

## JANUARY, 2013: BREEZE ISSUE #63

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



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On the morning of December 7th (EST), while I was preparing for Japanese classes as usual, one of the Social Studies teachers came into my classroom with printouts. They were the latest information on an earthquake that just struck off the northeast coast of Japan in the evening (JST). He talked with my supervisor, Bradshaw-sensei, and we discussed the current situation in Japan. When we shared the news in our classroom, one of the students

said that she had been talking with her friend about the news since arriving at school. These are only two instances among many showing that there are a number of people who really care about Japan in the U.S.

Hello, my name is UMEJI Nobuyuki and I am currently working at Appoquinimink High School in Delaware. Because Delaware was the first state that ratified the Constitution of the United States, it is known as The First State. And it has had a formal sister-state partnership and a close relationship with Miyagi Prefecture in Japan since 1997. In December, Governor Jack Markell was in Japan as a part of a business trip to Asia and kindly offered to conduct a video-conferencing session with the students at our school who are studying Japanese. With the help of modern technology, we had the honor to talk with him and were able to ask questions mainly relating to the recovery efforts from the Great East Japan Earthquake and Tsunami. In addition Gov. Markell emphasized the importance of learning foreign languages, which is a really significant experience for the students. And as time goes by, it will have more meaning in their hearts.

Currently, I help out teaching three classes, Japanese 1, 2 and 5. It is always challenging for me to teach them because I am trying to use Japanese language as much as possible, but sometimes I have to speak English to explain what I want the students to do. Every day is a succession of trials and errors; however, the students are intelligent, especially those taking Japanese 5 (advanced level). They will eventually lead the next generation and advance the relationship between the U.S. and Japan. So I would like to teach them about Japan because it really deepens the mutual understanding between our two great countries.

In addition to Japanese classes, I had opportunities to talk about Japan in other subjects. Two of the social studies teachers asked me to talk about Japanese culture and history. I was glad and thankful for the opportunities to be able to introduce Japan to the students who have few chances to learn about my country. When I talked about Japanese Culture, I presented Japanese gestures. I showed them the proper way to bow, which is one of the most typical gestures in Japan and we practiced how to bow together. Since then, there has been a student who greets me every morning by bowing. My next mission, after winter break, is to introduce Japanese cuisine in home economics class. I am looking forward to making and eating Japanese food with the students.

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Breeze #73



Breeze #72



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Annual Report

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