

## APRIL, 2015: BREEZE ISSUE #90

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



### JAYSON WOOD

*Muncie Southside High School  
Muncie, IN*

#### REMINISCING THE EXPERIENCE

During the two weeks that thirty-two high school students from all around the country spent in Japan, we formed many bonds and memories together. Whether we were traveling, learning, experiencing, or simply spending time with each other, we were having fun doing it --

something that would have been impossible without this program. I met many great people, both from the United States and Japan through and I am grateful that I was able to be a part of this experience.

The JET Memorial Invitation Program did a fantastic job of showing aspiring high school students a sample of Japan, as well as teaching them about the tragedies that befell the country on March 11th, 2011. The facilities were very accommodating and the staff were personally involved while our stay in Japan. For example, during classes, the group was split up into several smaller groups and were assigned teachers. With these small classes, the teachers were able to give more individualized attention to each student which seems to give each class more significance. We spent most of our time at the Kansai Institute, and it had everything that we would ever need. We had our own bedrooms, classrooms, meeting rooms, cafeteria, hangout spots, bicycles and buses to travel to malls and other places, and many other things that enhanced our time spent in Japan. The selection of places that we traveled to was planned out very well. All of the cities and landmarks that we visited catered to everyone's interests. I can only hope that the JET-MIP continues as it has to create more wonderful experiences such as the ones that the 2014 group experienced only a few weeks ago.

Before I went to Japan, I had already considered the possibility of living there for an extended period of time by myself to simply learn more about the language and culture and become part of a local community. Now that I have been able to go to Japan, albeit only for a couple of weeks, this possibility has gotten considerably more weight to it. Whether I attempt to apply to the JET program and become an ALT or if I study abroad while in college or decide to move to Japan and work for a Japanese company, I know that somewhere in my future, I want to stay in Japan. Whether it be in the next two years or the the next twenty doesn't matter, only that I make it at some point in my life. I will continue to learn Japanese, be it through a teacher or self-taught, in order to prepare myself for this journey in my future. To begin, I already completed three years of high school Japanese and I have signed up for Japanese during my first year of college. Although I am going to be majoring in Chemistry, I have high hopes of minoring in Japanese. Regardless of the official titles and diplomas and such, I do not plan to stop my education of Japan and Japanese at college. This is a fact that JET-MIP has guaranteed.

Ever since I have returned from the trip, the first question that everyone asks me is how much I enjoyed Japan or what I did while I was there. After explaining how great of a time that I had, they would tell me how great that it was that I was able to go and that they know that they will never be able to have the chance to go anywhere like that. I never really said it to anyone, but during the application process I thought the same thing. Times like this, especially after the online interview portion of the application, I thought that I was no one special -- that there was no way that I would make it through the crowd of other applicants. When I received the email that told that I was no longer just an applicant, but rather a participant, I gained the opportunity to tell others in the same type of position that, if they just try, they might make it through whatever trial they may be going through. There are still many people that I have yet to tell about my experience in Japan, in fact I am going to my town's high school Japanese classes to talk about my trip. This will give me the opportunity to tell future Japanese students that they have the chance to do the same thing that I did as long as they put forth the effort.

Those fourteen days that I had experienced away from my home last summer were some of the best days that I have experienced in my life. I met many unforgettable people and made unforgettable memories with them. I can only hope that we will all be able to find each other in the future and meet up once again. We would not have been able to bond with each other without the JET Memorial Invitation Program, so I wish for it to continue in the future to recreate more memories and friendships just like we were able to experience.

## **A PERSONAL NOTE TO TAYLOR ANDERSON AND MONTGOMERY DICKSON:**

Dear Ms. Anderson and Mr. Dickson:

During the earthquake and tsunami in 2011, you both did something that many other people would not have been able to do. You both stayed with the children of your respective schools and made sure they were safe before you went on your own. This act is very respectable deserves the recognition that you both received. Although both of you may have been o of the many thousands affected by the disaster, it was the two of you that created JET-M

which in turn allowed the thirty-two of us to meet each other, as well as your families, friends and many others. For this alone, I cannot thank you enough. Though I know both of your deaths were tragedies for many, they held a seed of good that was planted and maintained with care that resulted in this program that is trying to create a bridge between Japan and the US. I am sure that many of the people that participate in this program share many of the same passions that you both did. Personally, I wish to become an ALT in the future and do exactly what you both did. I wish to share your dreams, and I hope that my passions and desires will continue to lead me toward Japan in the same way that both of yours did.

With unending regards,

Jayson Wood

## NIPPON THROUGH MY EYES PHOTO SUBMISSION



“Garden in the Sky”

This picture was taken during my homestay when my host family and I went to the Umeda Sky Building to see the Floating Garden Observatory on the top of the building. It is an example of the more modern style of architecture and engineering that Japan is using for their buildings.

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2014 JET-MIP Report: Jayson Wood

2014 JET-MIP Report: Joshua Warnick

2014 JET-MIP Report: Konou Xiong

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**5700 Wilshire blvd, Suite 100**  
**Los Angeles, CA 90036**  
**P. 323.761.7510**

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