Butterfly Garden Exhibition
Together We Heal, Grow, and Soar
Information Packet for Teachers & Organizers
What is the Butterfly Garden Project?

This is a joint project by the MSU AgeAlive in the College of Osteopathic Medicine and the Asian Studies Center Japan Council.

The Japan Council holds several events every March as part of Japan Month, and AgeAlive, featuring Zahrah Resh, their Artist-in-Residence, organizes large paper flower and Butterfly Gardens to promote wellbeing, community engagement in meaningful activity, and an appreciation for unity through diversity and inclusion.

March 2023 marks the third anniversary of the arrival of the COVID-19 pandemic in the MSU community. We want to fill the atrium of the MSU International Center with thousands of origami butterflies made by MSU students, staff, faculty, and community members as a way to reflect on the pandemic. We hope this project will have a cathartic effect for those who make the butterflies and those who see the exhibition. The project will lighten our sadness and frustration caused by the pandemic, reaffirm our appreciation of being alive, and strengthen our hope and commitment to the future.

What are the benefits of participation?

- This project will enhance the unity within your organization and also among multiple organizations at MSU and nearby cities.

- This project will increase the visibility of your organization. Thousands of people visit MSU International Center and will view the Garden.

- This project allows faculty/teachers and students to learn in various fields such as foreign languages, writing, arts, social studies, and STEM. Please share your publications/presentations and students’ work samples with the Project Committee.

- Representatives of groups who created the butterflies will be asked to participate in the exhibition opening ceremony.

- This project can attract future organizers of the Butterfly Garden project. By doing so, we will contribute to the sustainability of community building through the Butterfly Gardens.
Discuss the challenges of and insights gained from the COVID-19 pandemic

Write poetry and messages on the paper butterflies

Learn about different patterns and designs

**Goals:**
Set the unique goal of your group. Who and how many people will participate? Will you make butterflies to promote team building? A ritual of healing? Purely to enjoy art? Will you include learning activities such as the examples below?

- Discuss the challenges of and insights gained from the COVID-19 pandemic
- Write poetry and messages on the paper butterflies
- Learn about different patterns and designs

**Materials:**
There are several options for paper needed to make butterflies. AgeAlive can provide all the paper, paint, and plastic zip ties for those hosting painting and/or holding sessions.

You and the participants can also bring paper to use. We ask that it fit the following criteria:

- The weight should be at least as heavy as copy paper [no tissue paper] so that it can be folded and holds a shape, and not as heavy as card stock.
- Factory-made origami paper, newspaper articles, letters, photographs, or other materials are fine. Suggestion: scan or copy/paste items into a word or pdf document that can be printed using copy paper.
- Each piece should be square. Any size square is fine.
- Ideally, there should be a design on both sides. If only one side has a design – logos, cultural symbols, paint, poetry, letters, can be added to the other side.

**Schedule:**
Will you have your group members create butterflies together in one day? Or will you set up a drop box that people can put their finished work in, at their convenience? Please donate the finished butterflies to the Project Committee by December 2022. The exhibition will open in March 2023.

**Contact us.**
If you are interested, please contact us at agealive@msu.edu and let us know your plans – if you want us to provide the paper and/or paint, or to host a painting workshop with Zahrah.

Also, visit the website, [https://www.agealive.org/butterfly_effect.html](https://www.agealive.org/butterfly_effect.html), for the butterfly-making workshops open to the public and volunteering opportunities. Let's build the Garden together.

Mariko Kawaguchi  
Japanese Studies Program  
kawaguc7@msu.edu  
[https://lilac.msu.edu/japanese/](https://lilac.msu.edu/japanese/)

Clare Luz  
AgeAlive  
agealive@msu.edu  
[https://www.agealive.org/](https://www.agealive.org/)

Zahrah Resh  
Artist  
zahrahr@me.com  