

## FALL, 2008: BREEZE ISSUE #36

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

# JAPANESE-LANGUAGE EDUCATION LEADERSHIP WORKSHOP

*Translated By: Thomas Lin*



A two day Japanese-language education leadership workshop took place from June 27 to 28 at the Japanese Embassy's Japan Information and Culture Center in Washington D.C.

The participants in the workshop were six up and coming individuals who are active members in Japanese-language Teacher's Associations in the United States . They came from nearby states such as Virginia to as far away as Hawaii and represented a very diverse group. The workshop featured lectures followed by discussions among the participants based on the current conditions (of Japanese-language education) around the country and focused on topics concerning Advocacy and Networking, which is an oft-forgotten aspect of teaching Japanese in the United States .

Maki Watanabe Isoyama, the Academic Specialist from the Japan Foundation, Los Angeles, was the main lecturer and focused her presentation on the following five topics: "the importance of Japanese-language education and how/to whom one should make it appealing," "advocacy activities and the importance of networking," "types of networks for Japanese-language education and how to make connections," "ways to request outside support/aid for Teacher's Association activities," and "important aspects to managing a Teacher's Association. "Guest speakers were also invited including Ms. Ashley Lenker Program Manager for the Joint National Committee for Languages & the National Council for Languages and International Studies (JNCL-NCLIS), which politically expedites aid for foreign language education and international education resource and innovation, Education Councilor Satoshi Nara from the Embassy of Japan in United States, Ms. Juliet Mason from the American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages (ACTFL) and Dr. Yasu-Hiko Tohsaku from the University of California, San Diego, who is also the president elect of the

The Association of Teachers of Japanese (ATJ). Each presenter focused on their area of expertise including the following: policies regarding foreign language education in the United States (Ms. Lenker), initiatives for Japanese language education from the Japanese Government (Mr. Nara), introduction of activities by ACTFL (Ms. Mason), and challenges of Japanese Language Education in the United States (Dr. Tohsaku).

# THE JAPAN FOUNDATION GROUP-TOUR PROGRAM FOR EDUCATORS (U.S. GROUP) 2008

*By: Thomas Lin*



In July of 2008, 25 educators were invited to participate in a two week tour of Japan in an effort to expand and improve Japanese language education on the level of primary and secondary education in the U.S. We invited administrators from elementary and secondary schools, along with those who are involved in local administration in primary and secondary education from the United States to exchange their opinions with Japanese teachers and local administrators by observing Japanese education, culture, and society.

This program is supported by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology, Shimoda City , The board of Education of Shimoda city, schools, enterprises, academic experts and many others.

The tour started in Los Angeles , where the participants attended a one day orientation to go through the basics of Japanese etiquette and a crash course in basic Japanese. They also listened to presentations from select leaders of local Japanese governmental organizations here in Southern California to better prepare them before they leave on their trip. Most of the participants had very little to no knowledge of Japan and were very excited to meet their fellow educators from around the nation and also in Japan .

During their time in Japan , the participants got to experience Japanese schools, companies, and culture by participating in school and company visits and also by partaking in traditional Japanese activities such as eating Japanese food, touring famous Japanese landmarks and experiencing the traditional art of tea ceremony. By being in Japan , the educators were able to see the country with their own eyes, and form their own opinions about the country to be able to take back to the states to share with their fellow

educators. These experiences also allowed the participants to reflect upon their journey and rediscover the American education system by witnessing both the similarities and differences between the two countries.

Upon returning home from Japan , many of the participants expressed their gratitude for the program and praised its success in introducing Japanese culture. Many thought that this was a moving experience and this opportunity allowed them to bring back a piece of Japan to their classrooms. The Japan Foundation hopes that this program continues so many more educators from the United States and around the world will have the opportunity to see Japan with their own eyes.

"The Japan Foundation's tour for educators was a life-changing experience that far exceeded my expectations. The tightly scheduled itinerary allowed participants to experience Japanese culture and language in unique ways. Each day presented new surprises that provided insight into the education, language, business, and recreation of the Japanese people. Everything was presented with a high degree of professionalism, care, and respect. My appreciation and understanding of the relationship between the United States and Japan was greatly impacted by my participation in the tour, and my commitment to extend Japanese into our program was certainly a product of my participation in this program. Whenever I think of the tour, I feel the warm embrace of the Japan Foundation and see the beauty of Japan and its people. Then I smile and think of how fortunate I was to have had this experience."

*Sheila Nelson*  
*Lusher Charter Schools, LA*

"I had the pleasure of participating in the Japan Study-Tour for U.S. Educators from June 30 to July 16, 2008. As I reflect upon the study-tour, it was a wonderful opportunity to meet Japanese educators and learn about the Japanese educational system and language. Highlights of the trip were visiting schools in Shimoda, seeing the Japan Foundation Japanese Language Institute, and experiencing traditional Japanese culture and food."

*Rebecca Richey*  
*US Department of Education, D.C.*



# LANGUAGE POLICY IN THE U.S.: AN OVERVIEW OF JNCL-NCLIS' ROLE AND RECENT DEVELOPMENTS

*By Ashley L. Lenker, Program Manager, JNCL-NCLIS*



## JNCL-NCLIS Mission and History

The Joint National Committee for Languages and the National Council for Languages and International Studies (JNCL-NCLIS) are membership organizations that are united in their belief that all Americans must have the opportunity to learn and use English and at least one other language. Our mission is to promote policies that respect and develop the language abilities of Americans through many mediums without favoring any language over another. Language and international education are areas of national need now more than ever because they are in the public and national interest, increase intellectual abilities, provide insight into other cultures, and are a basic educational priority that lack adequate support in the curriculum. Additionally, foreign language skills are an essential tool for Americans to conduct effective foreign policy, expand international trade, ensure national defense, and enhance international communication and understanding. These national needs are the basis on which JNCL-NCLIS was founded during the Carter administration with the release of the President's Commission on Languages and International Studies in 1979.

The Joint National Committee for Languages (JNCL) is a 501(c)(3) non-profit education organization and the National Council for Languages and International Studies (NCLIS), previously the Council on Languages and Other International Studies (CLOIS), is JNCL's sister organization. NCLIS is a 504(c)(4) professional association that is the advocacy arm of the pair of membership organizations. They were founded by a small group of eight members and now claim a 65 association membership.

The main goal of JNCL-NCLIS is to unify the language profession by providing a single voice to convey policy suggestions and initiatives from the field to federal leaders. They promote policies that respect and develop the language abilities of Americans and increase public awareness of languages. JNCL-NCLIS also promotes national policies that address the nation and its citizens' needs and capabilities. JNCL-NCLIS accomplishes these goals by holding its annual Legislative Day, where members meet with

Congressional representatives and staff to discuss current language issues, and Delegate Assembly, which provides a two day forum for members to discuss and create policy initiatives for the JNCL-NCLIS staff to pursue in the year to come.

Through the help of its membership and connections to policymakers in Washington, D.C., JNCL-NCLIS has been able to make many gains in national support for languages and international studies over its almost 30 years in existence. JNCL-NCLIS has created numerous new federal programs, such as the Foreign Language Assistance Program (FLAP), and addresses national policy issues with a unified voice among language professionals. The organization has worked to develop knowledge and skills in public interest advocacy among its membership and has also increased national awareness of the importance of cross-cultural communication and international understanding.

## Language Trends by Presidential Administration

Foreign language and international education needs in the United States tend to fluctuate according to current U.S. and world affairs and have also changed due to the importance placed on them by each different presidential administration.

During the Reagan administration, much energy was expended to defend language programs at the federal level. To do this, Congress added funding to study abroad initiatives during this time, Centers for International Business Education and Research were created, and funding for Title VI and Fulbright-Hays increased. It was also under this administration that a House/Senate Study Group on Languages and International Education was formed and the National Endowment for the Humanities became involved in language teacher education.

Under the leadership of President George H. W. Bush, languages and international education expanded in significant ways. The Foreign Language Assistance Program (FLAP) was created, as well as the Department of Defense's major language initiative, the National Security Education Program (NSEP), which includes a number of critical language and study abroad programs. Additionally, the National Education Goals were established under this administration, which set six education objectives to be reached by the year 2000. These goals are based on the idea that "every child can learn, and that education is a lifelong process" (Swanson, 1991, para. 1).

As Governor of Arkansas, William J. Clinton contributed to the creation of the National Education Goals, and later as president, Clinton added a language component to the goals and reauthorized the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) as the *Goals 2000: Educate America Act* (Public Law 103-227). The Clinton administration maintained focuses on equality and excellence and established the first annual International Education Week. It was during this time that the foreign language standards were created.

The administration of President George W. Bush changed the shape of federal education policy on several levels with the passage of the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001 (NCLB), the most current authorization of ESEA, which places emphasis on accountability and teacher quality. The U.S. Senate held hearings on language needs in the U.S. under the leadership of Senator Thad Cochran (D-MS) in September 2000, where Secretary of Education Richard W. Riley testified that during the mid-1990's "approximately 25 percent of the schools that sought to hire foreign language teachers were unable to find them" ( *The state of foreign language capabilities in national security and the federal government* , 2000, p. 26). This hearing set precedents for foreign language education goals during the 21 st century.

Also in 2000, the House/Senate International Education Study Group chaired by Senators Cochran and Christopher Dodd (D-CT) and Representatives James A. Leach (R-IA) and Sam Farr (D-CA) requested a Government Accounting Office (GAO) study on language needs in the U.S., “Foreign Languages: Human Capital Approach Needed to Correct Staffing and Proficiency Shortfalls”. The report was released in 2002 and concluded that the federal agencies that were studied had significant language “shortfalls” of translators, interpreters, and other staff with foreign language skills ( *Foreign Languages: Human Capital Approach Needed to Correct Staffing and Proficiency Shortfalls* , 2002, p. 26).

The Senate hearing and the preliminary GAO study both noted these national language deficiencies a year before the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001. The George W. Bush administration later began to focus on language education from a national security perspective as a result of the attacks. Languages and international studies became increasingly important for national security, economic competitiveness, and global communication with less commonly taught languages at the forefront.

### **Impact of September 11, 2001**

In the years following 9/11, the state of foreign language and international education were examined by language experts, business leaders, and government officials at the Global Challenges and U.S. Higher Education Conference (Duke University, 2003), the National Language Conference (University of Maryland, 2004), and the National Language Policy Summit (University of North Carolina Chapel Hill, 2005), which prompted the creation of the K-16 Chinese language flagship program with the University of Oregon through NSEP. The Department of Defense also produced its Language Transformation Roadmap, a plan to achieve the language goals and capabilities that would be necessary to support the 2004 Defense Strategy, in response to discussions from the National Language Conference. Similarly, the Department of State announced a Language Continuum.

The Bush administration announced a new \$114 million initiative that has since been highly influential in language education in the U.S., the National Security Language Initiative (NSLI), on January 5, 2006 at the U.S. University Presidents' Summit on International Education. It calls for the expansion of 13 existing language and international studies programs and one new program through the coordination of the Department of Education, the Department of Defense, the Department of State, and the Office of the Director of National Intelligence. NSLI seeks to increase the critical language abilities of Americans through intensive study and exchanges at all levels of education with multiple entry and exit points. Some of the languages specifically supported in these programs include Arabic, Chinese, Russian, Korean, Japanese, and the Indic, Iranian, and Turkic language families.

### **Languages and International Studies in the 110 th Congress**

A year after the announcement of NSLI, the Senate Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs held a hearing entitled *Lost in Translation: A Review of the Federal Government's Efforts to Develop a Foreign Language Strategy* . The hearing took place on January 25, 2007, moderated by Senators Daniel Akaka (D-HI) and George Voinovich (R-OH) with the intention of recording the importance and need for well-articulated language programs in the U.S., as well as some coordination of those programs. Witness testimonies included diverse perspectives within the language field and were presented by the Honorable Michael L. Dominguez, Ms. Holly Kuzmich, Mr. Everette Jordan, Ms. Rita Oleksak, Mr. Michael Petro, and Dr. Diane Birckbichler. This hearing was part of the effort to create a National Language Coordinator to oversee language programs in the U.S.

Beginning with the “Lost in Translation” hearing and wrapping up in the next few months, the 110 th Congress proved to be a very exciting and eventful period for languages and international studies in this country. A total of 53 bills dealing with languages and international studies were introduced during the first session of the 110 th Congress, followed by several policy developments in the second session. This produced three new laws, including a long-awaited reauthorization of the Higher Education Act of 1965 (HEA), and shows a huge expansion in congressional interest in languages over the 109 th Congress. A small sample of legislation introduced in 2007 and 2008 includes:

- Shirley A. Chisholm U.S. Caribbean Educational Exchange Act
- National Security Language Act
- America COMPETES Act
- Senator Paul Simon Study Abroad Foundation Act
- Foreign Language Education Expansion Act
- Foreign Language Education Partnership Program
- College Cost Reduction and Access Act
- U.S. China Language Engagement Act
- Mandarin Language Teaching Grant Act
- PRIDE Act
- National Security Culture and Language Training Act

The America Creating Opportunities to Meaningfully Promote Excellence in Technology, Education, and Science Act (America COMPETES), the College Cost Reduction and Access Act (CCRAA), and HEA are the three bills that were passed into law during the 110 th Congress.

America COMPETES, Public Law 110-69 signed by President Bush on August 9, 2007, is legislation that was introduced by Senator Harry Reid (D-NV) and Representative Barton Gordon (D-TN) as a bipartisan response to the National Academies' “Rising Above the Gathering Storm” report and the Council on Competitiveness' “Innovate America” report. It seeks to advance the global competitiveness of the U.S. by investing in the innovation of education. Some keys points of the law include strengthening educational opportunities in science, technology, math, and engineering from elementary through graduate school; expanding Advanced Placement (AP) and International Baccalaureate (IB) programs; developing bachelor's and master's degrees in critical foreign languages concurrent with teaching credentials; and increasing the number of students proficient in critical foreign languages in elementary and secondary schools through a Foreign Language Partnership Program.

The second bill that became law during the 110 th Congress (September 27, 2007) is CCRAA, which “will make the largest single investment in college financial aid since the GI Bill of 1944” (Pelosi, 2007, para. 1). The law proposes to make college more affordable, especially for the middle class, increase the Pell scholarship, ensure highly qualified teachers, and create a TEACH grant program, among other improvements to higher education. The TEACH grants entail \$375 million of mandatory federal spending

prepare new teachers in colleges and universities. The grants are awarded to undergraduate and master's students in the form of \$4,000 per year scholarships and, in return, students must teach in a high need school in a high need area (including foreign languages) for a minimum of four years after graduation.

### Foreign Language Assistance Program (FLAP)

In 2007, there was no new competition for FLAP. Recipients of these grants consisted of unfunded applications from the 2006 competition and represented both commonly and less commonly taught languages. Japanese programs made up about 12% (eight total) of the programs to which grants were awarded.

For 2008, the FLAP competition changed slightly in that it required an “absolute priority” that grantees teach a critical language as per NSLI, which includes Japanese. Eight proposals will receive funding in 2008 and the recipients are: Culver City Unified School District, CA; Glastonbury Town School District, CT; Pioneer Valley Chinese Immersion Charter, MA; School District of the City of Dearborn, MI; Utica Community Schools, MI; Minneapolis Public Schools, MN; School District No. 13, Portland, OR; and Memphis City Schools, TN.

### Higher Education Act (HEA) Reauthorization

The Senate version of the HEA reauthorization was introduced on June 6, 2007 and was passed by that chamber. The Senate and the House of Representatives, which later passed its own bill on February 25, 2008, would need to reconcile differences between their respective bills for this reauthorization.

The final reconciliation, which was halted with the discovery of Senate Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions Committee Chairman Kennedy's illness this summer, was finalized and signed by President Bush on August 14, 2008 (Public Law 110-315). The new authorization is entitled the *Higher Education Opportunity Act: Expanding College Access, Strengthening Our Future* and some highlights from the House/Senate Conference Committee summary of the 1,158 page bill include:

- A number of general provisions deal with college costs, loan accountability, textbook costs, opportunities for minorities, veterans, and students with disabilities, campus safety, energy efficiency, and competitiveness;
- A broad definition of “critical foreign language” in Title I, General Principles, as suggested by JNCL-NCLIS;
- A new competitive grant program for math, science, technology, and critical foreign languages to serve as adjunct content specialists to support teachers in Title II, Teacher Quality Enhancement;
- Provisions for loan forgiveness for teachers in high need areas, including foreign languages, in Title IV, Student Assistance;
- Foreign languages as an “area of national need” in Title VII, Graduate and Post Secondary Improvement Programs;
- Increased and improved linkages and outreach for foreign languages and international studies to public and private sectors, cooperation with math, sciences, and technology, increased study abroad, and reinstated FLAS fellowship eligibility in Title VI;



- The creation of a new Deputy Assistant Secretary for International and Foreign Language Education in Title IX, the Department of Education Organization Act.

## **Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) Reauthorization and Foreign Language Partnerships**

There have been no further developments regarding the pending reauthorization of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 (No Child Left Behind). Differences between the House/Senate draft bills for reauthorization and the request set forth by the Bush administration were far too wide to begin reconciliation during the last few months of this session of Congress. Reauthorization will not be further considered until the new administration takes office in 2009.

Although these draft bills may no longer be used in reauthorization of NCLB, it is important to note a major change to the FLAP section that was proposed by each draft. This change would modify FLAP by adding a second part that would create a grant program for foreign language partnerships. The partnerships would connect K-12 local educational agencies and institutions of higher education in order to create articulated, sequenced foreign language programs. The partnerships in the House and Senate drafts differ considerably in scope and flexibility, for example, the section in the House draft is Rep. Rush Holt's (D-NJ) Foreign Language Education Partnership Program (H.R. 2111), which was introduced as stand-alone legislation before being added to the House NCLB draft. This version offers the widest variety of possibilities for funding uses and is very academically sound as result of Rep. Holt's collaboration with language experts in writing the legislation. These partnerships also differ slightly from the Foreign Language Partnership in the America COMPETES law, which focuses only on critical foreign languages.

It is expected that work on the ESEA reauthorization will resume in 2009; however, it is unclear whether Congress will make amendments to the existing version, NCLB, or whether improvements will be more significant.

## **Appropriations**

Appropriations for the current fiscal year were passed in the form of an Omnibus Spending bill signed on December 26, 2007, after several extensions of the 2007 appropriations. In this budget, FLAP was increased from \$23.8 million to \$25.7 million. Advancing American through Foreign Language Partnerships, a component of NSLI, was unfunded and the Fund for the Improvement of Postsecondary Education (FISPSE) grew by almost \$100 million due to a large number of earmarks. International Education and Foreign Language Studies increased by \$3.3 million to \$109 million, and Civic Education also grew by almost \$3 million. Baccalaureate and Master's STEM Grants were funded at almost \$1 million each, SMART grants increased to \$1,445 million, and TEACH grants from CCRAA were funded at \$56 million. Star Schools were eliminated in this budget. The National Endowment for the Humanities received \$144.7 million, and the Education and Cultural Exchange Programs at the State Department received \$505.4 million. Finally, NSEP enjoyed a substantial increase from \$16 million to \$44.7 million.

President Bush released the administration's FY 2009 budget request in January, which level-funded the majority of foreign language and international studies programs and would have eliminated a number of others. Some of the administration-eliminated programs include Byrd Honors Scholarships, Teacher Quality Enhancement, Civic Education, and the newly created STEM grants under America COMPETES. Secretary of Education Margaret Spellings announced these changes in a press conference at the Department of Education and shared her view that many of the eliminated programs were duplicative, more money is requested for larger programs, and the administration is working to put money back into the hands students and parents.

The House and the Senate have also recently released budget recommendations for the next fiscal year. FLAP would be level-funded by both the administration and the House, but the Senate proposed an increase to \$27 million. The House would increase Civic Education by \$3 million (\$35 million total) and would fund International and Foreign Language Studies in Higher Education at \$118.8 million, increased from \$1 million in FY 2008. The Senate would level-fund bachelor's and master's STEM grants for foreign language teacher training at just under \$1 million each and would also level-fund Title VI and Fulbright-Hays. The administration was not able to garner support from either house in its \$24 million request for Advancing America through Foreign Language Partnerships, and all three requests would decrease SMART grants by about \$90 million resulting in \$301-\$308 million for the program (much less than the appropriation for 2007). TEACH grants would double from \$7 million to \$14 million. NESP would receive \$36.7 million under the Department of Defense/Office of the Director of National Intelligence request.

## **How Federal Legislation Affects Language Teachers**

Having all of the current facts about language legislation is important, but so is knowing how to use those facts to further your career and strengthen the profession. Language teachers are the strongest advocates for both their language and their specific field within education. Knowing about federal and local legislation that affect languages in education is essential to playing a role in influencing it. Furthermore, federal programs provide wonderful resources to enrich the experiences of both teachers and students in the form of grants, professional development, and study abroad opportunities at all levels. Therefore, knowing about the availability of these sources of funding will only strengthen teaching skills and language program progress. Being a savvy advocate for the profession enriches one's personal career and also sends an important message to students about actively supporting personal beliefs and pursuing goals.

The main idea behind advocacy is to encourage progress for something that you believe in, and inform others about it so that they too may support the issue. To do this for language education, you must stay informed about current political issues surrounding foreign languages. Identify specific matters that your association or school should address. Then, identify specific people and points in the decision making process where your advocacy efforts will make the greatest impact. Informing other teachers and school officials, organizing a network list, contacting the media, and building coalitions are great ways to keep others informed and get them "on board" with your objectives.

Many teachers realize the importance of advocacy, but feel that it takes an expert, huge feats, money, and endless amounts of time to be successful. The truth is that anyone with a bit of passion for what they do is already an effective advocate, and by simply refining a few strategies, teachers can greatly expand their influence on policy decisions. As an individual, start by putting stories and photos from classroom experiences to work for you. Share anecdotes and photos with anyone who will listen, and especially those who can help make positive changes in language education, such as other teachers, administrators, and legislators. This not only shows off your success and that of your students, but also reflects positively on the school or district language program.

If grabbing the attention of those not directly involved in the program proves difficult, exemplify visibility by letting students be advocates for themselves. Share their work, projects, and speaking skills through events or print media in order to reach a wider audience. Also, writing articles for association, school, or language program newsletters spreads knowledge of the program, the language, and progress that is being made. This same idea applies to listservs or mass emails and websites. Making sure that your students and your program receive public visibility is imperative for promoting growth and positive

attitudes toward language education. Increasing parental demand for foreign language education by teaching them of the benefits language learning has for children is a great way to increase local and federal funding and support for languages since, ultimately, parents are also taxpaying constituents.

A slightly more ambitious advocacy action would be to visit congressional offices to speak with elected officials about policy initiatives. Setting up a congressional meeting is as simple as sending a written request to the office that you wish to visit a few weeks prior to the tentative date. Be prepared to meet with staff, but be assured that they will be happy to convey information from your discussion to the boss. To prepare for the meeting, it is important to know about issues of interest to the legislator and tie languages into the conversation as you speak to these issues. Teach your audience why language education is so important and leave behind any appropriate materials and contact information.

After a Congressional meeting, it is vital that you follow-up with that office by sending a thank you note to the Member of Congress and the staff. This not only shows your appreciation for fitting you into their busy schedule, but also gives you one more avenue of visibility to them. Politely remind them of the issues discussed, how they can help, and periodically provide them with informative materials, such as association newsletters. When appropriate, it is always nice to invite Members of Congress to events within your school or language program so they can see and experience the success and need for language education. Regardless of the mode in which you do it, following-up on what you have accomplished in your visit is extremely important to keeping the conversation open and ongoing.

All of the above mentioned advocacy ideas are based around “active support” for foreign language education and policy change; however, they all also border on building relationships and interaction with individuals important to causing change. This interactive approach to encouraging change is more closely associated with public relations, which is helpful in supplementing advocacy initiatives. Finally, it is important to remember that advocacy is never complete. There is always room for improvement, especially in education, so it is essential to stay informed and make advocacy a continuous part of your career as a foreign language teacher.

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# NEW LIBRARY ACQUISITIONS

By: Thomas Lin



The Nihongo Library at the Japan Foundation's Los Angeles office is always receiving new print and multi-media materials. Below is a small list of new DVDs and Japanese-Language textbooks that we have added to our collection.

## DVD

### 1. 1. Yasujiro Ozu's Tokyo Story [DVD] :

#### From the Back Cover

Tokyo Monogatari follows an aging couple, Tomi and Shukichi, as they journey from their rural village to visit their two married children in bustling, postwar Tokyo. Their reception, however, is disappointing: too busy to entertain them, the children send them off to a health spa. After Tomi falls ill, she and Shukichi return home, while the children, grief-stricken, hasten to be with her. Starring Ozu regulars Chishu Ryu and Setsuko Hara, the film reprises one of the director's favorite themes--that of generational conflict--in a way that is quintessentially Japanese and yet so universal in its appeal that it continues to resonate as one of cinema's greatest masterpieces.

### 1. 1. Ugetsu [DVD] :

Hailed by critics as one of the greatest films ever made, Kenji Mizoguchi's *Ugetsu* is an undisputed masterpiece of Japanese cinema, revealing greater depths of meaning and emotion with each successive viewing. Mizoguchi's exquisite "gender tragedy" is set during Japan's violent 16th-century civil wars, a historical context well-suited to the director's compassionate perspective on the plight of women and the foibles of men. The story focuses on two brothers, Genjuro (Masayuki Mori) and Tobei (Sakae Ozawa), whose dreams of glory (one as a wealthy potter, the other a would-be samurai) cause them to leave their wives for the promise of success in Kyoto. Both are led astray by their blind ambitions, and their wives suffer tragic fates in their absence, as *Ugetsu* evolves into a masterful mixture of brutal wartime realism and haunting ghost story. The way Mizoguchi weaves these elements so seamlessly together is what makes *Ugetsu* (masterfully derived from short stories by Akinari Ueda and Guy de Maupassant) so challenging and yet deeply rewarding as a timeless work of art. Featuring flawless performances by some of Japan's greatest actors (including Machiko Kyo, from Kurosawa's *Rashomon*), *Ugetsu* is essential viewing for any serious lover of film. --Jeff Shannon

### 1. Rhapsody in August [DVD] :

The final film released in the U.S. by Japanese master Akira Kurosawa looks at the atomic blast on Nagasaki from a distance of more than 40 years, through the eyes of a woman who survived it the grandchildren who are spending the summer with her. Though she tries not to think about it, the

memory of the bombing is with her every day, in the family she lost and the scars she still carries. But the grandchildren insist on seeing the memorial, which brings it home to her once again--and to us. Though sometimes slow going (and what is Richard Gere doing in this movie, as her Amer-Asian nephew?), *Rhapsody in August* is a story about family and about living in the present while never being allowed to forget the past. --*Marshall Fine*

## Japanese-language Textbooks and Novels

### 1. 1. **Obento Supreme** [Textbook]:

Obento Supreme is the new taste sensation combining the best selling Obentoo 2 and Obentoo 3 into one concise and engaging text. Obento Supreme provides continuity between Obento Deluxe and Obento Senior and a manageable increase in the level of language difficulty. The Obento Supreme Student Book features structured language lessons and a variety of authentic texts such as letters, emails and dialogue. Supported with stunning photographs, exciting manga cartoons and a fresh new magazine design, Obento Supreme will engage and stimulate students from the first page. The Obento Supreme Student Book also includes wordlists and additional grammar information.

### 1. 1. **Hai 1 & 2 Nice to Meet You** [Textbook]:

Hai! 1 provides beginners with a very accessible and well-integrated introduction to Japanese. Hai! 2 builds on and extends grammar, vocabulary and script from Hai! 1. Students will feel a real sense of achievement and progress as they learn to write what they can say. Cartoon stories, photo presentations and a variety of text types introduce the key language and vocabulary and provide a wealth of cultural interest.

### 1. **Mistress Chika - Stories from a Tokyo Teahouse** [Novel]:

#### **From the Back Cover**

Sensitive, compassionate, and indomitable, Mistress Oriku has abandoned the pleasure trade of Meiji-era Tokyo to run an elegant teahouse on the city's outskirts. Despite her hopes for a quieter, less hectic life, she finds she can't escape her involvement in the city's creative, intellectual, and political circles.

# WELCOME MS. SHOGASE



HAJIMEMASHITE!!!

My name is Mari SHOGASE, and I recently arrived from Japan to start my new position here as the Assistant Director of the Japan Foundation, Los Angeles . Previously, I worked at the Japanese-Language Department at the Japan Foundation's headquarters, and was in charge of providing current conditions on Japanese-language education around the world through various research projects.

This is my third time living in the United States and will account for a total of 10 years of my life. I had previously spent 8 years living in Illinois , Ohio , and Kentucky as a child, because of my father's job, and then decided to come back to Ohio as an international exchange student during my junior year in college. I am very delighted to begin my 3rd stay here in Los Angeles . Feeling the clear blue sky, pleasant breeze, and the vigorous pace of Southern California, I see the United States in a new light everyday.

During my tenure here, I plan to take on the challenges of promoting Japanese-language and culture for the purpose of cross-culture exchanges between Japan and the multitude of cultures that are gathered here in the United States and around the World. Together, I hope we can enjoy the beauties of Japan and I look forward to meeting new people at our future events.

DOUZO-YOROSHIKU-ONEGAI-SHIMASU.

## 2009-2010 GRANT ANNOUNCEMENT

*By: Mamiko Nakai*

We are now accepting applications for the Japan Foundation's 2009 Fiscal Year Grant Programs. Below is a list of our grant programs that are available for Japanese-language education (excluding mini-grants and the revolving "Teaching Materials Donation Program"). The deadline for submitting applications for our grant programs is December 1st, 2008 and results will be announced in April, 2009. For additional information, please contact [language@jflalc.org](mailto:language@jflalc.org).

① **Application Deadline** : 12/1/2008

### ● Grant Program for Japanese-Language Courses Abroad

This program assists overseas (outside of Japan ) educational institutions to maintain/expand/initiate their Japanese-language programs, by providing one-year financial assistance to supplement the salary of the Japanese language instructor. Since the grant period is for only one year and the funding is very limited , each applying institution must have a detailed plan explaining how they plan to supplement the Japan Foundation's grant with other funding, as well as how they plan to sustain the program after the one-year support ends.

### ● Japanese Speech Contest Support Program

This program supplements the expenses for prizes and/or venue rental to support Japanese-language speech contests. Project must be held during the Japan Foundation's 2009-2010 Fiscal Year (4/1/2009 ~ 3/31/2010)

### ● Grant Program for Developing Networks of Japanese Language Teachers and Institutions

This program provides partial aid for seminars, workshops, training courses, and academic meetings pertaining to Japanese-language education carried out by teachers' associations, academic societies, and higher educational and research institutions for the purpose of developing networks of Japanese-language teachers and institutions.

- **Japanese Language Teacher Training Programs**

- **Long-term Training (6 months)**

This program is intended for teachers who are non-native speakers of Japanese , and who have more than 6 months and less than 5 years of experience in teaching the Japanese-language as of 12/1/2008 .

Duration: 9/16/2009 - 3/12/2010 (tentative)

- **Short-term Training (2 months)**

This program is intended for teachers who are non-native speakers of Japanese , and who have at least 2 years of experience in teaching the Japanese-language as of 12/1/2008.

Duration:

**Spring Course:** 5/13/2009 - 7/3/2009

This Course is designed for teachers engaged in primary and secondary education , and those who teach young children .

**Summer Course:** 7/15/2009 - 9/4/2009

Not specified ( for all educational levels )

**Winter Course:** 1/27/2010 - 3/19/2010

The course is designed for teachers engaged in higher and adult education .

- **Advanced Training for Lead Teachers**

This program provides teachers of Japanese with advanced expertise and skills, as well as addresses specific challenges or issues relevant to the teaching of the Japanese language. (e.g. the development of Japanese teaching materials, teaching methods, or curriculums, etc).

This program is designed for both native and non-native speakers of Japanese , and candidates can individual or a team consisting of up to 3 members. (All applications must be submitted through the individual's or team leader's host institution.)

Based on the Study Plan detailed in the Outline of Research and Challenges section in the application, research activities will be further developed through lectures, one-on-one guidance and discussions among trainees. These challenges and issues cover a variety of themes that may include pedagogic method research, syllabus development, and textbook compilation planning. Participants are requested to submit reports detailing the results of their training by the end of March the following year (2010). It is expected that these results will ultimately be made public and published, in the form of an academic paper, syllabus, or as a text book.

- **Graduate Program on Japanese Language and Cultures (Master's Course)**

This program is designed to provide teachers of the Japanese language (outside of Japan) or individuals who have experience teaching the Japanese language (outside of Japan), who are expected to become leaders in the academic world in their own countries, with an opportunity to obtain a Master's degree in Japanese-language education. This post graduate program is offered at the following three institutions:

1. The Japan Foundation Japanese-Language Institute, Urawa (JFJLI)
2. The National Institute for the Japanese Language (NIJLA)
3. The National Graduate Institute for Policy Studies (GRIPS)

**FYI:** Please see the GRIPS website ( [www.grips.ac.jp](http://www.grips.ac.jp) ) for “Graduate Program on Japanese Language and Cultures (**Doctor's Course**) ”. Application for “Doctor's Course” should be submitted directly to the GRIPS office in Japan . The Japan Foundation, Los Angeles will only accept applications for the “Master's Course”.

- **Japanese Language Program for Specialists in Cultural and Academic Fields**

This program is an intensive Japanese-language training course for scholars and researchers (outside of Japan ) who are interested in the fields of social sciences or humanities and need to learn the Japanese language to be able to conduct research activities. Postgraduate students (outside of Japan) majoring in the fields of social sciences or humanities, who are planning to be engaged in jobs relating to Japanese-studies in future, and need to learn the Japanese language for their academic research activities, are also encouraged to apply.

② **Revolving Deadlines** : 2 / 2 / 2009 , 6 / 1 / 2009 , 11 / 2 / 2009

- **Program for the Donation of Japanese Language Teaching Materials (for the U.S. Only)**

This program donates a variety of teaching materials to educational institutions that offer regular Japanese-language courses in the United States . The donations are to become the property of the recipient's institution, and are not to be owned privately by teachers or students. Applicants can request materials totaling up to the equivalent of 100,000 yen (roughly \$900 USD). All applications are subjected to review by the Japan Foundation, and the actual amount awarded may be less than the total amount requested.

**FYI:** This program has 3 deadlines in the United States . We are currently accepting applications for the 3rd deadline (11/3/2008) , which is part of the Fiscal Year 2008's donation program.



# 2008 JLPT UPDATE

By: Thomas Lin

The 2008 JLPT Registration started on August 1st 2008 and ended on September 26th, 2008. This year the test will be held on December 7th, 2008 at nine locations around the country. If you have already registered for the test, you should expect to receive a letter in Late-October with your test voucher and detailed information regarding your test site. Please make sure your registered address in My Account is up to date. If you do not receive your test voucher by the test date, please logon to My Account and print out your voucher from their. Test site information will also be posted on our website.

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**Japan Related Links**

**Job Openings (Updated)**

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**Annual Report**

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