

and, especially, as they move from high school to a college program. ATJ will soon be adding to the website a new section on "Articulation," which will feature links to helpful resources.

I would like the Newsletter and ATJ website, along with providing important information about conferences and job opportunities, to carry more news from the membership. If you would like to write the next *ことばのコーナー* feature (see page 3 for this issue's installment) or if you have an interesting story about your own Japanese program, please feel free to contact me or write to atj@colorado.edu.

In addition, I would like to extend a call for photographs from Japanese National Honor Society chapters. Starting this past year the JNHS inductees received, along with the Certificate of Excellence, an auspiciously colored red and white cord that can be worn at commencement ceremonies. It was wonderful to see my own institution's initiate as she proudly walked down the aisle wearing her well-deserved cord. In order to have a picture of the cord on the ATJ website, I asked her to send a photograph. Please feel free to send photographs of your JNHS inductees, either individually or in a group, as email attachments to atj@colorado.edu for posting on the website, and let us know how you celebrate that special day at your institution. We ask that you obtain in advance the permission rights from students who appear in the photograph(s) and include your institution's name and the name of the JNHS chapter's faculty sponsor.

Last of all, the ATJ Board voted to endorse the bill that I mentioned in the last newsletter. H.R. 6036, the "Excellence and Innovation in Language Learning Act," was introduced by Representatives Rush Holt (D-N.J.) and Paul Tonko (D-N.Y.) on July 30, 2010. You can read more about this at www.languagepolicy.org. I believe we would like all young people in this country to have access to quality world language instruction and to

become proficient in a second or even third language.

Janet Ikeda

News of the Association 2010 ACTFL Convention

Many ATJ members will be attending the annual convention of the American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages (ACTFL) in Boston November 19-21. Our sister organization NCJLT has organized a Japan Pavilion with exhibits and cultural events, is hosting a luncheon for Japanese language teachers, and will sponsor a number of paper and panel sessions during the three-day conference. Information on the conference schedule and on registering to attend can be found online at www.actfl.org; a listing of the NCJLT-sponsored sessions is online at www.ncjlt.net.



The Summer 2010 Japan Foundation Leadership Workshop

(Report by Masahiko Minami)

The Japan Foundation Los Angeles (JFLA) organized a Japanese language education leadership workshop in the form of a two-day summer session in its Los Angeles office (August 12-13) and a two-day session during the American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages (ACTFL) convention, in collaboration with the Association of the Teachers of Japanese (ATJ) and the National Council of Japanese Language Teachers (NCJLT). Attending the Los Angeles leadership workshop session, in fact, was one of the most

unforgettable summer events of 2010 for me.

Dr. Yasu-Hiko Tohsaku, former ATJ President, and Ms. Maki Watanabe Isoyama, JFLA senior program officer, served as the lecturers. Dr. Yoshiko Mori (Georgetown University), Ms. Tomoko Takami (University of Pennsylvania), Ms. Kazumi Yamashita (NCJLT), Ms. Nobuko Hasegawa (Northeast Council of Teachers of Japanese: NECTJ), Mr. Doug Welton (Inter-Mountain Association of Teachers of Japanese: IMATJ), and I participated in the leadership workshop representing both ATJ and the Northern California Japanese Teachers' Association (NCJTA). Personally, I was fortunate to become acquainted with Ms. Takami. I have been directing a business Japanese curriculum project (supported by the U.S. Department of Education) for the past two years, and Ms. Takami has been involved in leading ATJ's Japanese for Specific Purposes Special Interest Group (JSP-SIG) (for my project, visit www.sfsu.edu/~collhum/business-japanese/).

I have been actively involved in local and national professional organizations, serving as a president, an executive council member, and an editorial board member. For the past five years, in particular, I have been serving as President of the Northern California organization NCJTA. Unlike ATJ and NCJLT, which are both national-level organizations, NCJTA is a regional one like the aforementioned NECTJ and IMATJ. NCJTA was formed almost 30 years ago, and its primary activities include hosting biannual meetings for Japanese-language teachers to get together and share, publishing biannual newsletters, disseminating information such as job opportunities and workshops for professional development through email, and maintaining the organization's website. These are all important services for members; the website, for example, is constantly evolving responding to meet the needs of members. NCJTA is also affiliated with the Foreign Language

Organization of Northern California (FLANC), and NCJTA's fall meeting has always been part of the FLANC annual conference. As a matter of fact, I just assumed my presidency at FLANC as well.

As NCJTA President I have been devoting my efforts towards fostering collaborative efforts between the board and the general membership in order to create opportunities for NCJTA to engage actively in intellectual exchange and discussion. I have also tried to promote studies aimed at increasing the scope of knowledge among individuals interested in Japanese language and culture. Unfortunately, however, it's easier said than done. Diverse questions or even uncertainties occur, such as whether the organization is successfully responding to the needs of its members, whether the organization is providing its members with sufficient curriculum ideas and resources, whether dissemination of information (e.g., employment opportunities) is adequate, and whether the organization is attractive to Japanese-language teachers.

JFLA's leadership workshop opened my eyes in many ways. On the one hand, I was convinced that some of the things that I had done for NCJTA had been correct (e.g., connecting a single-language organization with an organization for language in general, as detailed below); on the other hand, I felt that others might not have been a good idea (e.g., doing virtually everything on my own). Having one leader is not sufficient to maintain a healthy and long-lasting organization. What happens if that leader becomes exhausted and quits his or her job? The organization will eventually suffer from malnutrition or even hibernation. Recruiting new members is important. Avoiding overloading and burnout is important. We should not always depend on the same individuals.

JFLA's workshop emphasized the importance of networking on behalf of Japanese language education. This emphasis, of course, includes networking not only between regional organizations and national-level

ことばのコーナー

ありがとう

“Arigatoo - Thank you”

The word ありがとう, like many common words such as 玄関, 人間, 我慢, 不思議 and 迷惑, finds its origin in Buddhism, a religion that was born in northern India a few thousand years ago and traveled eastward to become a part of people's life in the past and present of Japan.

So what does ありがとう mean in the Buddhist context? To explain it, it is easier to start with its variant form 有り難い or “difficult to exist” referring to rare things. The question is, what is difficult or rare to exist? In Buddhism that “what” is life or one's encounter with Buddhism, which may be considered a philosophy or a way of life. 人身受け難し 今すでに受く 仏法聞き難し 今すでに聞く is what Shakyamuni (the name of the historical Buddha) taught. The essence of this teaching is that one has had the rare good fortune to be born a human being, and the further good fortune to encounter the teachings of Buddhism. Its message is that one should not waste this opportunity of being a human being blessed with Buddhist teachings.

Buddhism positions life at the center of everything. A life in Buddhism does not necessarily point only to a living entity; it also characterizes life force as a fundamental power or principle. In Buddhism, since the universe and the Earth are the environment for sentient beings, they are constructed by the common karma of the sentient beings themselves.

Today we say ありがとう to convey our appreciation to others. I hope to think the word can still emanate a sense of appreciation for life hidden in it when we say ありがとう.

Sufumi So

George Mason University, Fairfax, VA

Do you have a word or phrase in Japanese that informs your teaching? Please share them with other teachers of Japanese. Submit your essay (maximum of 300 words) to atj@colorado.edu.

ones, but also between Japanese-language organizations and foreign-language ones. In a nutshell, we should not allow the organization to be a loner. Instead, communication between local-level organizations (e.g., NECTJ, IMATJ, NCJTA) and national-level organizations (e.g., ATJ, NCJLT) is important; in many cases, national-level organizations should support regional ones. Also, maintaining communication between specific-language organizations and organizations of language in general (e.g., ACTFL, MLA) holds significant meaning, particularly for the purpose of making the language (e.g., Japanese) visible among other foreign languages. One such national-level organization is JNCL-NCLS (the Joint

National Committee for Languages and the National Council for Languages and International Studies), which is simultaneously a lobbying organization working on behalf of foreign language education. Thus, what I call networking has multiple meanings here.

The leadership workshop also introduced the importance of advocacy. Advocacy—the act or process of advocating—is certainly the key to the success of a school program. Advocating, not only to school faculty and administrators but also to parents, local communities, and policymakers, is important. In a broad sense, therefore, advocacy means influencing public policy and resource allocation decisions within political,

economic, and social systems and institutions. In this way, networking and advocacy are inseparable.

More importantly, advocating not only for Japanese-language education but also for foreign language education has significant implications, since if a Japanese program (as a specific-language program) is a tree, Japanese programs form a grove, and foreign language education forms a forest. At the individual level, improving our teaching skills will certainly attract more students. Advocating the presence and the significant role of our Japanese-language programs is certainly necessary. But we should not stop there. We need to make people aware of the value of foreign language education. Advocating the importance and benefits of learning Japanese and other languages holds significant meaning. In this way, we should move from micro-level to macro-level advocacy. Advocacy and networking are connected, multi-layered concepts.

To summarize, JFLA's leadership workshop in August covered diverse areas, including networking, advocacy, and grant-writing. At the conclusion, Mr. Kohki Kanno, Director of JFLA, gave each participant a certificate of participation that said: "In recognition of your completion of 14.5 hours of intensive classroom study and exemplary achievement from August 12th to August 13th, 2010 during the Leadership Workshop in Los Angeles for Teachers of the Japanese Language in North America by the Japan Foundation, Los Angeles with the support of AATJ, ATJ, and NCJLT, we hereby present you with this Certificate of Participation." We were all happy and proud.

Even more than that, the workshop was informative in promoting better articulation from every possible perspective. I learned a great deal from the Los Angeles leadership workshop session, and I am very grateful to have been given this opportunity. I look forward to attending the next leadership workshop session

in Boston in November during the ACTFL convention.

Occasional Papers Issue 10 **Published**

The tenth issue of ATJ's *Occasional Papers*, "Meeting Student Needs: Perspectives on Teaching Japanese for Professional Purposes," is being mailed together with this issue of the Newsletter. It is also posted, as a PDF file with active links to online resources that are cited, on the ATJ website. Issue 10, as well as back issues 7, 8, and 9, can be found and downloaded at www.aatj.org/atj/publications/occasionalpapers/index.html.

Minutes of ATJ Board Meeting, March 27, 2010, Philadelphia

(Approved by ATJ Board September 25, 2010)

In attendance: Officers Janet Ikeda (incoming President), Yasu-Hiko Tohsaku (outgoing President); Mari Noda (outgoing Past President); Board members Dan Dewey, Fumiko Nazikian, Mayumi Oka, Yoshiko Saito-Abbott, Steve Snyder, Motoko Tabuse, Michio Tsutsui; Journal coordinating editor Hiroshi Nara; staff members Kathy Ajisaka and Susan Schmidt.

Retiring Board members Dan Dewey, Mayumi Oka, and Noriko Iwasaki (not present) were thanked for their service. The names of three new Board members—Kimi Kondo-Brown, Masahiko Minami, and Sufumi So—were announced.

Membership report (Schmidt): Renewals are running behind but should reach the normal level of approximately 800 this spring. The Conference had 280 attendees, and some of them joined or renewed their membership on-site.

Financial report (Schmidt): The current financial report does not reflect the Conference receipts. Conference income is expected to be approximately \$10,000, enough to cover Conference expenses.

Conference report (Tabuse): The 2010 Annual Conference had 280 attendees and 65 presenters. Tohsaku thanked Tabuse for helping to develop a clear and transparent standardized review process for Conference submissions. Several

members reported receiving positive feedback on the move of the President's session and general membership meeting to Thursday evening from the previous slot on Saturday afternoon. Tohsaku translated the Call for Papers for the Nihongo Kyoiku Gakkai website, resulting in increased submissions and attendance from Japan.

It was suggested that unsuccessful paper proposers be given feedback from the review process. It was also suggested that the lunch break be extended to avoid late arrivals for the early afternoon sessions. Many attendees commented that the large number of concurrent sessions makes it difficult to attend all papers/sessions of interest. Suggestions for next year: an "individual papers" session to collect unrelated papers on unrelated subjects; encouraging more organized panel submissions.

Question: Should the panel chairs observe the original time schedule even when presenters cancel? Consensus: Yes, because some attendees plan to move between rooms to hear individual presentations, and it is important to have these at the originally scheduled times.

Tohsaku suggested that the chair of the Conference Committee remain in the registration area rather than chairing panels and that a more extensive "chair's packet" be provide instructing chairs on procedures.

Designated session topic for AAS 2011: A roundtable on teaching translation was suggested and approved.

Report on SIG Chairs meeting (Tohsaku): Philadelphia marked the first-ever SIG chairs meeting. Most of the discussion centered on how to handle Conference paper and panel proposals in a way that makes more sense. The consensus was that proposals related to SIG topics should be reviewed after being submitted by a panel that includes a representative of the appropriate SIG. The 2011 Call for Proposals will reflect this change. SIG issues will be considered more fully at the Fall Board meeting; information on SIG issues is being collected.

Bridging Project report (Schmidt): Annual funding for the Bridging Project from the Japan-US Friendship Commission supports ATJ staff salaries and benefits. Beginning this year there will be just one scholarship competition annually instead of two as in the past. Students will apply in April for scholarships for fall 2010, spring 2011, or full academic year. Japan-US Friendship Commission executive director Eric Gangloff is retiring, and