

SEPTEMBER, 2013: BREEZE ISSUE #71

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



IDA CAPROON

*Miami Palmetto Senior High School
Miami, FL*

May 15 2013 was a day that led to an experience that has changed my life, and for the better. On May 15th I was accepted into the JET Memorial Invitational Program. Two months later on July 9 2013 I arrived in Japan. I had expectations about everything. From how damaged and recovered the areas in

Tohoku might look, to what the more famous areas of Japan like Tokyo and Osaka would be like.

I live in Miami. Hurricanes are always a concern. It took many years for the area where I lived to recover from Hurricane Andrew. I expected that after the disaster of 2011 the areas that were affected by the earthquake and tsunami would have extensive damage remaining. Unfortunately full recovery is still a few years away. I was curious about the people, those hit by the tsunami, to those in places like Tokyo and Osaka. What I saw, and what I experienced, surpassed every expectation I had, the people, the culture, the language, all were more exciting than I imagined.

From the first bus ride leaving the airport going to Rikuzentakata my expectations began to be replaced with what these areas, these people, and the recovery efforts actually were. When the Earthquake and Tsunami disaster of 2011 occurred everyone saw videos of the tsunami on the news. Unfortunately, videos can never capture the scale of what has happened. There were entire cities and villages that were washed away, the trees, buildings, playgrounds all were gone.

While on this trip I was inspired by the strength of the people. The survivors showed such strength in the face of this disaster. I had a host family, whose home and office were completely flooded. They still took me in and welcomed me into their family and their culture. Also, I was paired with students. After talking and becoming friends with them, I found out that one still had family who were among the missing. Another had lost family among the confirmed deceased. However, they still laughed and joked with me, still asked me about things they had heard about America, and still worked hard at school. Furthermore, they still were in a temporary school building.

I was in awe of the love these people had for every aspect of their beliefs. For example during my stay in Tohoku I went to festival called Umi no Hi or Day of the Ocean. A festival that is completely f ocean, giving thanks and respect to it for what it gives. Even after the tsunami, that they still celebr

ocean was astonishing to me.

This trip and the experiences I had while on it has led me to realize that I don't just like Japanese anime and food. I love the country, the culture, the people, and the language as well. It made me realize I want to continue learning the language and learning about the culture. I am entering college this fall. This trip has helped me realize I am not satisfied with my knowledge of the language. I want to improve my speaking abilities and continue making bonds with people in Japan because, I plan on returning to Japan.

I graduated from Miami Palmetto High School in June and I plan on returning in 2014 to share my experiences with the Japanese classes there. However, until then I have shared my experiences with my family and friends and they were in shock at the damage done to Tohoku and impressed by the plan they have for recovery. In addition, they were also surprised by how much I did in the course of two weeks.

I have heard amazing things about both Taylor Anderson and Montgomery Dickson. Everyone I met who was friends with them, who was taught by them, both young and young at heart all had wonderful stories to tell about these two people. For example, how Taylor would help teach English at the Kiwi Club and attend festivals at her students villages. And, how Monty would help make videos to teach people about Japanese culture. Taylor and Montgomery followed their dreams, even when it meant leaving their families and going into an environment that was unknown to them.

Finally, to Taylor Anderson and Montgomery Dickson I want to say thank you. I would want to tell them how they are an inspiration to many people, from both America and Japan. That the number of people they continue to inspire is growing. I also want to thank their families, for coming to meet us prior to our departure to Japan. For telling us about Taylor and Monty and sharing their stories. They encouraged us to continue Taylor and Montgomery's dream. Thankfully, these two amazing people are changing lives in America and in Japan, even though they are gone. They will be sorely missed.

NIPPON THROUGH MY EYES PHOTO SUBMISSION



"THE STRENGTH OF SENDAI"

While at my Homestay in Sendai my host family took me to this temple. It was damaged and is finishing its reconstruction, but even while it is under re-construction it was open for people to use.

Breeze #74



Breeze #73



Breeze #72

Breeze #71



Japanese Language Program Report: Whitney Nakayama

2013 JET-MIP Essay: Ida Caproon

2013 JET-MIP Essay: Jing-Ting Chen

2013 JET-MIP Essay: Juliana Choup

2013 JET-MIP Essay: Allyza May Concepcion

Breeze #70

Breeze #69



Breeze #68



Breeze #67



Breeze #66



Breeze #65



Breeze #64



Breeze #63



[Headquarters](#)

[New York Office](#)

[Center for Global Partnership](#)

[Volunteer](#)

[ボランティア募集](#)

[Japan Related Links](#)

[Job Openings \(Updated\)](#)

5700 Wilshire Blvd, Suite 100

Los Angeles, CA 90036

P. 323.761.7510

Annual Report

© 2019 The Japan Foundation, Los Angeles

Web Design.