After the Massive Earthquake and Tsunami in Japan

On March 11th, 2011, Japan was hit by a massive earthquake and then a gigantic tsunami. Five UVM students were studying aboard in Japan at the time, four in Tokyo area and one in Nagoya. The Office of International Education contacted them immediately after the earthquake and luckily found that every one of them was sound and safe. The Japanese Program and its students have been working on a fundraising project through Students Rebuilt. Thanks to the Bezos Family Foundation, which is working with Students Rebuild, $2 for each origami crane will be donated towards Architecture for Humanity’s reconstruction efforts in Japan. Mrs. Kazuko Carlson, Senior Lecturer of Japanese, conducted a workshop on how to make origami cranes, and then many UVM students participated in making paper cranes, and thousands of have been made. Students taking the Advanced Japanese course led by Mrs. Carlson went to the Edmunds Elementary School to teach students there how to make paper cranes as well. This fundraising project was well responded throughout Vermont and even by Misawa US Air Base in Japan, which has just shipped their 19,920 cranes. 41,948 paper cranes in total have been made by UVM students and schools students as well as individuals from all over Vermont.

Chinese Talent Shows by Chinese Language Students

On March 21 and on April 4, Chinese language students at all levels enjoyed an opportunity to perform in front of their classmates and their Chinese language teachers during a Chinese Talent Show.

The 3rd, 4th, and 5th Year Chinese language students held their Chinese Talent Show on March 21. There were twelve performances including dialogues, skits, comic talks, puppet shows, talk shows, self-made video shows by over 30 students. The 1st and 2nd Year Chinese language students held their Chinese Talent Show on April 4. Over 70 students participated in 36 show items, including monologues, dialogues, and skits.

Chinese language students wrote their own scripts and consulted with their instructors for grammar and idiomatic usages. They practiced and rehearsed, so that they could speak as fluently and accurately as possible during their performance. Chinese language students enjoyed each other’s performances in Chinese and were entertained by their fellow students’ humor and creativity in Chinese. All Chinese language instructors were impressed by their students’ talent in Chinese.
Japanese Conversation Hour Started

A new Japanese Conversation Hour started this semester. Students studying Japanese can practice speaking with Ms. Yui Gokita, a graduate of International Christian University, Tokyo, and a former TA of Japanese language classes at St. Lawrence University. Five to ten students meet every Thursday from 4-5 pm in A101, L/L. Ms. Gokita encourages students to speak Japanese.

Eric Hendel, a JAPN 002 student, says “To me the best part of the Japanese Conversation Hour is that it’s like attending a class except without the ordinary pressures. We can make mistakes and play around with the language as we try to figure out how to express what we’re trying to say. It’s a fun way to supplement the material we’re covering in class and great to learn from students from different levels of the program.”

Another Japanese language student Brittney Haynes says: “It’s definitely been a beneficial part of my Japanese language experience. Having the opportunity to review the vocabulary and practice speaking in a relaxed setting has helped me in my understanding of the language. There has also been a large improvement in my performance in class. I feel much more comfortable speaking than I would without the conversation hour.”

From a Former Student

After I graduated from UVM with my BA in Japanese last year, I knew that I wanted to teach English in Japan. However, at that time, the field was so competitive that I couldn’t find the right job for me. I was so discouraged but I realized that I needed to make myself more marketable rather than stay home and complain! I am now pursuing my Master’s Degree in Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages (TESOL) and my K-12 teaching license at St. Michael’s College. My favorite part of the program is that I get to meet people from all over the world in my classes. When I’m not in class, I am tutoring English Language Learners at schools throughout Vermont and I’m now teaching an after school class about Japanese Culture. Most recently, I have been having my students help me make 1,000 paper cranes to send to Japan.

--Anna Walsh

News from Arabic Program

Darius Jonathan is the Arabic language instructor, and he is still working on a textbook of Arabic for our Beginners of Arabic at UVM.

Two of his Arabic language students, Sidney Upchurch and Kathryn Worley went to Morocco on a Study Abroad Program in the spring of 2010. While they were at Morocco, they studied Arabic, and both of them were placed with Moroccan families, where they enjoyed the cultural immersion.

This spring semester, Jessica Salameh, another Arabic language student, is in Jordan studying Arabic and Middle Eastern politics. Jessica is that she is doing well in spite of the wave of youth riots spreading in the country.

Arabic Program is doing well. The academic year 2010-2011 witnessed opening of our Arabic House Program in the Living and Learning Center. Students living in the Arabic House enjoyed a taste of Arab cooking – commonly known as Middle Eastern Cooking. The resident program Director Bayan organized cultural dance activities in which she brought in all kinds of dances for all Living and Learning Center residents.

Next year the Arabic House is planning to start a weekly Arabic table at L/L so that our Arabic students will have a chance to converse in Arabic over lunch or tea.

Greta Mattessich, Chinese language student graduated in May 2009, has been admitted into Georgetown University Law School and will be pursuing a dual degree in Law and the Master of Science in Foreign Service. She studied abroad in Spain and China as an undergraduate at UVM.
Faculty Members’ Activities

Mutsumi Corson attended a workshop at the Center for Teaching and Learning and learned how to podcast video clips at the UVM podcasting sites.

This semester, she organized and assisted with Japanese cultural activities, such as the Japanese tea ceremony workshop, J-POP (Japanese popular music) sessions, for the Japanese House at the Global Village.

During the Biannual Japanese Festival at St. Michael’s College in March, she played the Koto, a Japanese thirteen-stringed instrument as part of a group performance and also volunteered to help in the Kimono-Try-on section.

Kazuko Carlson has been instrumental in the origami crane project at UVM to raise money for the earthquake relief in Japan. Over $80,000 worth of paper cranes have been made.

She will hold a calligraphy workshop for the Japanese language students to help them to learn how to write Japanese characters properly. She will also guide her students in JAPN102 & 222 to teach about Japan at Milton High School and Essex High School as part of their service-learning projects.

Kyle Ikeda was on junior faculty leave for Fall 2010, working on his book manuscript on Okinawan writer Medoruma Shun and war memories of the Battle of Okinawa in his fiction. His article on unarticulated memory in Medoruma Shun’s early war fiction was accepted for publication in the journal Positions: East Asia Cultures Critique, and his revised translation of Medoruma’s short story “Spirit Stuffing” (Mabuigumi) was requested for republication in the literary journal MANOA.

He also presented his research at the Modern Languages Association’s annual meeting in January in Los Angeles, and at the Association of Teachers of Japanese conference, in conjunction with the AAS meeting in April in Hawaii.

He chaired two sessions of the New England Association for Asian Studies conference held at UVM in November of 2010, and is currently on the honor’s thesis committee of students John DeCosta and Akane Yamamoto.

Diana Sun has continued to lead the Chinese Language Partners Program in the spring of 2011.

Recently, she served as a peer reviewer upon the invitation by Vermont Department of Education to assess the qualification of the two applicants who were seeking a Vermont teaching license in the Chinese language.

She will also be presenting a paper on “Teaching Advanced Grammar in a Holistic and Comprehensive Way” at the 9th International Conference on Chinese Pedagogy, which is to be held in Beijing on July 24-26 of 2011.

John Yin will be presenting a paper entitled “Primary Exploration on Transition from Teaching Chinese to Foreigners to Teaching Chinese Globally” at the 9th International Conference on Chinese Pedagogy in Beijing on July 24-26, 2011.

His article entitled “Analytical Reasoning for Applying Computer Technologies to Chinese Character Teaching at the Entry Level” has been accepted and will be included in the book Applications of Educational Information Technology in Chinese Language Teaching: Global Viewpoints of the 21st Century, which is to be published by Nanjing University Press in 2011.

He is now serving as a member of the Organizing Committee for the 9th International Conference to be held in Beijing. He reviewed over 53 paper abstracts and 11 completed papers for the Conference.

He is also serving as the Program Chair for the 2011 ACTFL/CLTA Annual Meeting, which will be held in Denver on November 18-21, 2011. In the last few months, he has been busy coordinating the process for reviewing the 66 panel proposals and 105 paper proposals that have been received. □
Japanese Extracurricular Activities

Calligraphy Art Workshop
Cameron Ingpen, junior, who studied abroad at Aoyama Gakuin University, Tokyo for one year, studied calligraphy art in Japan. He had a workshop on March 1, 2011 and shared his calligraphy skills with students in the Japanese House at the Global Village and Japanese language classes.

Tea Ceremony Workshop
Atsuko Harada, an exchange student from Kansai Gaidai University, Okayama, Japan, performed the Japanese Tea Ceremony at the tea ceremony workshop on April 5, 2011. The Japanese House members and German House members enjoyed her performance with matcha, Japanese powdered tea, and sweets.

Guest Speaker
Professor David Stahl from Binghamton University was to give a lecture entitled “Victimization and Response-Ability: Remembering, Representing and Working Through Trauma in Grave of the Fireflies” on October 22, 2010, and it was well-attended by many students in the Japanese and Asian Studies programs.

J-Pop First Performance
J-Pop (Japanese Pop) presented their first performance on December 3rd, 2010. Ms. Megumi Esselstrom, a certified music instructor, has been leading this group since the spring of 2010. They meet 6:00-7:30 every other Friday in CM 216, L/L in the spring of 2011.

Chinese Extracurricular Activities

Chinese Lantern Festival
The Chinese Lantern Festival occurred on Feb. 17 this year. Members of the Chinese House led by David Zhang and Xiaofeng Zheng organized a party at Fireplace Lounge.

At the party, students learned how to make rice dumplings with different stuffing, and they tasted the sticky rice dumplings of their own making.

Chinese Cuisine
Chinese House members have had three cuisine get-togethers in the spring of 2011.

Chinese language students continue meet and talk with USPP students from China every Tuesday night for one hour this semester to improve their target language. The topics of their weekly meetings this spring semester include Chinese New Year Celebration, Chinese Lantern Festival, Oscar Winning Films, Spring Break, International Women’s Day, Birthday Celebration, Population Control, New Trends, and Special Cuisine. Active participating members will be invited to a celebration dinner at a local Chinese restaurant at the end of this semester.

Dishes made by Chinese House members.

Ms. Tian, Ms Hou, and Mr. Zhang, visiting instructors from China, taught them how to make Chinese noodles, pancakes, and other delicious dishes such as scrambled eggs with tomatoes.

Language Exchange Hour
Learning how to make three different northern styles of Chinese noodles.