

MARCH, 2017: BREEZE ISSUE #113

A FREE MONTHLY E-NEWSLETTER FOR FRIENDS OF JAPAN & TEACHERS OF JAPANESE

JAPANESE LANGUAGE EDUCATION UPDATE 40: CLTA ADVOCACY WORKSHOP REPORT

by Amanda Rollins, Japanese Language Program Coordinator

17 Japanese teachers from all over California came together last month to talk about Japanese language program [advocacy](#) at a workshop titled, “Your Principal/Dean Will Adore You and Your Japanese Program.” The workshop was held during the California Language Teachers’ Association ([CLTA](#)) Annual Conference 2017 in Monterey, CA. Some of the workshop participants had never attended CLTA’s conference before, and their registration was financially supported through a JFLA [Project Grant](#) administered by the California Association of Japanese Language Teachers ([CAJLT](#)).



The two workshop presenters, Amanda Rollins (JFLA) and Nick Sturtevant (Silver Creek High School), asked the participants to list the activities they are currently doing to get their principal or dean to love their program. Here are just some of the answers:

School-wide Little Tokyo trip with History class
My high school students teach about Japan in elementary schools
Japanese Game Show
Karaoke Festival
Invite parents as a guest

Giving chocolate to admin, secretaries, etc on Valentine’s Day

“J-ART”: Japanese students display Japan-related art at a community exhibition

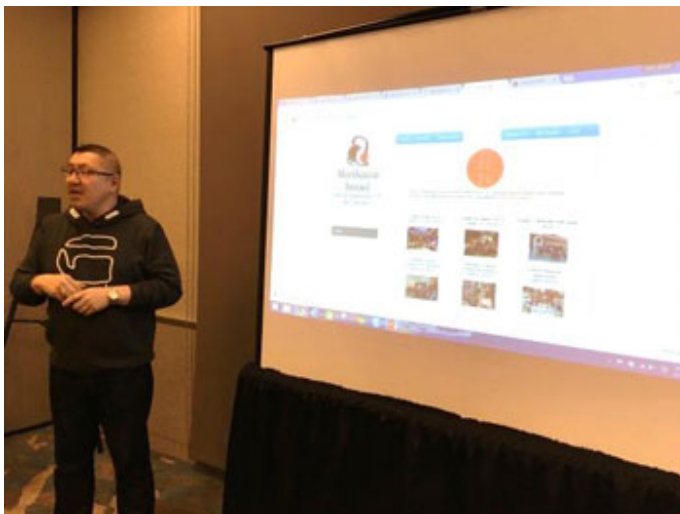
These are all excellent ways to spread awareness about a Japanese language program! For more examples of advocacy, visit [Real Advocacy Stories](#).

ACTFL Teacher of the Year (2012) Yo Azama stopped by the workshop as a guest speaker to talk about successful examples of his program advocacy. He urged the participants to invite their principal or dean to every event in order to give them a chance to proudly show off their school's Japanese program via social media. He also addressed participants' concerns about burning out, and how starting a parent committee or delegating tasks to students can be a way to take pressure off the teacher.



CLTA Outstanding Teacher of the Year (2016) Tomokazu Morikawa also dropped by to discuss how his program advocacy uses word-of-mouth as a powerful attraction. If the students are having fun and learning important life lessons in class, Morikawa said, they will tell their younger siblings and friends. He encouraged the participants to continue attend teacher conferences and grow as professionals.

For advocacy to be effective, it needs to have a clear objective and audience. Every participant wrote an [Action Plan](#) to visualize a 5-year plan and break it down into smaller goals.



For example, one participant wanted to address an interesting challenge at her school: heritage Japanese students are being incorrectly placed into lower-level Japanese classes because students, parents, and school counselors do not fully understand the disadvantages of such placement. She decided to create a “parent advocacy committee” to help her write an informative brochure which will spread awareness about the consequences of trying to get an “easy A.”

Another participant is facing a different challenge: she has to travel between two schools every day, so she doesn't have many opportunities to spend much time planning and implementing student recruitment activities. She shared her idea of creating a recruitment video for incoming new students, and the presenters were happy to show her [two examples](#) available at [Real Advocacy Stories](#). Her action plan included asking a tech-savvy student to create a similar video for extra credit

By being excellent Japanese teachers and by telling the world about it, we can ensure rich and popular programs at our schools. Let's keep up the good work, teachers!

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Breeze #121



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Annual Report

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