



JLGC NEWSLETTER

Japan Local Government Center (CLAIR, New York)
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JAPAN DAY 2013 IN NY

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A Greeting from the Executive Director

On behalf of Japan Local Government Center (JLGC), it is a great pleasure for me to greet all of you in this first newsletter of the 2013 fiscal year.

Since 1988, JLGC has been conducting many activities to develop exchanges between local governments in Japan and their counterparts in the US and Canada. We support the activities of Japanese local governments, carry out exchange events, conduct research and provide information on local governments in the US and Canada, and promote the JET Program. Through these activities, our office has been trying to develop grass-roots and youth exchanges and promote mutual understanding between Japan and North America.

Japanese communities have about 440 sister cities in the US and about 70 in Canada. After the prolonged recession, Japanese economic power has recently started growing again not only in urban areas but also in more rural areas. This spring, delegations from Tokyo, Kanagawa, and Osaka Prefectures came to the US. In addition, some other delegations are going to come here in the near future. I think this means that many Japanese local governments attach importance to their

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relationships with the US and Canada, and I hope that grass-roots exchange and mutual understanding may become even deeper in the future.

Recently, various aspects of Japanese culture, commonly called “Cool Japan”, including anime, manga, J-pop (music), foods, and traditional culture, are very popular around the world. And in Japan we have not only sophisticated traditional handicrafts and food, but also many kinds of beautiful scenery and finely crafted products. In addition, Japanese culture values mutual consideration and support, as was seen most recently

in the wake of the 3.11 earthquake and tsunami, along with our great spirit of hospitality. Japan is made up of many different prefectures, from Hokkaido in the north, wide open and rich in nature, to Okinawa in the south, surrounded by beautiful ocean. I hope people from all around the world will come and visit these beautiful and wonderful areas of Japan and develop lasting relationships with them. I am sure you will love wherever you go.

One of our main activities is supporting the JET Program and the JET alumni. As you probably know, the JET Program makes it possible for Japanese local governments to invite young people from around the world to live in Japan, teach English in public schools, and interact with their communities. About sixty thousand people have participated in this program up until now, and about half of them were from the US and Canada. After JET, their experiences in Japan stay with them and contribute to enhancing their careers and their personal lives. These alumni then contribute to strengthening relations between Japan and their home countries. I wish continued success and prosperity for all the JET alumni.

Now there is a new wave in Japan, which seeks more active exchange with the world, and JLGC will try to contribute to this by strengthening relations at the local level. I would like to say thank you to all of our readers and to the various government officials in the US and Canada as well as the JET alumni for all the help and support you have given us. I know that your cooperation will make the relationship between Japan and the U.S. and Canada even more wonderful.

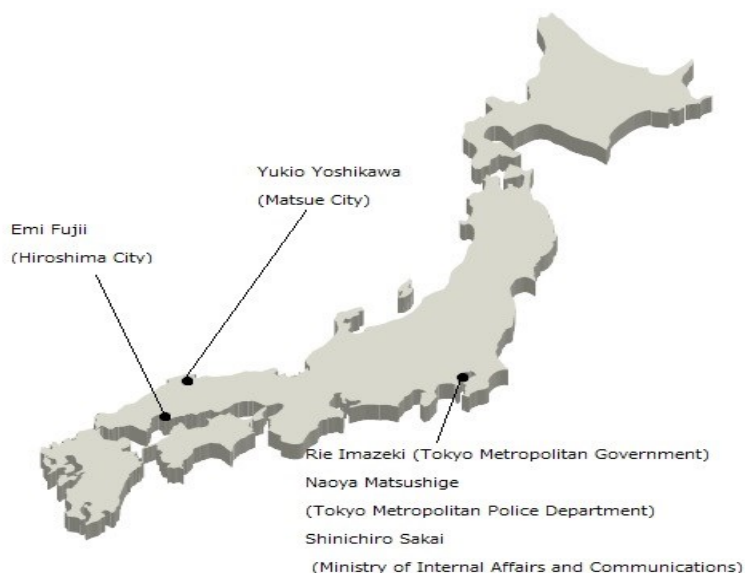
Takaaki Ogata

Executive Director

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Please visit our website at www.jlgc.org for more information

Introduction of New JLGC Staff



Rie Imazeki, Director, Representative of Tokyo Metropolitan Government

Hello! My name is Rie Imazeki and I have been assigned as the new director at JLGC. Prior to my appointment I served as an official at Tokyo Metropolitan Government. Half of my career in Tokyo Metropolitan Government was in charge of international affairs. I was in charge of the JET Program in Tokyo in 1995. If someone was a JET member in Tokyo, please contact me!

As you know, New York is one of the biggest cities in the world, and Tokyo is the biggest city in Japan. Further more, both cities have many cultural events, delicious foods and historic sites. So, Tokyo is similar to New York.

There are a lot of subways in Tokyo just as in New York. However, some points are different. Our Tokyo subways have timetables and they run on time every day. When I came to New York, I couldn't find a timetable. New York subways are delayed sometimes. People, however, stay calm. I was surprised by that! If the subway is delayed by 3 minutes in Tokyo, people get angry, especially in the morning. Meanwhile, unlike New York, we can use our cellular phones at all subway stations and in the subway; talking, sending e-mail, browsing but not Wi-Fi. I think New York is working on that! I love New York because many parts of Tokyo are similar to New York. If you are a New York lover, please come to Tokyo and experience the similarities and differences from New York.



Yukio Yoshikawa, Assistant Director, Representative of Matsue City

Hello, my name is Yukio Yoshikawa from Matsue City, Japan. Matsue, the capital city of Shimane Prefecture which is in Western Japan, is known as the City of Water because of its scenic location between Lake Shinji and Lake Nakaumi and the Sea of Japan. Also, many beautiful canals and historic hot springs are found throughout the city. Close to the north of the city center there are many tourist attractions, such as the original Matsue Castle and writer Lafcadio Hearn's residence.



At JLGC, I am mainly in charge of research about the local government system in North America and the fellowship exchange program in which CLAIR invites state and local government senior officials to Japan from the US and Canada to exchange information and develop mutual understanding.

I am going to stay in New York for 2 years. Though I know that it's not enough time to understand the administration system of North America, I would like to learn and experience as much as possible.

Emi Fujii, Assistant Director, Representative of Hiroshima City

Hello, my name is Emi Fujii from Hiroshima City in Japan. Recently, I came to New York to work at JLGC. I'm mainly in charge of the JET Program at JLGC. Several years ago I was in charge of it in Hiroshima City, so I'm very surprised and happy to work for JET again. It will be a good and valuable opportunity for me to work here for two years, so I would like to do my best.



When you hear the word "Hiroshima", you may remember the Atomic Bomb Dome at first. Of course it's very famous, but it's not the only thing. Hiroshima is a very beautiful city surrounded by the sea (the Seto Inland Sea) and the mountains (the Chugoku Mountains). Six beautiful rivers flow in the central area of Hiroshima from the mountains to the sea, so Hiroshima is known as "The City of Water". There are cruise boats on the rivers and nice open-cafes alongside them. Not only many tourists but also the locals (like me) enjoy a very relaxing time in those places. Riding the cruise boat, you can visit Miyajima Island. The Miyajima Itsukushima Shrine is one of the beauties of Japan. In addition, there are many wonderful places to see and enjoy in Hiroshima, so please come and try them!

**Naoya Matsushige, Assistant Director,
Representative of Tokyo Metropolitan Police Department**

Hello, my name is Naoya Matsushige. I'm a police officer with the Tokyo Metropolitan Police Department (TMPD). I was just seconded to JLGC in April this year. I will stay in the United States with my family for 2 years.

As you may know, TMPD is the largest police agency in Japan. TMPD has about 44,000 police officers, 102 police stations, and 826 "kobans". Koban means police Box, which is like a small police station. I have been a police officer for 15 years, now. My rank is Chief Inspector, which is like Captain in North America.

On this occasion, let me introduce you to TMPD's mascot "PEOPO". "PEOPO" combines the first syllables of "people" and "police". He was born from all the TMPD police officers' fervent hope for the happiness and well-being of the public they serve. Embodying cute and appealing features of animals, "PEOPO" has an antenna on his head to grasp swiftly any social changes, and big eyes and ears to observe every nook and corner of the society and to listen to what the public has to say. I'm trying to work for the people of Tokyo with the spirit of "PEOPO" every day.



**Shinichiro Sakai, Assistant Director,
Representative of the Ministry of Internal Affairs and Communications**

Hello, my name is Shinichiro Sakai and I'm from the Ministry of Internal Affairs and Communications (MIC). MIC manages fundamental systems in Japan, like administrative management of the national government, administration and finance systems of local governments, fire and disaster management, and information and telecommunications.

I was in charge of support for municipal enterprises when I was in MIC and I had been backing up privatizations of public sector entities. At JLGC, I'm in charge of the sister city program, so I want to assist in building connections between Japan's communities and North America's.

I came to New York this April and this is the first time for me to live overseas. I think this is a great opportunity. While I'm in New York, I want to learn much about New York and I hope I can work as a bridge between Japan and North America.



Japan Day 2013 In Central Park

Many know the stone and concrete bridges that knit New York together. Sometimes overlooked are the social bonds of culture-sharing and volunteerism that connect New Yorkers with each other and the rest of the world. Those bonds made the Seventh Annual Japan Day a success, treating 45,000 Central Park visitors to a Japanese summer festival.

Japan Day 2013 was celebrated on May 12 in Central Park. Events started at 8:00 a.m. with 5,000 entrants tackling the four-mile Japan Run. As usual, people lined up early and often at the food tents, waiting for gyoza, ramen, or okonomiyaki. Cold bottles of tea were plentiful, a welcome refreshment as the day grew warmer.

The breadth of activities and performances reflected the variety of subcultures in modern-day Japan. At the activity tents, visitors could try Japanese calligraphy and origami crafts, paint their faces like kabuki actors, or dress in vivid yukata. Language tent volunteers made vocabulary lessons fun, challenging passersby to a karuta game. Cultural icon Hello Kitty mingled with the crowd, posing for photos.

Meanwhile, CNN correspondent Sandra Endo hosted an eclectic lineup of musical, artistic, and athletic performances at the Naumberg Bandshell. “Japan day 2013 is in full swing in Central Park! Come join us! “nipponpride,” she tweeted. Traditional acts led the line-up: Yosakoi and Awa Odori folk dances, taiko, calligraphy, and karate demonstrations. Contemporary acts followed, such as J-pop performances, street dance, and Project Runway contestant Kooan’s fashion show. There was something new, and something nostalgic, for almost everyone.

Judging by the number of water balloons in the crowd, the yo-yo fishing tent was a popular activity. The challenge was deceptively simple: to pluck a balloon out of water before the paper “fishing line” got damp and broke. Children, teens, and parents all played, some repeatedly. “This is the most fun he’s had all day,” one father remarked to me, watching his young son “catch” a red balloon.

The yo-yo fishing tent hosted 3,500 visitors, a feat made possible by volunteer spirit and the collaboration of the JET Alumni Association of New York, Japan Society, and the Japan Local Government Center. About 45 members and their recruited friends—and parents!—helped twist paper fishing line, make piles of water balloons, advertise the event, and work in the tents. Some of us ended the day with wet clothes and sore fingers. But each balloon spotted in the crowd was evidence that we helped to make Japan a little more vibrant in the eyes of New Yorkers.



Volunteers from JETAANY, JLGC, and Japan Society helped teach visitors the game of yo-yo fishing.



Some of the JETAANY, JLGC and Japan Society volunteers pose with their “catch” at the yo-yo fishing activity tent.



Kathryn Edwards

JETAA NY (Kochi Ken, 2001-2004)

The 2013 JETAA Canada National Conference in Montréal

From May 24 to May 26, the 2013 JETAA Canada National Conference, hosted in Montréal, Québec by JETAA Québec / Atlantique, brought together delegates from six JETAA chapters across the country. The conference was sponsored by CLAIR and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, with support from the Consulate-General of Japan at Montréal, who hosted a cocktail reception on that Friday evening to launch the conference.

Highlights from the Saturday workshops include a keynote speech given by Mr. Philippe Arseneau, Outgoing Board President for the Québec-Japan Business Forum. Through his personal experiences, Mr. Arseneau introduced a four-step strategy for JET Programme returnees to use their experience as an ALT or a CIR in a professional career other than teaching. Other things discussed on that day include cultural and professional activities organized by different JETAA chapters as well as talks to consolidate website hosting to reduce costs and technical difficulties. On Saturday evening, a dinner reception hosted by CLAIR took everyone to the local restaurant Chez Ma Grosse Truie Chérie (literally “My Dear Fat Sow”) to discover generous French-style bistronomie with a Québécois twist.

On Sunday, a presentation from JETAA BC introduced a mentorship program system powered by Google technology such as Google Maps and Google Drive. The collaboration between JETAA and the local consulate made it possible to build a database linking future JET Programme participants and alumni who had worked in near-by areas, to facilitate the sharing of relevant, local information. Other workshops on that day allowed delegates from various chapters to share ideas for activities geared for returnees, such as career workshops, as well as discuss the challenges faced by smaller, isolated chapters for funding activities and getting a variety of alumni involved.



Keynote Speaker Mr. Philippe Arseneau



Chapter Presentation



Consul-General's Reception

We would like to thank our sponsors for their continued support for JETAA Canada activities as well as for feedback and advice during the conference. We were also glad to welcome an observer from the Embassy of Japan in Canada and hope to strengthen our communications with the Embassy in the future. This meeting will contribute greatly to the consolidation of online JETAA initiatives, such as mentorship programs and websites, but it will also help us share ideas for pre and post-departure activities for new JET participants.

JETAA Québec/Atlantique

New JLGC Staff visit Novi, Michigan



Mr. Bob Gatt, Mayor of Novi, with JLGC staff

Yukio's Comments

Visiting Novi was a great experience for me. One aspect I could perceive about the United States is why it is an automobile society. Also, I had an opportunity to see how a local government manages its community and city by visiting several city facilities. I really appreciated the hospitality of Novi city officials and I would like to share the information and knowledge I got in Novi with my colleagues back in Japan. Thank you very much.

Shinichiro's Comments

I stayed in Novi for a brief time and I felt what a nice city it is. People in Novi are very kind and Novi has a nice atmosphere, so I enjoyed it there very much. Above all, it was great opportunity to see the senior center. I suppose it will be difficult to manage such facility in Japan. I will go back to Japan someday, but I want to visit Novi again while I'm in New York.

JLGC's new assistant directors and our Executive Director, Mr. Takaaki Ogata, visited the City of Novi, Michigan, on May 20-23, 2013.

Novi is located in southeastern Michigan and has a population of about 55,000. There are many numbers of Japanese companies doing business in Novi, resulting in a strong relationship with Japan.

Every year, Novi is kind enough to host JLGC's new staff to help us learn about American local government.

Emi's Comments

The experience in Novi was very exciting and valuable for me. I'm very glad to know how the local governmental staff in the United State works for their residents because I have worked in the city hall in Japan. I would like to say thank you to all the staff in Novi, and I hope to visit and meet all the wonderful people again!

Naoya's Comments

I was pleased to have had the opportunity to ride in the patrol car of the Novi Police Department. The patrol car was wonderful, and there were many useful features that Japanese patrol cars don't have yet. I was also impressed with the safety of Novi. I believe that the safety is the result of the Novi Police's efforts day and night.

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