



IKIGAI

Life's Purpose

STORY BY
CHIEMI SOUEN

ILLUSTRATIONS BY
FLOR KANESHIRO

Every day, Choichi Terukina practices singing and playing the three-stringed sanshin with his teacher, Miyazato-Sensei. Choichi wants to become a great musician and share the art of utasanshin with the world beyond his island home. But is that truly his ikigai—his life's purpose?

Inspired by the life of Living National Treasure of Japan, Choichi Terukina, *IKIGAI: Life's Purpose* is a beautiful tale of determination for anyone searching for their place in the world.

About the Author



Chiemi Souen writes to give a voice to Okinawan-American descendants of contract sugar plantation workers who immigrated from Okinawa in the early 1900s and remain faceless in literature to this day.

Born in Torrance, California, and raised in Honolulu, Souen earned her bachelor's degree in Japanese language and literature at the University of Hawai'i at Mānoa in 1995. In 1998, she received the Okinawa Prefectural Government Scholarship to attend the University of the Ryukyus, where she studied Okinawan language and women's studies. She is also a member of Ryukyu Koten Afuso Ryu Choichi Kai USA/Hawai'i, an Okinawan classical music academy.

She is currently the editor of *The Hawai'i Herald*, Hawai'i's Japanese American Journal.



About the Illustrator

Flor Kaneshiro is an Argentinian illustrator. Born in La Plata in 1983, Flor is *nikkei*, a third generation Uchinaanchu (Okinawan). She earned her bachelor's degree in fine arts from the National University of La Plata and studied in traditional arts at the Okinawa Prefectural University of Arts, Japan, where she was awarded a grant by the Okinawa prefectural government and the Okinawan Center of Argentina. Currently, she is a teacher at an art school in Junin de los Andes and San Martin de los Andes, Neuquén.

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