



# JLGC NEWSLETTER

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JETAA USA NATIONAL CONFERENCE

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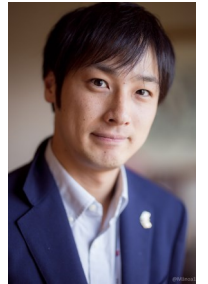
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## 1. Introduction of New JLGC Staff

**Kotaro Kashiwai, Assistant Director, Representative of Matsue City, Shimane Prefecture**



Hello, my name is Kotaro Kashiwai. I'm from Matsue City, Shimane Prefecture. I've been working for Japan Local Government Center since this April. Here I'd like to introduce Matsue City, which is not a well-known city, even among Japanese people. Matsue City is the capital of Shimane Prefecture, in Southwest Japan.



A former feudal stronghold, Matsue City, known as the "City of Water", is a true castle town crossed with many canals and boasts one of the twelve remaining original castles in Japan. Matsue City also prides itself on being famous for its beautiful sunsets over Lake Shinji.



As an International City of Culture and Tourism, Matsue City and its surrounding areas are rich in cultural assets and historical sites, and many of Japan's most ancient legends are set in the area.

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**【Sightseeing】****Matsue Castle and Surroundings**

Completed in 1611, Matsue Castle was built over a five-year period by Horio Yoshiharu, feudal lord and founder of Matsue. It was designated as a national treasure in 2015.



The elegance of the castle's swooping roofs and their ornamentation is often compared to the wings of a plover bird, which has led to the castle's nickname, Plover Castle. There is a museum inside, and the top floor offers a panoramic view of the castle grounds and the city.

North of Matsue Castle, there is a historical site call "Shiomi Nawate". Shiomi Nawate is a 500m long street running along the castle moat that is lined with traditional Japanese houses on one side and majestic pine trees on the other. It has been designated as a traditional aesthetic zone. A finely preserved samurai residence (buke yashiki), open to public viewing, is located at the half-way point of this street. There, you can see what life was like for a middle-class samurai in the Edo period.



You can also enjoy the Horikawa Sightseeing Boat tour, which circles the castle's historical inner and outer moats, passing points of interest which you may not see otherwise. The boat also passes under particularly low-built bridges from time to time, meaning the passengers need to duck down as the boat passes underneath the bridges. Kotatsu heaters are placed in the boat during winter and passengers can literally experience the "warmth" of Japanese tradition.

**Daikonshima Island and Yuushien Garden**

The flat island of Daikonshima is one of the nation's most celebrated producers of Japanese peonies and ginseng. There is Yuushien Garden on Daikonshima Island, which is famous as a beautiful traditional Japanese garden. It is designed as a walk-through garden with ponds, streams and small waterfalls. Its main attraction, the peony flower, blooms in winter and spring, and the garden is resplendent year round with a variety of seasonal blooms, such as irises and hydrangeas in summer, as well as sasanqua camellias and "momiji" foliage in autumn. Peonies are also kept in a hothouse, where their blossoms can be viewed all year round.



### **Tamatsukuri Hot Spring**

Tamatsukuri hot spring is one of the oldest hot springs in Japan. This hot spring was first mentioned in the “Chronicles of Izumo Province” in 733, where it is said that the gods themselves enjoyed bathing here. It is now a popular destination with those looking for a more tranquil Japan, and has excellent dermatological properties, said to improve the elasticity of bathers’ skin.



### **【Food】**

#### **Wagashi (Japanese Confectionaries) and Matcha Green Tea**

In the 18th century, a Lord of Matsue Castle deeply loved the tea ceremony. Under his influence, drinking matcha green tea served with wagashi became a part of daily life for many locals. You can find many wagashi shops all around town. In the Matsue History Museum, you can watch Mr. Tsugio Itami, one of the most distinguished wagashi makers in Japan, perform his art in front of you. You can also learn how to make your own wagashi at the Karakoro Art Studio.



#### **Izumo Soba (Buckwheat Noodles)**

Handmade Izumo soba has a darker grey-black color, firmer texture, and more aroma than typical soba in Japan. We normally serve it in round dishes known as ‘warigo’, with seaweed, spring onion, grated daikon with chili pepper, and a thick soy sauce based sauce. I’m sure you will like the firmer texture, aroma and taste, of course.



I don’t have enough space here to introduce all of the many beautiful places, fresh and delicious foods, and other attractions in Matsue City. You would also have the chance to visit other cities near Matsue City, as well as famous places like the Izumo Taisha shrine, which is one of the biggest and most famous shrines in Japan, and “the Adachi Museum of Art” which was chosen as “the most beautiful Japanese garden” by the Journal of Japanese Gardening, also listed as a three-star site in the Michelin Green Guide Japan.

For more information about Matsue City, please check out our official website:

Visit Matsue: <https://www.visit-matsue.com/>



## Sayaka Mochizuki, Assistant Director, Representative of Yamanashi Prefecture

### 【Great to meet you!】

My name is Sayaka Mochizuki. I've been working for Japan Local Government Center (CLAIR, New York) since this April. I originally come from Yamanashi Prefecture. Maybe most of you don't know our prefecture, so please let me introduce my home, Yamanashi!



### 【Belly button of Japan】

Yamanashi is situated in central Japan and located next to Tokyo. So you can get to the central city of Yamanashi in about 1 hour 30 minutes by train.

The climate of Yamanashi includes large temperature swings between summer and winter. Therefore, the prefecture undergoes distinctively visible changes among the four seasons.



### 【Sightseeing】

Yamanashi is surrounded by high mountains and almost 80% covered by forests. It is blessed with natural beauty like Mt. Fuji, the Five Fuji Lakes, and the Shosen-kyo and Nishizawa Valleys. We can enjoy colorful vistas in each season.



### 【Activities】

#### The Samurai Festival: SHINGEN-KO FESTIVAL

The people of Yamanashi celebrate the famous warlord of the Sengoku era, Takeda Shingen, every spring. The main highlight is the parade in which more than 1,000 people dress in traditional Samurai costumes and they re-enact



the deployment of a battalion of samurai. And if you want, you can participate in the parade as a Samurai after making a reservation and paying the participation fee.

### Thrilling amusement park: Fuji-Q Highland



Fuji-Q Highland is located at the foot of Mt. Fuji. Along with appreciating Mt. Fuji, you can enjoy various thrilling world-class rides such as “DODONPA”, with a maximum speed of 172km per hour. However, there are also attractions for families. For example, in “THOMAS LAND”, kids can spend time playing in fun Thomas-themed attractions like a train ride and mini roller coaster that are safe and great for young children.

### **【Foods】**

#### One food nurtured from our renowned waters: Fruits

Thanks to the blessings of being surrounded by mountains, Yamanashi has clean and delicious water. These renowned waters nurture juicy fruits year-round. You can go to Yamanashi farms and pick fruit with your own hands and eat it.



#### Healthy miso vegetable stew: Hoto

Hoto is a local specialty of Yamanashi. It features an abundance of seasonal vegetables such as pumpkin, mushrooms, and potatoes stewed in a miso broth together with long, wide, flat noodles. Hoto that has been left to sit overnight and is eaten the next day is especially delicious. It is a well-balanced food.



#### This confection looks like a drop of water: Mizu Shingen Mochi

Mizu Shingen Mochi is a Japanese-style confection served with soy powder and brown sugar syrup. You can get it only at a shop, since it can only hold its form for up to 30 minutes. Also, it is sold for a limited time from June to September. Mizu Shingen Mochi looks like a cross between jelly and edible water!



For more information about Yamanashi Prefecture, please look at our official site: <http://www.yamanashi-kankou.jp/english/index.html>

I'm really happy if you have become interested in Yamanashi. Thank you for reading!



## ***2. Japanese Governors Attended the NGA Summer Meeting***

***Kaori Kurauchi, Assistant Director, Representative of the Ministry of Internal Affairs and Communications***

Japanese governors talked with their U.S. partners at the National Governors Association (NGA) Summer Meeting in Providence, Rhode Island, which was held from July 13rd to 15th.

Two Japanese governors, Gov. Taizo Mikazuki (Shiga Prefecture) and Gov. Shinji Hirai (Tottori Prefecture), attended the meeting as representatives of the Japan National Governors Association. On the first day of the meeting, they conferred with NGA Chair Gov. Terry McAuliffe (Virginia), Vice Chair Gov. Brian Sandoval (Nevada), Gov. Steve Bullock (Montana), and Gov. Larry Hogan (Maryland).

Both U.S. and Japanese governors focused on international trade and investment. “We governors are taking the lead in international trade,” Gov. McAuliffe said. He added there was an eagerness to work with each other. Gov. Mikazuki agreed and highlighted the importance of working together on issues involving international trade and investment promotion.

In their conversation, Gov. Hirai suggested that the two countries resume the U.S.-Japan Governors’ Meeting after a 22-year hiatus. The U.S. governors showed considerable interest and they agreed to continue efforts to enhance the relationship between the U.S. and Japan.

We, JLGC, supported these two governors’ visit, and we continue to encourage efforts to strengthen the friendship between the U.S. and Japanese governors.



## ***3. USJETAA Celebrates 30 Years of JET at the JET30 Reunion***

***Laurel S. Lukaszewski, Executive Director, USJETAA, ALT, Kagoshima-ken 1990-1992***

This summer, the United States Japan Exchange and Teaching Programme Alumni Association (USJETAA) was proud to host the JET30 Reunion celebrating the 30th Anniversary of the JET Programme. The event was held at the historic Omni Shoreham Hotel in Washington, DC, on August 4-6, 2017. Over 280 alumni of the JET Program, who served on every year of the program since 1987, in 46 of the 47 Japanese prefectures, gathered from across the United States, Canada, Japan, Jamaica and Brazil. The weekend Reunion brought back fond memories of their time in Japan, and enabled alumni to reconnect with friends and colleagues that they had not seen in years.





As attendees arrived, they had the opportunity to enjoy off-site excursions to the Library of Congress to view the Asia Collection and to Discovery Communications for a behind the scenes tour of the Discovery Channel in Silver Spring, MD. Others enjoyed reliving traditional Japan in Natsukashii Hall, participating in the tea ceremony, observing traditional Japanese woodworking, playing go, and watching an engaging kendo demonstration. Organizations like the Sasakawa Peace Foundation USA, The Mike Mansfield Fellowship, iiiiCareers, InsideJapan Tours and JNTO all provided information about their programs and services, encouraging individuals to maintain and enhance their connections to Japan.



Panels at Natsukashii Hall

The formal program started on Friday afternoon, highlighted by welcome remarks by Paige Cottingham-Streater, Chair, USJETAA, Masahiro Fukukawa, Executive Consultant, CLAIR, and Atsuyuki Oike, Deputy Chief of Mission, Embassy of Japan. They were followed by Tom Vick, curator of film at the Smithsonian Freer/Sackler Galleries whose talk, “Natsukashii Japan Through Film” followed the prolific and influential career of film director Seijun Suzuki.

Four JET alumni contributed to the panel “Strengthening U.S.-Japan Relations: 1987-2017.” Moderated by Jim Gannon, Executive Director, JCIE (ALT 1992-1994) with panelists Paige Cottingham-Streater, Executive Director, Japan-U.S. Friendship Commission (ALT 1988-1989), Jim Schoff, Senior Fellow, Carnegie Endowment for International Peace (ALT 1988-1989), and David Boling, Deputy Assistant, Office of the U.S. Trade Representative (ALT 1988-1989). The panel shared not only the changes in the U.S.-Japan relationship over the past 30 years, but personal stories about their time on JET and how it influenced them as professionals.



The panel “Strengthening U.S.-Japan Relations: 1987-2017.”

The panel was followed by guest speaker, and JET alumna, Dr. Emily Metzgar (ALT 1993-1995), Associate Professor of Public Diplomacy at Indiana University, whose recently published book, The JET Program and the U.S.-Japan Relationship: Goodwill Goldmine, highlights the role JET alumni have played strengthening the U.S.-Japan ties on all levels, especially in the arena of public diplomacy.



Dr. Emily Metzgar

That evening, attendees were welcomed to the exquisite Japanese Ambassador’s Residence by Deputy Chief of Mission, Atsuyuki Oike. Alumni enjoyed touring the tea room, networking with friends old and new, and getting a taste of authentic Japanese cuisine including sushi, ramen, tempura and other favorites.



Reception at Japanese Ambassador’s Residence



Throughout Saturday, the JET30 Reunion featured panels and discussions highlighting the interesting and successful paths many alumni have taken since returning from JET. Len Schoppa, Professor of Politics at the University of Virginia (Mombusho English Fellow, 1984-1985) shared what it was like to be an ALT in the early days of teaching English in Japan. Alumni Keith Krulak, former International Economist at the U.S. Departments of Treasury and State (ALT 1993-1995) moderated a panel of alumni, “Investing in Change,” with speakers Tracy Washington, Principal Investment Officer, International Finance Corporation of The World Bank (ALT 1991-1992), Shawn Escoferry, Program Director of Strong Local Economies, Surdna Foundation (ALT 1998-1999), and Gisela Camba, J.D. Candidate, GWU National Law Center (ALT 2010-2012). Over lunch, where alumni were seated by prefecture, Mark Frey, JETAA USA Country Representative (ALT 2002-2006), moderated a discussion, “Enriching Diverse Communities” with Bill Clifford, President & CEO of World Affairs Councils of America (ALT 1987-1989) and Amy Boots, Executive Director, Japan-America Society of Pennsylvania (ALT 2008-2010), whose organizations strive to create international and grassroots connections among Americans, Japanese and others in local communities.



The panel “Investing in Change”

Between the morning panels, the Japan-America Society of Washington, D.C. hosted a mini Japan Bowl Competition, challenging JET alumni to remember their Japanese language and culture knowledge. Based on the annual national competition for high school students, the Japan Bowl proved to be a fun way for alumni, who were seated by years on JET, to try and recall some very obscure vocabulary and facts about life in Japan! Even those whose memory of the language wasn't quite as sharp as it once was enjoyed the challenge.



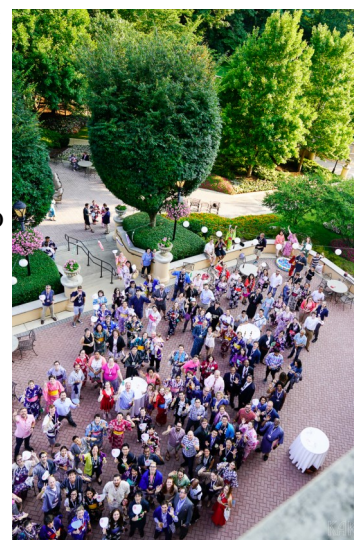
Mini Japan Bowl Competition

In the afternoon, attendees had a choice of breakout sessions to hear from alumni speaking on a variety of topics: “JET: The Next 30 Years” was facilitated by Stephanie Sanders, M.A. Candidate, GWU (ALT 2010-2013) with discussants Masahiro Fukukawa, Executive Consultant, CLAIR, Seana Magee, Reporter, Kyodo News (ALT 1988-1990), and Greg Aurit, Educational and Exchanges Officer, U.S. Embassy Tokyo (ALT 2002-2005). “Making the Network Work” was moderated by Monica Yuki, JETAA USA Country Rep (ALT 2002-2004) with Laurel Lukaszewski, Executive Director, USJETAA (ALT 1990-1992), Xander Peterson, Chair, JETAA International (ALT 2009-2012), Steven Horowitz, Founder & Editor, JETwit (ALT 1992-1994), and Andrew Ou, Acting Director of the Office of Taiwan Coordination, U.S. Department of State (CIR 1995-1997). And, “JETs Educating the Next Generation” was facilitated by Len Schoppa with discussants Roderick Jemison, Head of School, International School of Asia (ISAK) (ALT 1992-1994), Mya Fisher, Director of Education, U.S.-Japan Council (ALT 2000-2002), and Shanti Shoji, Vice President & Co-Founder, Kizuna Across Cultures (KAC) (ALT 2002-2004).



The final session of the day began with an energetic demonstration of martial arts by Aikido of Arlington. This was followed by an engaging and wonderfully entertaining talk with author and translator Zack Davisson (ALT 2001-2006) and Michael Richey, Editor of Tofugu (ALT 2008-2010).

After a full day, alumni were invited to celebrate at the Natsu Matsuri, starting with a networking reception featuring summertime games, lanterns, and many colorful yukata and jimbei worn by attendees on the outdoor terrace. This was followed by a buffet dinner and exciting raffle drawing with prizes generously donated by organizations and individuals, including ANA, with two roundtrip tickets from the U.S. to Tokyo, and selections of Japan-related books from Chin Music Press and Stonebridge Press. After dinner, attendees moved back outside to the lower terrace to hear alumni share stories of “Fame & Fortune” at the “Moth(ra) Storytelling Hour” with JET alum Steven Horowitz acting as emcee. It was a delightfully entertaining end to a long and fun day.



As the event came to a close on Sunday, alumni had a final chance to meet up informally with excursions around DC, including an Urban Hike on the National Mall and a whiskey tasting at DC Distilling in the U Street Corridor.

Whether reconnecting with Japanese culture in the Natsukashii Hall by participating in the tea ceremony, trying out traditional Japanese woodworking tools, or having a chance to wear a yukata that has been in storage since leaving Japan at the Natsu Matsuri, alumni throughout the weekend were delighted to celebrate 30 years of memories and a passion for a country they once called home. As alumni departed the weekend, the Planning Committee heard over and over how meaningful the weekend had been. USJETAA is particularly grateful to the JET30 Reunion Planning Committee members who spent the past year orchestrating the event, and to all of the alumni who volunteered throughout the weekend—otsukaresama deshita!

As a young 501(c)(3) organization, USJETAA's JET30 Reunion would not have been possible without the strong support of funders and donors. USJETAA is grateful to the Japan Foundation Center for Global Partnership, CLAIR, Sachiko Kuno Foundation, U.S.-Japan Foundation, JCAW Foundation, ANA, SAN-J, Cheryl Hou, Takeo Yuki Family Foundation, and the Young-Champaloux Families. USJETAA also thanks all of the alumni and friends of JET who joined us to celebrate 30 years of the JET Program. For more information about USJETAA and our ongoing activities, please visit us at [www.usjetaa.org](http://www.usjetaa.org).

