



JLGC NEWSLETTER

Japan Local Government Center (CLAIR, New York)
Issue no. 83 December 2015



WASHINGTON DC SEMINAR (PAGE5-6)

ISSUE NO. 83
DECEMBER 2015

1. Introduction of New JLGC Staff (Page1-4)

2. JLGC's Washington DC Seminar 2015 was held in October (Page 5-6)

3. Great American Opportunities, Great JET Alumni (Page7-8)

4. JETAA US Conference 2015 in Detroit (Page 9)

5. JETAANY Career Forum and JET Welcome back Reception in New York (Page10)

6. Tohoku Report :Building New Communities in Tohoku(Page11-13)

1. Introduction of New JLGC Staff

Arisa Maruno, Assistant Director, Representative of Wakayama Prefecture

Hello. I'm Arisa Maruno from Wakayama in Japan. I'm dispatched by the Wakayama prefectural government to New York and I've been a JLGC staff member since this April.

In this office, I'm mainly in charge of things related to JETAA in the U.S. such as granting subsidies for their activities and communicating and coordinating with chapters. I talk about that part of my job in the article about the JETAA US conference, so I would like to let you know about my hometown, Wakayama Prefecture, in this article.



I think many people know Osaka, but I'm afraid that you don't know Wakayama even though it is located just south of Osaka. Wakayama has an abundance of both farm and marine products and has many historical buildings.



JAPAN LOCAL GOVERNMENT CENTER

3 Park Avenue, 20th Floor
New York, NY 10016-5902
212.246.5542 office • 212.246.5617 fax
www.jlgc.org

There is [Wakayama Castle](#), near our office in Wakayama City. Wakayama Castle was originally constructed in 1585. It was severely damaged twice because of lightning and wartime air strikes and was rebuilt each time. We can go up in its tower and see the whole city from there. Furthermore, there are many temples and shrines around the prefecture. As you may know, [Koyasan](#), which is a World Heritage site, is the most famous place for tourists. However, I would like to let you know my favorite temple. It's [Dojoji Buddhist Temple](#) in Hidakagawa Town located in the middle part of Wakayama Prefecture. It was built in 701 and there are many stories related to this temple such as the famous tale "[Anchin Kiyohime](#)" and "[Kaminaga-hime](#)". It has a lot of Buddha statues designated as National Treasures and Important Cultural Properties. Especially, one of the National Treasures, the Senju Kannon, which is the Buddhist Goddess of Mercy with a thousand arms, is worth seeing.



Dojoji Buddhist Temple



Wakayama Castle



Wakayama-style ramen

I would also like to recommend some of our special foods here. Now, it is said that the origin of Japanese soy sauce is in Yuasa Town, north of Hidakagawa Town. We can have it as it is when we eat sushi and sashimi. We can also use it as an all-purpose seasoning. One of the popular foods using it is ramen noodles. Wakayama's ramen is a soy sauce flavor based on broth made from pork bones. Wakayama ramen won as the best ramen in Japan on a TV show in 1998, so there is a long line in front of famous ramen noodle restaurants on weekends even now. When you go there, you can see not only ramen noodles but also boiled eggs and sushi fermented with mackerel. This is Wakayama ramen-style.



How to make soy sauce

After eating great food, you can enjoy hot springs. We have many fantastic hot springs around Wakayama. One of the most popular hot springs is [Kawayu-onsen](#) in Tanabe City. In summer people warm themselves here after playing in the pristine currents of the Ohtou River. Anywhere you dig along the riverbank hot water springs up. The holes in the riverbank are the tubs for bathing. In winter a vast open-air bath is made and opened to public. My favorite hot spring is [Boki-do Cave](#) in Nachikatsuura Town, located in the southern part of Wakayama. Boki-do means that you will forget to go home once you come here. You can see the beautiful sights while enjoying the hot spring, with the Pacific Ocean before you.



Boki-do Cave



Kawayu-onsen in summer

As I said at first, my main job is the matters relating to JETAA. However, I would like to let many more people know about my great hometown, Wakayama, while I am here in NY. If you have any questions about Wakayama, please feel free to ask me!

Thank you



Kawayu-onsen in winter



Ki-chan
(a mascot for Wakayama)

[Shindo Hayase, Assistant Director, Representative of the Ministry of Internal Affairs and Communications](#)

Hello, everyone.

I am Shindo Hayase, an assistant director of JLGC, assigned since this April. Prior to my work at JLGC, I worked for here CLAIR Tokyo Headquarters as a project manager in the General Affairs Division for two years.

Before that, I worked in the Prime Minister's Cabinet Office. In that office, from 2011 to 2013, I was in charge of coordination among government ministries for Japan's participation in United Nations Peace Keeping Operations. During that time, I had an opportunity to work in Haiti after the 2010 earthquake with officers of the Japan Self-Defense Forces.

Here is a report I wrote about my stay in Haiti: http://www.pko.go.jp/pko_e/liaison/liaison06.html

I also have experience working in a prefecture government in Japan. I have worked for Kochi Prefecture, on the southern coast of Shikoku island. Kochi boasts some beautiful rivers. The Shimanto River is especially famous as "Japan's last pristine river". Even though Kochi is very far from urban areas of Japan, it is worth your visit.

Here, in JLGC, I work on wide variety of research requests from all levels of government in Japan. During my stay in the United States, I'm looking forward to learn a lot of things about America and its state and local governments.



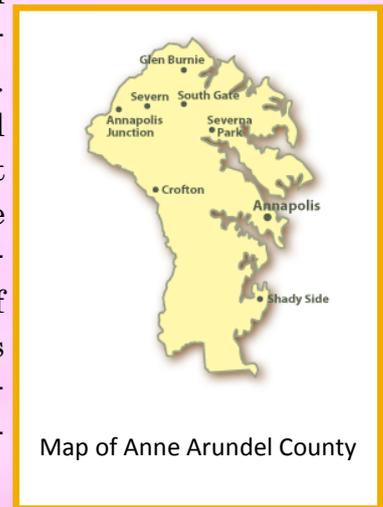
Shimanto River

2. *JLGC's Washington DC Seminar 2015 was held in October*

JLGC's annual Washington DC seminar was held for three days from October 7th to 9th, and eight staff members including interns from our Tokyo headquarters, attended it. This seminar is arranged by the Council of State Governments (CSG) with the main goals being to help our staff learn about unique administrative structures in the US and strengthening our networks with the participating institutes.

All the institutes we visited through our three days were wonderful. On the first day, we visited the government of Washington, DC, and were lectured on its unique administrative structure and how this effects the process of making policies and laws. On the third day, we visited Anne Arundel County, which is located in southeastern Maryland and has a population of about 560,000.

It is a very beautiful town surrounded by a charming waterfront. The administrative officers explained to us the characteristics of the county, especially about the division of roles between the state and cities. They are making an effort to become the best place possible for inhabitants through building a convenient transportation system, fostering employment and providing quality education. We could learn a great deal about the successful management of America's unique structure of administration.



10/7 Day1	Center for Strategic and International Studies (CSIS)	Washington, DC
	Government of Washington DC	
10/8 Day2	Police Foundation	
	Council of State Governments(CSG)	
	U.S. Department of Transportation	
10/9 Day3	Tour of the State House	Maryland
	Anne Arundel County	
	Secretary of State of Maryland	
	Public high school in Washington, DC	Washington, DC

During our three-day seminar, every participant was eager to exchange their opinions with the speakers and ask questions, especially about the differences between American and Japanese local government systems. The lectures and presentations were terrific and informative, and we hope that some policies can be applied to local communities in Japan as well.

Also, we could get a chance to see many historical sites such as the White House, the Lincoln Memorial and the Washington Monument in our spare moments between visits, which was also valuable. As everyone knows, the National Cherry Blossom Festival is held near East Potomac Park every year and you can see many beautiful Japanese cherry blossoms, 'Sakura' in Japanese, and do Hanami.



The government of Washington DC



With the Secretary of State of Maryland

Washington, DC, is a great city with a fascinating history and numerous sites worth visiting. This seminar allowed us to learn how the federal government, states, counties and the municipalities interact with each other and how we should be networking more so that we can learn from each other's work. We were also so impressed with the highly organized CSG staff who took the time to prepare the visits. Thank you so much!



White House



Cherry Blossom Festival in April

3. Great American Opportunities, Great JET Alumni

Erisa Morita, CLAIR Tokyo office from Tokyo Metropolitan Government, Board of Education

People who have been working for 2 years at CLAIR Tokyo headquarters participate in an internship at one of CLAIR's overseas branches for one month. I am one of the members of the JET Programme division of CLAIR Tokyo, so I had an internship at CLAIR NY(JLGC) in October. In this internship, I was able to meet many JET alumni. A lot of JET alumni still continue to share their memories and experiences from Japan. Through this experience, I realized how large the influence of this programme is in the world and in my life.

Thanks to the JET Programme

“Hi, Erisa! Welcome to Mt. Joy!” Jodi Frey and her husband Wes welcomed me as I got off the Amtrak train at Mt. Joy. They are old friends of our family.

In 1988, the year after the JET Programme started, she came to the town of Tsuruta in Aomori Prefecture as an ALT. She did an outstanding job as an ALT, and she was so popular that 500 people attended her wedding ceremony in the town and it became an article in the local newspaper. She still has a connection with people of that town.

Now, she is teaching English to students from all over the world as an ESL teacher and supporting students who



Jodi's favourite Japanese dishes

come to the US to join language exchange programs. She loves her job and keeps in touch with her students. It is clear that the JET experience encourage her to continue teaching.

To tell you the truth, she is my parents' match-maker. My parents met in one of her English conversation classes. It's not too much to say that thanks to her, I am here. Our family has known her for 30 years. She always has a warm heart and has been welcoming to us. She is a member of our family.

Her family also really loves Japanese food. When I met her daughter for the first time, when she was 5 years old, she taught me how to eat natto. When I visited them this time, I cooked their favourite Japanese dishes like gyoza and miso soup. I was glad that they enjoyed the food. Jodi told me about life as a JET during her time on the Programme. Also we shared ideas about the education of global citizens. It was a great time for us. Her old album is full of good memories like a precious treasure box.

When we were in NYC, she told me “Thanks to the JET Programme, I am here in NY.” At the time, I felt the same way. The connections produced by the JET Programme brought us true happiness. I feel truly thankful that Jodi and our family still maintain strong connections.



With Jodi and her daughters

Apple picking with JETAANY

JETAANY is a community for former JET participants. There are 19 chapters in the US and 7 chapters in Canada. I joined the New York Chapter for apple picking in Hunter Valley.

After 2 hours on the train, we arrived at Poughkeepsie Station. We joined a bus tour around the area of Hunter Valley. There are about 30 members of JETAANY on the tour. It was good chance to meet people in JETAANY.

The apple orchard was huge. There were many kinds of apple trees like "Pink lady", "Gold rush" and "Fuji". (As you may know, Fuji are Japanese apples.) It was my first experience picking apples from trees directly. It was so much fun! The interesting thing for me was that the apples in the US are smaller than ones in Japan. Also, we don't bite apples directly in Japan when we eat them, but I tried to bite apples like people in America. It became a great memory.

I would like to thank Pamela, the president of JETAANY. I really appreciated your kindness for inviting me to join. I enjoyed my time with JETAANY.



JETAANY in Hunter Valley

With JETs

The last time that I visited the US with my family was to attend a JET participant's wedding in Columbus, Ohio. It was 17 years ago. Also I visited NY and Mt. Joy, but I couldn't imagine I would come again by the connection of the JET programme. It's true that I couldn't understand English at all at that time, but the experience encouraged me to improve my English skills. There was a JET in my junior high school who taught me English. There was also a JET in a tea ceremony class near my house. There was a JET living near my house who became like an older sister to me. I was fortunate to be surrounded by people related to the JET programme, so I could keep learning English. Even though I myself was not a JET participant, JET has been one of the most influential things in my life.

Through this internship I was reminded of the importance of keeping connections with JETs. I would like to keep in touch with people I meet through the JET programme.

Finally, I would like to thank the supervisor of JLGC, Mr. Tatsuta who gave me a lot of great opportunities in the US. In addition, I would like to thank all the members of JLGC. I was lucky to work with such great people. It has become one of my most precious memories.



Aki Matsuri with JETAANY in United Nations International School

4. JETAA US Conference 2015 in Detroit

JETAA US Conference 2015 was held in Detroit from September 24th to 27th. Delegations from all chapters in the U.S., the country representatives from the U.S. and Canada, a representative from the Toronto chapter, and many guests attended the conference. Mr. Fukukawa, the Executive Consultant from CLAIR headquarters, also took part in the conference from Tokyo this year.

JLGC explained the outlines of CLAIR Grant-in-Aid. It's a subsidy for JETAA activities that JLGC grants to all JETAA chapters in the U.S. and Canada. It's also allocated for a part of the expenses needed to hold this conference. Furthermore, Mr. Fukukawa and JLGC talked about the recent CLAIR projects such as the Satogaeri Project, video contest, and career fairs in Japan. We also informed attendees of our monthly PR magazine, "CLAIR Forum". It's almost all written in Japanese because it's mainly for local government officers in Japan. However, to our delight, some of alumni showed their interest in reading this magazine.

One of the highlights of the conference was the announcement made by Ms. Paige Cottingham-Streater. She is the Executive Director of the US-Japan Bridging Foundation and also the main person leading a group working to establish USJETAA, an organization which works with the chapters to support JETAA activities. She announced to the attendees that USJETAA was finally officially recognized as a 501(C)(3) nonprofit organization. USJETAA will take care of supporting the network of JET alumni, facilitating information sharing and collaboration between chapters, and of course, promoting cultural understanding between the U.S. and Japan. The inaugural board members have been selected and other essential issues such as membership fees and incentives for JET alumni to belong to the organization will be discussed in more detail in the near future. JLGC will closely follow these developments and would like to actively support their activities.

You can find the details of the:

Satogaeri Project at <https://www.facebook.com/JETsatogaeri>

Video Contest at https://jetvideocontest.com/system/international/pc/?contest_pk=2

Career Fair in Japan at <http://jetprogramme.org/en/careerfair/>

CLAIR Forum at <http://www.clair.or.jp/j/forum/forum/index.html> (in Japanese)



Chapter representatives at the conference



Activity reports from JETAA chapters

5. JETAANY Career Forum and JET Welcome Back Reception

CLAIR New York, the Consulate General of Japan in New York, and the JETAA New York chapter, hold the JETAANY Career Forum and Welcome Back Reception for JET returnees in New York every year. This year it was held on October 17th at the Nippon Club. 15 JET returnees, including 2 people who returned to New York last year, attended the Forum and learned basic job-search information from their “Sempai” JET alumni, such as how to write resumes and handle interviews.

In the resume session, the presenter gave some pointers for resumes, including to describe career information briefly, hopefully fitting in one page, to write high priority information at the top of the resume, and to use some keywords. And as a part of the interview session, the returnees conducted mock interviews among themselves. It was useful for them not only to practice the interview itself but also to re-think their career goals and the strengths JET participants gain. The “Sempai” JET alumni had a panel discussion which focused on their experiences, especially for job hunting. The returnees earnestly listened to their talks and asked them many questions. At the end of the Forum, the returnees had the opportunity to talk and connect with Japanese recruiters. It was a first step for the JET returnees to live again in the US, so we hope the Forum was helpful for them to find a job in the near future.



Welcome Back Reception

The Welcome Back Reception was also held after the JETAANY Career Forum at the same venue. We had approximately 100 attendees for the reception, including JET returnees, JETAA New York members, Japanese recruiters and many other people involved with the JET Program and Japanese communities. At the beginning of the reception, Ambassador Takahashi made a welcome speech for JET returnees. Then Mr. Tatsuta, Executive Director of CLAIR New York, gave a speech and told everyone that CLAIR New York, the Consulate, and the JETAA New York chapter will always support JET returnees here. Ms. Pamela Kavalam, who is the president of the JETAA New York chapter, also made a speech introducing JETAA activities to JET returnees and thanked people who were involved in the JET Program and JETAA. CLAIR New York arranged the reception foods, especially the “Sushi Bar”, for the first time, and the attendees enjoyed them very much.

At this reception, we could talk with many JET returnees and felt that they love Japan very much even after coming back to the US. We hope to have the chance to support them going forward as part of our strong relationship with JETAA.



6. Building New Communities in Tohoku

Matthew Gillam

The physical devastation in the Tohoku region of northeastern Japan was immediately clear and overwhelming, and the ongoing work to rebuild cities on higher ground is a striking civil engineering project. However, beyond the need to create new physical infrastructure there lies a concurrent need to create new social infrastructure, and this is not so readily apparent to the eye.

Communities were under stress already, prior to the triple disasters of March 11, 2011, due to declining birthrates, the outmigration of young people looking for opportunities, and aging and mortality among those who stayed behind. This combined with changing economic and social behavior as the availability of cars and attractions of large shopping and entertainment developments drew economic activity away from smaller businesses and reduced the allure of traditional community life. They have now been further challenged by dispersal into emergency housing, even more people deciding to start a new life elsewhere, and local governments overwhelmed by the disasters.

Numerous groups moved in quite quickly after the tsunami and helped fill various needs. These efforts were, by nature, relatively short-term and largely dropped in from elsewhere. What is more significant (and interesting) are the efforts that have grown in the wake of these, locally, to address long-term needs as the recovery and rebuilding process advances.

Tohoku has demonstrated a continuation of the developments seen after the 1995 Hanshin Awaji Earthquake in Kobe, prompting further changes to laws and regulations governing NPOs, the use of volunteers, and disaster response and recovery protocols, along with new arrangements for government and civil society to work together in these efforts. I would like to mention a few examples here, ranging from a neighborhood to a city.



The monument “Niji no Kakehashi” (Bridge of Rainbows) in Watanoha, in commemoration of the Endo’s children.

Team Watahoi

Team Watahoi is a nonprofit group formed by neighborhood residents in Ishinomaki who evacuated to the Watanoha Hoikusho (Watanoha Daycare Center) after their homes were destroyed by the tsunami. The group's founders, Endo Shin'ichi, and his wife, Ayako, lost their three young children in the disaster, along with their home and almost everything else. They have provided a physical place on the site of their former home for people to gather, and Team Watahoi conducts events like community festivals and mobile clinics for elderly people living in temporary housing to provide physical and mental exercises to help them stay active and healthy.



Cosmos House, home base of Big Up Ishinomaki

Big Up Ishinomaki

Big Up Ishinomaki mainly serves the Kama and Ookaido neighborhoods, a few kilometers from Watanoha. It was created by Mr. Harada Yutaka, who came to the city from Tokyo as a volunteer after the disasters and soon recognized the need for a community gathering space and better information dissemination for the residents remaining in the area. Enlisting support from a growing network, Big Up has built Cosmos House and Angel House to replace heavily damaged community halls and playgrounds, where adults and children can gather, exchange information, hold events, and have some fun.

Funakoshi

Funakoshi is a fishing village located in a small inlet in the northeastern corner of Ishinomaki City, which has received wide recognition in Japan and abroad for its tenacious and innovative efforts to keep itself together while working towards the eventual rebuilding of the village on higher ground. Led by Mr. Nakasato Koichi and a core group of residents, Funakoshi has been steadily and patiently struggling to coordinate with authorities from the city, prefecture, and central government to develop and execute a plan to level off a mountain next to the former village site and rebuild there. In an effort to raise funds to support village activities and to keep residents working and engaged, the "Funakoshi Ladies" have been creating and selling phone straps, necklaces, charms, and other items using the famous local slate decorated with hand-painted designs and braided cords, while the men have restored their fishing fleet.

Rikuzentakata City

Rikuzentakata, in Iwate Prefecture, with a little over 23,000 people immediately prior to 3.11, was largely wiped out by the tsunami and is currently undergoing a massive terracing and rebuilding effort. Basically one large construction zone with some hardscrabble but charming shops, restaurants, and services functioning in temporary quarters, it is a difficult and grueling place to live. Under its mayor, Mr. Toba Futoshi, the city has launched itself on a years-long project to not only rebuild but also rebrand itself as an open and inclusive community linked to the rest of the world. Rikuzentakata is notable not so much for its aspiration to make itself a convenient and pleasant place to live as for its explicit inclusion of groups such as the LGBT, non-Japanese, and disabled communities in its list of stakeholders. As such, the effort here is not only to restore infrastructure and property, but also to work with the community to address the realities of 21st century Japan, where cities and towns must compete for talent and make the most of everybody's contributions to support economic development through creating new businesses and new opportunities beyond necessarily limited resource exploitation and declining manufacturing.

The long term

Ultimately, what Tohoku needs is local talent - people who speak other languages and can work in an international environment, whether in the public, private, or nonprofit sector. Since 3.11, roles in the relief effort have largely been filled by volunteers from outside, Japanese and foreign, but must be taken over by locals as these volunteers move on. Beyond recovery itself, attracting people to the region for the long term by providing opportunities and fostering local talent that does not then leave for Tokyo or points beyond is the ultimate key to Tohoku's recovery and survival. Furthermore, the experience of 3.11 showed the need to integrate non-Japanese more effectively into preparedness and response capabilities and to give women a greater voice and diversity of roles in these efforts. These needs are as true for economic development as they are for disaster preparedness.

JAPAN LOCAL GOVERNMENT CENTER (CLAIR, NY)

Published by Japan Local Government Center

3 Park Avenue, 20th floor, New York, NY 10016 / Tel: 212-246-5542 / Fax:212-246-5617 / E-mail: jlgc@jlgc.org / <http://www.jlgc.org>