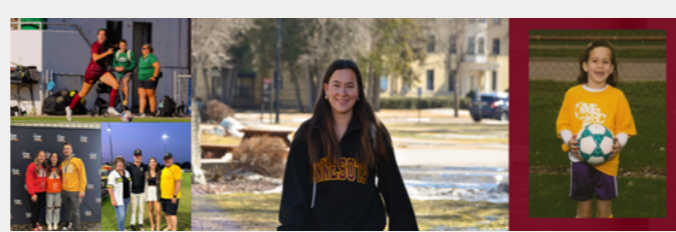
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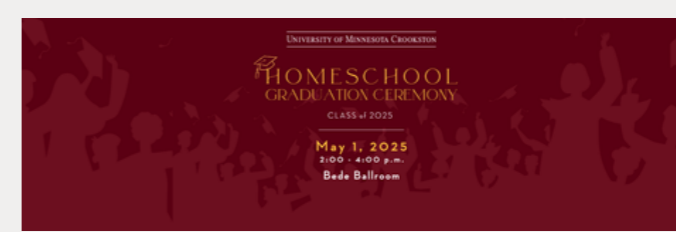
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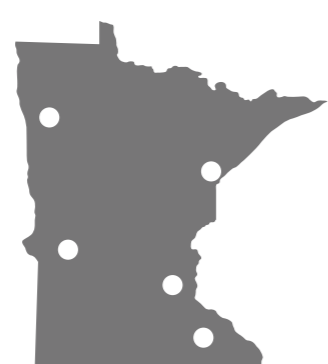
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