



Words from the President

President
Teruko Honjo

Hello everyone, scholars and alumni of the Honjo International Scholarship Foundation. How are you? I often think of you all—about how you are all doing in different parts of the world now.

The Honjo International Scholarship Foundation was established on December 25, 1996, and our first generation of scholars was selected in 1997. And this year, in 2016, we welcomed our 20th generation. Since the beginning of our foundation, we have always wished for peace and prosperous development in every part of the world and have supported students who may become leaders in their countries. To that end, our system allows any student to apply for a scholarship, regardless of nationality or research area. As of 2016, the number of foreign and Japanese students who have become Honjo scholars has grown to about 600 students from 76 countries.

Our foundation not only provides scholarships, but conducts a range of other activities. We have visited those affected by the Great East Japan Earthquake for four consecutive years. This July, we held the "Iwate Prefectural University International Relief Forum" in Morioka City,

together with Iwate Prefectural University. In the "HISF Workshop", our alumni speak about their various research areas in a manner that is easy to understand and fun to listen to. Today, not only our scholars and alumni, but also many members of the general public participate in this workshop, where they have opportunities to actively communicate with each other. We also hold reunions overseas, starting from China and Taiwan, where we have many alumni. Please do put your hands up to host a reunion in your own country. And we plan to organize various activities this year too, so please join us.

On August 19 and 20, 2017, we will hold the HISF 20th Anniversary International Symposium in Tokyo. I would like to express my sincere gratitude to all of our alumni around the world who have provided their support in our preparations for the symposium. I hope that everyone will be able to attend the symposium.

I hope to continue supporting young people who are eager and passionate, and thereby contribute to international peace. I will do my best to support you as you raise your sights and become bridges between your own countries and Japan.

Masanori Honjo Memorial The 20th Anniversary International Symposium

Honjo International Scholarship Foundation will organize the international symposium to celebrate 20th anniversary in August 18~19, 2017 at Tokyo International Exchange Center "Plaza Heisei". Your registration is now accepted.

We are expecting all of alumni of HISF will gather to join us in the events like paper presentation sessions, forums, workshops, panel discussion and keynote speech and meet old friends and establish new networks with people coming from all over the world.

<http://www.hisf.or.jp/20anniversary/>



Guideline for Scholarship and Research Fellowship in 2016~2017

Scholarship Program

- **Scholarship for Foreign Students**
For Foreign students studying in Japanese graduate school
- **Scholarship for Japanese Domestic Students**
For Japanese students studying in Japanese graduate school
- **Scholarship for Japanese International Students**
For Japanese students studying in graduate school in overseas

Overseas Scholarship Program

- Jack Lewis Scholarship Program (University of Southern California)
- Professor Misawa Scholarship Program (University of Hawaii)
- JMSA Scholarship Program (Japanese Medical Society in America)
- JAA Scholarship Program (Japan Association in America)
- CUSSW Scholarship Program (Columbia University School of Social Work)

Research Fellowship Program

- **食と健康研究助成金**
- **Food and Health Research Fellowship Program**

This program is to support the research to clarify the efficiency of food or ingredient of food to maintain good health by means of assay targeting human beings or alternate assay without using animal.

※The detailed information about the application is announced on our website. Application forms are available there, too.
※The application of Overseas Scholarship Program is operated by partnership bodies. Please visit their website for detailed information.

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Looking Back on Seven Years at University of Paris

Akihide Negi, Ph.D.
(2012-2014 Scholarship Recipient)

Born in Okayama, Japan. A Project Researcher at Integral Human Science Program for Cultural Diversity in The University of Tokyo Graduated from Master's Course of Graduate School of Arts and Sciences, Tokyo University and Master's Course of Graduate School of History, Literature and Social Science, University of Paris 8, in 2009; proceeded to Ph.D. course of Graduate School of Literature and Comparative Literature, University of Paris 4



Started study in France in the Fall of 2008

Last year I submitted my doctoral thesis and returned to Japan after spending seven years in France, including two years as a recipient of a scholarship from the Honjo International Scholarship Foundation. It took a little longer than I had expected, but I am now relieved that I have fulfilled all of my goals. Also, I am really satisfied with my thesis because could show everything what I have learnt and all my efforts in my writing.

I went to France in the fall of 2008, when I was in the second year of my Ph.D. in Japan. Before I went, the Euro was very strong, so I was worried about my economic situation and I was unsure about how long I would be able to stay there. During my first year in France, I registered in the Master II course and acquired another Master's degree. Between attending classes, doing homework and writing my Master's thesis, that first year went really quickly. After starting my Doctoral course I spent more time preparing for conferences, and in my free time I also read books and worked on my thesis. On top of this, I tried to improve my French by conversing with my French friends every week and went on trips whenever I had some extra free time.

Since my field is social sciences, I was not subject to requirements such as having to be in my office during specific hours, either in Japan or France. It was all up to me, and all I had to do was write papers and show my progress to my advisor. It was hard to enjoy this freedom. I struggled to find the best way to configure all of the chapters for my thesis. After discussing with my friends and reading others' theses, I came to finalize the concept for my own thesis. However, nothing was solved. I knew how to conclude my thesis, but I struggled to develop its structure to logically lead to that conclusion. Since the term of my registration was fixed, I kept writing day after day, 24/7. It was really tough, but it was also a very precious experience for me because I truly focused on thinking only about my research.

Research on Jean-Paul Sartre

I started researching a French philosopher, Jean-Paul Sartre (1905-80) when I was in my Master's course in Japan. Sartre wrote a series of biographical monographies on other writers and poets, including Genet, Mallarme, and Flaubert. I assumed that Sartre's coherent system of thought related to his aesthetics and ethics would be found in those monographies. Moreover, I suspected that there are many different points of

view between this system of thought and his famous essay on literature, *What is literature?* (1947). Thus, I aimed to prove this potential aesthetics-ethics system. In a manner of speaking, I aimed to reconfigure a second *What is literature?* from these reviews, which Sartre had not crafted into a book on literary theory. He was a writer and philosopher, and at the same time, he was involved in political activities. Because his text was always multi-faceted, in my actual doctoral thesis, I had to deal with a wide variety of themes, such as Christian theology, German phenomenology, his stance toward Marxism, and his thoughts on painting.

Now I am back in Japan and editing my doctoral thesis, aiming at its publication in France someday in the future, while looking for a teaching job. During the period of my research, I had to focus on finding agreement between the different kinds of expert in my narrow field. But because my "experts" henceforth are going to be students, I will need to explain many kinds of topics as simply as I can. This is going to be a big change, and I need more experience and training.

If you try your best, things will change, too.

Because there are many international students in our HISF Family, one piece of advice I would like offer from my experiences is that you should not care that you are a foreigner. Then you should try applying for as many conferences as possible. If you are in a social sciences field, you have no experimental data; rather, you must use your brain and write papers using your own words. Being in this field, I felt that I was at a huge disadvantage compared to native speakers. However, if you try your best, things will change too, and people around you will care about you and help you with your research. I would like you to not fear making mistakes because you are a foreigner, but to keep trying continuously. Then all of your efforts will pay off sometime in the near future.



At the PhD thesis defense

Walking with Sofya Suidasari, tracing her 12 years in Japan

Sofya Suidasari, Ph.D.
(2013-2016 Scholarship Recipient)

Born in Yogyakarta in Indonesia. She works for R&D division of Aliment Co. Ltd. She came to Japan for the first time in 2004 as a high school student on exchange program. She obtained Ph.D. at Hiroshima University in 2016.



In Feb 2016, Sofya Suidasari, who is from Indonesia, finally finished her long 10 years of student life in Japan. In April, she started work at a Japanese company. I visited various people in Nara, Tokyo, and Hiroshima, where she has spent the past 13 years, and gathered information about Sofya. I also talked to some of her friends and classmates about the things she had told them during those 13 years.

High school years in the ancient city of Nara



At the home of Aoki Family

Sofya came to the Koriyama High School, located in the ancient city of Nara, in 2005 as part of a 10-month student exchange program. Sofya's host family was the Aoki family, and they were selected from among the families of the students that were studying at the same high school. There were 6 members of the Aoki family living in the same house, including 3 children that were of a

similar age to Sofya, the father and mother, as well as one of the children's grandmother. The mother worked as a national registered dietitian, and was the first person to inspire Sofya into following the path of studying nutrition.

Although the grandmother is now 90 years old, she is still teaching Japanese calligraphy. Since the mother was working during the day, it was actually the grandmother who had more opportunity to spend time with Sofya, so she was able to tell us many stories about Sofya.

Sofya grew up in a big family in Indonesia, with many brothers and sisters. She is also the oldest child, so she was very good at taking care of the younger children and instructing them in what to do. She asked if she could help the Aoki children to do the chores and made a roster for things like cleaning the toilet and bathroom. Even after Sofya left and went back to Indonesia, the Aoki children have continued this habit.

Koriyama is a town that values tradition, and is lined with old Japanese style houses. Sofya helped the Aoki family with their work at the farm. She also actively participated in the autumn festival and Rice Cake tournament events that took place at the Shrine, and became a very popular person in the neighborhood.

Once school started, the grandmother noticed that there were days when Sofya left to go to school earlier than usual. Later on, she figured out that Sofya had asked all her classmates for their birth dates, and when it was someone's birthday, she always went to school early that day so that she could write "Happy Birthday" on the blackboard in the classroom to make her classmates happy.

Sofya's best friend, Miki, said that she had learnt the phrase, "That's the way I am," from Sofya. She said that she always remembered the phrase, especially when she was facing difficulties at work, or during her daily life. The phrase is the title of a song by Celine Dion, and it basically means "even if you are different to others, as long as you think you are right, then just do what you think is right."

It was around this time that Sofya started to tell others that she will become the President of Indonesia one day. Her host family, her High School class teacher, Maeda, her best friend Miki, all remember her saying this. The reason that she said this was because she said she wanted to "change Indonesia." When Sofya was 17 years old, she had learned a lot about life in Japan, and could see her mother country, Indonesia, from the perspective of a foreign country. It made Sofya think about this, and so she decided that she wanted to become the President so that she could change Indonesia?

The years at the Nutrition College in Tokyo

After she finished her 10-month exchange program, Sofya went back to Indonesia to apply for a government scholarship, and then she came back to Japan again. After finishing her Japanese program at a language school, she entered the Nutrition College in Ikebuguro, Tokyo. During the years she was studying at college, Sofya was trying very hard, because the rules of the scholarship meant that if she received a Grade of C for any subject, the scholarship would be withdrawn and she would have to go back to Indonesia since she would not be able to afford to pay for the tuition by herself. Once, when some other students tried to disrupt a class, she even shouted at them and told them that if they didn't want to study, then could they please leave the room, because she was trying so hard to study and stay in Japan!

The terminology used in the study of Nutrition is often very difficult, and it sometimes took Sofya an hour and a half just to read a single page. Mr. Gotou, Sofya's class's teacher, always stayed behind and helped her with the vocabulary. Sofya started on her path towards studying Nutrition in such a difficult environment, but she decided that she wanted to bring the school lunch system to Indonesia, establish a Nutrition College in the country, and improve the health and education systems back in her home country. As a result, she began to think that building networks with the people around her was very important so that she could achieve those goals. Consequently, after she moved to the University in Hiroshima to continue her studies, she founded the ASEAN overseas students association at the university.

Studying for a PhD at Hiroshima University.

After studying at the Nutrition College for 2 years, Sofya went to the Hiroshima University to continue her study, where she met Prof. Kato of the Food Science Faculty. Prof. Kato is a professor with a strong character, and enjoys discussion and debate.

The first thing Prof. Kato said was, "Sofya will become the President of Indonesia one day." That was also something Sofya had said to other people when she was at Koriyama High School. Prof. Kato analyzed the specific reasons more objectively, saying, "She is someone who is going to be the leader of the country. She is not the type of person to be used by others. She also said that she wants to build a school."

I asked Prof. Kato how Sofya was as a researcher. He said, "She will never do things that are not interesting. She will never do things that she cannot be convinced about. She judges intuitively whether or not the theme of the research or the experiments will be interesting. In the world of science, it is important to have the intuition and the sense to become involved in the right thing. Whether the theme of the research is interesting or not is more important than the value of the research. Also, discussion is very important, too. She says the things that she wants to say, and she thinks using her brain. I think this type of person will create new fields of research."

Lastly

Born in Indonesia, but maturing in Japan, Sofya is now working for a Japanese company that produces medicines and supplements, while trying to guide people in Indonesia towards a healthier life. I don't think it will be long until her dream of seeing smiling faces on healthy Indonesia children comes true.



With Prof. Norihisa Kato

(This article was written by Itsuko Kawashima)



Kaori Fukumoto
(2016~Present Japanese Student in Overseas Program)

Born in Yamaguchi, Japan. She graduated Prefectural University of Hiroshima, Faculty of Life and Environmental Sciences in 2012, and proceeded Graduate School of Environmental Science and Technology, Okayama University and then she is currently enrolled in University of Cologne and engaging in the research of plant hormone crosstalk at department of plant microbe interactions in the Max Planck Institute.

Scholars
in Action

Beliefs ~What I learned at the workshop in the Max Planck Institute~

Workshop apart from research

I am conducting research at the Max Planck Institute in Germany, where they hold free workshops several times a year. Various topics are covered, and sometimes we spend two to four days studying presentation skills or career planning. I had never experienced such workshops back in Japan, so it was a new experience for me to see all of the participants really joining in and debating whatever topic we were given. Also, we formed groups and created diagrams on paper to show our conclusions. Those activities form the main part of each workshop. I really enjoy this and I always look forward to each new debate. In addition, apart from my research, I haven't had much experience showing my work, so I have been trying to participate in as many such events as possible. In one session, we discussed Conflict Management.

Conflict Management

At the beginning of this particular session, we played a game using 10 sticks and a frame. A lecturer showed us the sticks and told us that they are used in some places in America for fortune-telling. She held the sticks inside the frame perpendicularly and then released them. Then she told us, "No.3: It's going to be sunny tomorrow" or after another throw, "No.1: fried potatoes for dinner". During the game, we were supposed to predict what number she was going to say and try to detect tricks. Suspected that there must be some routine for her to say what comes next, I carefully watched how the sticks were scattered or piled. However, I couldn't see the trick. I also suspected that there must be implication in her fortune-telling, but I couldn't find any information regarding to the number that she said. Then she gave us a hint, telling us to look inside the frame, whereupon I finally saw that her finger was inside the frame when she called out the number. I had been thoroughly fooled. The frame, the sticks, the fortune-telling were all fake, and they

had been used to distract our attention. Using this game, she emphasized that we must reconsider whether we are seeing what really is. We may not necessarily be seeing the truth, and if we observe something from a different angle, we may come to other decisions.

Beliefs can be a trouble

In the next step after the game, we started to think about how we can solve conflicts on the base of our own experiences of conflict. Conflicts can be divided into two groups: our own conflicts and conflicts with others. Our own conflicts are those that arise when we have to make a choice between preferable or less preferable options, or those that arise when you choose a preferable option, a less preferable one comes with it. For example, there are always conflicts between what we really want to do and what our work environment or family want us to do. Such conflicts are our "own conflicts". The other type of conflicts is that which arises between us and other people, whom we have professional or private relationship with, when we hold differing or negative opinions about each other. While I profoundly considered about the both types of conflicts, I began to think that beliefs can be a huge source of trouble. People suffer from misconceptions when they pretend to see someone else's point of view, or they can be selfish and not see what other people want from them. Also, people underestimate themselves. These factors are among the causes of conflict. This reminds me of how I was tricked in the game.

However, I would like to say that believing in your own thoughts is not always a bad thing. Positive beliefs can make your life better. I came to Germany and started my Ph.D. research out of a belief that I can do this. You must ask yourself whether your beliefs reflect the facts or not, and whether your thoughts have a good effect or a bad effect.



Takumi Ohashi
(2014~Present Japanese Graduate Student Program)

Born in Nagano, Japan. He has engaged in a research of semiconductor at Interdisciplinary Graduate School of Science and Engineering, Tokyo Institute of Technology and also he has been enrolled in master course of Technology and Innovation Management, School of Environment and Society in Tokyo Tech to be involved in a research of education from the view point of social linguistics and cognitive psychology.

Scholars
in Action

To obtain two different axes

To fulfil my goal of working in education in developing countries in the near future, I aim to fortify my axes of science & technology and education through my semiconductor research in a doctoral program and my activities in educational NPOs and student-run organizations. Although these two axes seem to be completely different, the heart-warming support I have received from Honjo International Scholarship Foundation is allowing me to pursue both of them. In this article, I would like to express my deepest gratitude by describing my experiences in one of these axes: "education".

Japan-Bangladesh Sister School Project

Through the workshops and lectures that I have conducted over a period of two years, I have reached about 3,500 children in many countries. One of these events was the Japan-Bangladesh Sister School Project. This was an international exchange event based on a robotics workshop, at which more than 750 children both in Japan and Bangladesh enjoyed creating robots. I was also satisfied with their wonderful smiles.

However, one question occurred to me: "Is it 'good' for children—who might still be happy without the new technology that I brought—to be provided with cutting-edge knowledge just the same as Japanese children?" This question then became, "how can we judge what things are 'good' to provide to children without taking into account their circumstances?" The question of "good" or "bad" would be judged by the receivers—namely the children—and it depends on their surroundings. Therefore, we have to judge the best choices for the receivers based on an understanding of their surroundings. To do this, I realized that my limited experiences so far must be complemented by new abilities and experiences that will enable me to observe the situation more objectively.



At Robot workshop in Bangladesh

Stockholm International Youth Science Seminar *

I took part in the Stockholm International Youth Science Seminar (SIYSS) with the goal of broadening my horizons and conversing with lots of wonderful young scientists from various countries. Run in conjunction with Nobel Week, the SIYSS is an annual weeklong international event for young scientists. This year, the seminar hosted 25 young scientists from all over the world including me. Together, we shared in many experiences including the Nobel festivities, participating in discussions on the ethics of science and technology, and presenting our own research to more than 500 local high school students.

By conversing with other young scientists, I was so surprised that they had a great deal of knowledge regarding various international situations and that they had their own concrete opinions on each topic. Further, they had the ability to deliver their opinions to everyone. These facts made me think about how they have developed their opinions so far. One of the SIYSS events, the ethics seminar, really brought this home to me. We faced such tough questions on ethical issues and unfortunately

had insufficient time to discuss them all; however, they tried to construct their opinions in great detail based on their own background and knowledge. I thought that this was the result of deep thought processes that reflected their stance toward various daily encountered problems, and it made me realize that I should have a much wider view than before.

When I attended a reception held by the Japanese embassy, I had an impressive opportunity to speak with Prof. Satoshi Omura, the laureate in the field of Physiology or Medicine. Because of my experience described above, I am interested in education in developing countries. Therefore, I asked Prof. Omura—who has conducted research for people in various countries—what is the most important point when conducting projects with a focus overseas. He mentioned that "human networks and connections are important points" and he emphasized that connections with others are the platform for obtaining fruitful results. I realized that since we cannot do anything without others, it is necessary to define the appropriate position from which to work in the face of the great challenges of "education in developing countries". This lesson became one of my important milestones in considering my future career.

*Each year, The Japan Prize Foundation provides an opportunity for young scholars to exchange opinions with their peers on an international level by sending two Japanese students to the Stockholm International Youth Science Seminar hosted by the Swedish Federation of Young Scientists with the support of the Nobel Foundation.



With Prof. Satoshi Omura

The axes of "science & technology" and "education"

A huge number of children cannot access education due to limitations in their circumstances. In order to change this situation, I would like to use "science & technology" to develop the socioeconomic infrastructure and thereby realize a situation where anyone can access education. This is my reason for pursuing the axes of "science & technology" and "education".

Over these two years, I have received an enormous number of precious experiences thanks to the great support of the Honjo International Scholarship Foundation. This has reminded me once again of the importance of connections with people. Last but not least, I would like to express my gratitude to all those who have given me these wonderful opportunities. By using the precious lessons these opportunities have given me and my connections with the people I have met, I will strive to achieve my goals in the future.



With 25 students from all over the world and local students who hosted us for nine-day seminar in Stockholm

A letter from
Hawaii



Mikhail Romanchuk
(2015 UH Program / United States)

Born in Vladivostok, Russia. Graduated University of Hawai'i-Manoa in 2016
Bachelor of Business Administration in Finance

Japan Spring 2015: Struggles and Accomplishments In a New Culture

My name is Mikhail Romanchuk and I had the honor and privilege of studying at Keio University in Tokyo, Japan during the 2015 spring semester and participating in various socially enriching events as a Honjo International Scholarship recipient. I am a Finance and International Business double major with strong desire to obtain business level proficiency in Japanese. Hence, when I researched the student exchange opportunities available to me in the preceding semester, I knew fairly quickly that an exchange to Japan would not only enable me to assess my strengths and weaknesses in an unfamiliar setting, but also provide me with invaluable tools and experience to better prepare myself for the professional world. Nevertheless, my achievements could not have been realized without overcoming various challenges throughout my stay, the lessons of which I am certain will continue to impact my life considerably.

"Japanese Way"

First and foremost, a significant hurdle I worked to overcome during my exchange to Japan revolved around reconciling the differences between the methods I employed to address ordinary matters with the "Japanese way" of accomplishing the same tasks. It seemed to me that even if a more efficient way existed to accomplish a given task, unless it had been previously introduced in Japan and the success was empirically verified, the Japanese would more than likely use the methods known to them out of safety. This was made most apparent to me at Sumitomo Mitsui Banking Corporation where I opened a student bank account to house my scholarship funds. At this point, my Japanese was sufficient for processing simple transactions, making basic inquiries, and engaging in light conversation. With careful listening, I believed that I could effectively follow the associate's instructions in Japanese and I figured they were accustomed to handling foreign clients. However, I never expected filling the forms to open my account would be as tedious of an ordeal as it was. While the instructions seemed clear to me, each time I made a mistake, even a slight smudge in a letter, I was required to input my signature and a special 4-digit pin number, indicating that I was indeed the one who corrected the error. Once I completed the necessary forms after three attempts, my foreign account was ready to accept the fund deposit from Honjo Foundation. The process subsequently made me critical of the meticulous nature of Japanese organization that I had admired, but at the same time, I appreciated the professionalism the associates exhibited towards me as well as their genuine desire to assist me with my rather troublesome matters.

Most arduous challenge

Perhaps the most arduous challenge for me was to accept the fact that I was still learning the language and making mistakes in Japanese conversation was inevitable. Sometimes I would plan my speech inside my mind, but accidentally replace a verb with one of a similar sound, like 働いて (English: to be employed) in place of 払って (English: to pay), as I delivered it. Therefore, when I asked an employee at a conveyor belt sushi place, "すみません、働いてもいいですか。" I inadvertently requested to work there. The difference was substantial enough that it caused confusion and even more so, embarrassment for me. Luckily, I managed to communicate to them that I wanted to pay for my dinner, but upon exiting the restaurant, I became very

upset with myself. The remainder of the evening consisted of me pondering how I could be so foolish as to make a novice mistake like that in public. Other times, within a given conversation, I would mistakenly switch between the polite and plain forms of speech, which to native Japanese speakers is not appropriate in any type of setting. The polite form is designed for use among acquaintances and between subordinates and superiors while the plain form is reserved for conversations between friends and family members. I resented making these mistakes because I felt it only affirmed to those around me how inexperienced I was in the language and that at most, it served as amusement to them. Eventually, I conditioned myself to embrace my errors and work to ensure that they would occur less frequently. Soon after, I began to notice that I possessed a more positive outlook of my time in Japan and it became considerably easier for me to appreciate the culture more as a result.

Japan transformed me

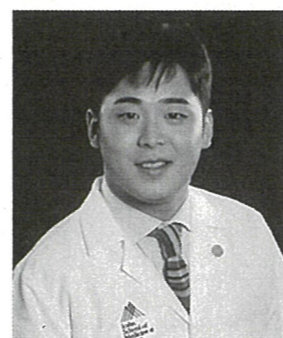
As a student affiliate of Honjo Foundation, I felt very fortunate to meet an incredibly diverse group of individuals and learning about their backgrounds and their relationships with Japan. Partaking in community service and team building events with these students opened me up to the reality of how globalized Japanese culture has become, with students from nearly all seven continents coming to Japan to further pursue their scholastic endeavors in a setting far different from their respective home countries. Additionally, as we were all foreign students experiencing Japanese culture, I felt I could easily relate to them in regard to the challenges associated with cultural immersion and the methods they employed to better understand the intricacies of their own environments within Japan.

Overall, I can certainly say Japan transformed me into a wiser, more culturally aware individual. In addition to enhancing my knowledge of finance and obtaining a basic grasp of the business environment in Japan, I enjoyed the rare opportunity of immersing myself in a culture with beliefs and values deeply contrasting those to which I am accustomed through daily interaction with the local population and relying heavily on my knowledge of Japanese to accomplish ordinary tasks. Moreover, I established and maintained a vast network of friends and acquaintances from countries across the globe who exposed me to a portion of their values and beliefs linked to their respective cultures. Only in a foreign country as unique as Japan could I truly understand what it meant to be an American.



At Rikuzen-Takata city - joined volunteer work to support recovery from East Japan Earthquake occurred in 2011.

A letter from
New York



Kenji Fujitani
(2015-2017 JMSA program / United States)

Born in Hyogo, Japan.
2012-Present Icahn School of Medicine at Mount Sinai

Medical Education in US and Experience in Japan

I have been involved in many projects with Japanese Medical Society of America (JMSA) ever since the beginning of medical school, and I would like to highlight some of the progress for my main scholarships projects here within the past year.

Shadowing and Mentorship Program:

I worked to expand my JMSA shadowing program that I began last year for members-in-training (high school, college, medical students, residents, fellows). As I progressed through high school, college, and medical school, I discovered that many students do not have a full understanding of what physicians or other healthcare professionals do on a daily basis. Because medical school is a huge commitment that requires students to sacrifice other opportunities they could have undertaken, understanding the field and its future prospects are crucial. However, particularly for these trainees, opportunities to shadow have become more rare, if not nearly impossible, in recent years with patient privacy enhancements, hospital requirements, and other restrictions. Furthermore, offering such opportunities to international students from Japan allows an easier connection between Japanese and American medical professionals.

Initially, my JMSA shadowing program's matching system focused on New York, but it has now expanded to cities such as Detroit and Chicago. My goal is to spread JMSA's shadowing program all throughout the United States so we could help as many people as we can. More importantly, with another JMSA student's help, I have added a second component to JMSA shadowing program – the mentorship/advising program – and renamed the program to JMSA Shadowing And Mentorship Program. This advisory component will help high school, college, international, and medical students who are interested in pursuing a healthcare profession. Application processes are getting more and more competitive each year, and having someone for guidance to ask questions is very helpful when determining which path to take. I, along with many other students, have looked for advisers during this nerve-wracking period and utilizing JMSA's robust physicians as both mentors and advisors will only benefit these students. I have modified the two surveys/applications I created for the JMSA shadowing program in order to fit the mentorship component. We continue to recruit volunteer healthcare providers as well as screen applications from students who are interested in this program.

Like the shadowing experience, students are encouraged to mold their experiences to best fit their needs. For instance, I will meet with a student and his parent next week under the JMSA mentorship/advising program for a brief chat to help him find a right approach for him as he prepares for college.

Clinical Rotation in Japan:

My involvement in Japan continues to grow. I recently returned from an international medical clinical exchange program with Keio and Jikei medical schools in Tokyo, Japan. My aim was not only to learn about the Japanese healthcare system and about the Japanese medical

licensing exam, but also to create connections with Keio and Jikei professors, residents, and students. I wanted to help those interested in making the transition to the United States and build valuable connections with upcoming, younger generation physicians in Japan. These connections will allow us to foster lifelong relationships and ease information exchange between the two communities/countries. Another benefit is the ability to expand JMSA's shadowing and mentorship program to Japan.

During my rotations, professors from both universities taught me very well and exposed me to a diverse range of healthcare opportunities. For example, I rotated in inpatient wards, outpatient clinics, surgery operations, departmental conferences, and national "soukai" conferences in radiology, ophthalmology, and internal medicine. Through these exposures, I strengthened my Japanese medical terminology and learned the differences between American and Japanese healthcare systems. Couple overall differences were 1) the vertical structure of Japanese healthcare departments, 2) the high quality but accessible and relatively cheap cost of healthcare in Japan, 3) patient compliance and willingness to accept physician recommendations in Japan, and 4) the value of connections among doctors in Japan, especially during referrals. My goal is to use this knowledge to create a combined healthcare system where I incorporate the positive aspects of the two countries, while minimizing the negatives.

As the first student to rotate to Keio and Jikei medical schools from Mount Sinai, I would like to increase our connections between the two schools. With Dr. Kimihiko Oishi's guidance and connections (Mount Sinai assistant professor who graduated and practiced at Jikei), I hope to create a formal exchange program between Jikei and Mount Sinai for future students. Beyond academics, I was able to build relationships with residents and medical students and attend student medical seminars, after-work dinners, and extracurricular club activities.

Lastly

I hope this report clarified my activities this year to benefit the community, which was only made possible with the support of JMSA and Honjo International Scholarship Foundation. I appreciate the vision of JMSA and HISF, and can only wish for both organizations to continue to support students in need such as myself in the future.



Keio School of Medicine Ophthalmology rotation with ophthalmology residents after my presentation



Deng Ben-Shiang, MD, Ph.D.
(2006~2008 recipient / Taiwan)

Vice Director of the Department of Anesthesiology, Aoyama Hospital



Could you please tell us what you have been doing after finishing at Chiba University?

I passed the national exam for physicians in Japan in 2007 and finished a doctoral course at Chiba University in 2008. After graduation, I was a resident physician at Matsunami General Hospital in Gifu Prefecture for six months, and returned to Taiwan to finish anesthesiology residency. To resume my clinical training in Japan, I returned to Matsunami General Hospital in October 2010. I passed the Board Certification Exam of Japan Society of Anesthesiologists held in 2014. At Matsunami General Hospital, an acute care hospital, I learned a lot by taking care of patients undergoing emergency operations, but unfortunately I became burnt down. I decided to leave and found a job offer at Aoyama Hospital in Toyokawa, Aichi Prefecture since March 2015. I am working in a more work-life balanced hospital where I devote myself to high quality medical care as an anesthesiology specialist.

What kind of job does an anesthesiologist do?

Stress response—the instinct to stay away from harmful stimuli so as to protect yourself—causes various changes in circulation, respiration, metabolism, and behavior, for example. Pain or fear associated with surgical procedures cause stress response because our bodies regard the stimuli as threatening as severe trauma. However, elevation of blood pressure or body movement due to pain of surgical

procedures are often overreacting and even harmful. Anesthesiologists are medical professionals who alleviate such unnecessary responses. Because anesthetics tend to be suppressive, anesthesiologists select appropriate methods of anesthesia and optimal anesthetic dose to help patients undergo operations safely. To keep refreshed and updated in anesthesiology, once a week I work under my mentor in another hospital by taking care of patients undergoing the operations which are conducted in my hospital.

Is what you learned at graduate school useful to you?

I studied stress response and did basic research which is not directly applied to my present job. However, recently I realized all the efforts and time in graduate study paid off and build the foundation to further understand anesthesiology. I stopped my clinical training for graduate study in Japan and finished longer anesthesiology residency in Taiwan and Japan than other clinicians. I went a long way around to become a certificated anesthesiology specialist in Japan. However, I have the fortune to work under excellent mentors and kind colleagues. I think it is the reward for my continuous efforts.

What is your future goal?

As I have come to a position to instruct younger doctors, I would like to learn about hospital management. I think teaching is important for me to grow further as well.



Matsuyama Hoyos Takesi, Ph.D.
(2008~2009 recipient / Colombia)

Research Scientist, RIKEN Center for Developmental Biology Laboratory for Retinal Regeneration



Riken, located in Port Island, Kobe, looks like some kind of near-future environment with a combination of multiple hospitals and laboratories.

Although I came here in April 2015, I haven't yet gotten used to the complicated building structure. However, the facility provides a very good environment for research.

Your laboratory is globally famous for the retinal regeneration project using iPS cells. How did you join the laboratory?

At Kyoto University, I worked on research about proteins that sense light in the eye. In addition to "conscious vision" it has been found that we possess light responses that we are not conscious of. I am studying the molecule that mediates these, so called non-image-forming light responses. An example of this would be seasonal affective disorder, experienced by people who become depressed due to lack of light in the winter season. Also, it has been found that even people with complete blindness can entrain their circadian rhythm with the day/night rhythm, even if they can't see it. A protein, called melanopsin, is associated with such phenomena, and it strongly reacts to blue light. I would like to elucidate the mechanism of these non-image-forming photoreponses. Although my specialty is not ES/iPS cells, I have been engaged in this research because my background is useful for the aim of our project, which is to regenerate the retina. Many researchers here are ophthalmologists, and I

have to learn a lot of new things, but I am very proud of working at a laboratory that is at the forefront of regenerative medicine.

What do you do on your days off?

Currently, I live in Nishinomiya, but I like Kyoto, where I lived as a foreign student, very much, and I often go to Kyoto on my days off. I visit temples or take a walk alongside the Kamogawa River. My wife is Romanian, and we met when I came to Japan on a scholarship from the Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology. Our first baby was born in March 22, 2016!



Sandra Milena Puentes, Ph.D.
(2008~2010 recipient / Colombia)

Assistant Professor of the Faculty of Engineering, Information and Systems, the University of Tsukuba



When did you first come to the University of Tsukuba?

I came here for the first time two years ago as a researcher at the University of Tsukuba's Center for Cybernetics* Research (CCR). My research field is neuroscience, and although the CCR belongs to the faculty of Engineering, my mission there was to collaborate merging the research between medical and engineering faculties. I started collaborating with robotic assisted rehabilitation of patients paralyzed due to causes such as cerebral infarction. I became an assistant professor of the Faculty of Engineering, Information and Systems in July 2015, and I started giving lectures to students at the faculty in September of the same year. As a medical doctor, I was worried about what exactly I could teach engineering students, and I ended up giving lectures about basic neuroscience related to how the body moves and how the central nervous system process and transmit the information related to it. Fortunately, I received good responses from the students; seems that they found lots of applications to their own research learning from the human body function.

What kind of research are you working on?

Apart from robot assisted neurorehabilitation using the Robot Suit HAL developed by Cyberdyne and the CCR, I am working also with animal models of brain infarcts. Using mice, we catheterize the carotid artery to reach the middle cerebral artery (MCA) with a silicone-coated monofilament to occlude the blood flow to the

MCA area in the brain (the most frequently occluded artery in humans who suffered from stroke). Then we test different therapies as drug delivery systems (DDS), and stem cell therapy. I really enjoy performing experiments, although as a doctor I miss the clinical practice. However, doing both is difficult; so I would like to focus on research that can appropriately obtain correct data and to produce good scientific papers that lead to find the cure for stroke someday.

What is your future vision?

I have been involved in brain research for 10 years and I think the most important point to have in account about brain healing is to improve the entire environment in the cerebral tissue, not just looking selectively to a particular cell or signal. Although I need to perform lots of research and keep going deep to understand the brain behavior against ischemia, I think the treatment for brain disease will change significantly 20 years from now, and I would like to continue working hard and producing relevant research data which contributes to that future.

*Cybernetics
Cybernetics is the academic field combining Cybernetics, Mechatronics, Bionics, Medics (Medical Engineering), and Informatics including Electronics, Physics and Mathematics. (Excerpt from the website of Sankai Laboratory, University of Tsukuba)



Andrew C. Elliott, Ph.D.
(2010~2011 recipient / United Kingdom)

Associate Professor, Department of International Studies, Faculty of Liberal Arts, Doshisha Women's College of Liberal Arts



When did you first come to the Doshisha Women's College of Liberal Arts?

After completing my doctorate at Kyoto University I taught English language and British/American literature at the Department of English at Doshisha Women's College of Liberal Arts, and then, three years ago, I came to the Department of International Studies. All students in the department go abroad to a university in an English-speaking country for one year. I teach International Relations and Japanese Culture in English there. As an educational policy, we have to take close care of students here at the college, thus teaching staff are very busy, and unfortunately I don't have as much time as I would like for my research activities at present.

What kind of research do you want to work on?

I am continuing research on intercultural contact and travel writing, which I worked on during my graduate studies, including research on Isabella Bird.* Last year, I attended a symposium organized by Steve Clark, professor of English Language and Literature at the University of Tokyo. I enjoyed connecting with the world of Bird for the first time in a while. She is not so well known in the U.K., but she's very famous here in Japan—many books have been published about her, written by Japanese authors. I have been investigating how she had been interpreted in Japan, and hope to publish my findings in a special edition of the journal Studies in Travel Writing. I am also working on the topic of the "Perry Mission and pop culture." His arrival was a watershed moment in the

history of Japan, and this is variously expressed in Japanese pop culture, including anime and manga.

The Westernization of Japan in the Meiji Period was a sudden and long lasting cultural transformation. How does this compare to Britain?

I don't think Japan is unique in this regard. Also, in England, where I was born, people felt a sense of loss after the Industrial Revolution. Of course, actually, society changed drastically in many ways, and many things were actually abandoned, but there was a huge paradigm shift too, that is, after undergoing modernization, movements were created to revive the things felt to have been lost, looking back to the past. "Tradition", in that sense, is something "created" as a means to connect with the past and surmount the sense of a break caused by modernization.

What are your impressions of the intercultural exchange that occurs when your students are studying overseas?

I think that it is very good that our students become friends with Chinese or Korean international students during their overseas studies. I want them to study while inspiring each other.

*Isabella Lucy Bird (1831~1904) An English, professional traveler; she traveled the Tohoku region after the Boshin War (at that time she was 47 years old) and later published an account of these travels: Unbeaten Tracks in Japan (1880).



Yuichi Abe, Ph.D.
(2010~2012 recipient / Japan)

National Institutes of Biomedical Innovation, Health and Nutrition



What kind of research are you working on now?

I currently work on predicting the efficacy of anticancer drugs. I obtain cancer specimens from hospitals so as to gain more cancer models and to investigate the efficacy of anticancer drugs via a method involving the exhaustive analysis of proteins (proteomics). However, such drugs may not be effective for some patients. "Companion markers" are thus used to distinguish the efficacies. The goal of our research is to find as many new companion markers as possible, so as to develop order-made medicine. One problem is that, even with no efficacy, anticancer drugs cause side effects, which delay treatment and cause a heavy burden on patients. Also, anticancer drugs are expensive, thus they increase the medical costs borne by the government. Selecting effective anticancer drugs properly from the early stage of treatment has become important as a goal of order-made medicine.

It seems that this is very different from your work at graduate school.

I worked on basic biological research involving viruses at

the graduate school of Kyoto University, but now I analyze proteins in the human body in a chemical manner. Both subjects and methods for research have changed drastically, and I have to study everything anew, but the research is applicative, directly benefiting society, so I feel very satisfied. Today, research into order-made medicine is being advanced at the genetic level; however, it has been clear which parts cannot be explained by genes only. Therefore, analyses at the protein level have started to become an area of focus, and I would like to follow that trend as well.

What is your future goal?

My wife, who studied in the same area at my graduate school, is now studying in Germany. Thus, if I have a chance, I would like to go overseas to study. Additionally, after I joined the institute, I have been engaged in applicative research and have learned, not only disciplinary basic research, but also how to proceed with work that can directly benefit society. Thus, I would like to see my results as gained through the academy (i.e., the university) filter down to various industries.



Young-Ho Lee, Ph.D.
(2007~2008 recipient / Korea)

Associate Professor (Lecturer), Institute for Protein Research, Osaka University



What kind of place is the Institute for Protein Research, Osaka University?

Osaka University's Suita Campus doesn't always feel like a traditional university. Rather, there are many institutes, including the university hospital. The campus is home to many buildings housing various laboratories, and researchers are sometimes walking around as if in agony. (Laughs) The Institute for Protein Research was established in 1958 with its mainstay of the Osaka University with the mission of clarifying the principles of biological activities through basic research into proteins. From the beginning, it has been a base where researchers in chemistry, physics, biology, and medicine come together and inspire each other via an interdisciplinary approach so as to devise innovative ideas. The institute is the one of best research centers in the world for protein research and is equipped with state-of-the-art facilities for protein research, in particular, facilities for solution nuclear magnetic resonance (NMR) spectroscopy, with the world's highest sensitivity. I, as a manager of this NMR facility, have provided measurement and analysis services to domestic and overseas researchers for several years. Other than that, I am assigned to the Korean version of PDBj, one of three global protein data banks.

What type of research do you work on now?

Biological phenomena are maintained by tens of thousands of different types of proteins with their own intrinsic functions. However, destabilization of healthy and native proteins makes them deactivated and form aggregates such as amyloid fibrils or amorphous aggregates. The principle of the formation of protein aggregates is the same with that of the solidification of egg at high temperature (i.e., boiled eggs), and it causes more than 40 types of serious diseases. Representative diseases include Alzheimer's disease, Parkinson's disease, type II diabetes, and mad cow disease. Dialysis for a long period gives rise to a new protein aggregation-related disease,

"dialysis-related amyloidosis". This is a dilemma since a method to cure a disease creates a new disease. One of my central themes is biophysics of proteins including structure, stability, and dynamics of proteins and their relations to protein function as well as to protein folding and protein misfolding-induced aggregation. I especially aim to reveal the cause and mechanism of protein aggregation and to establish a method to prevent disease-related protein aggregation. Besides these research subjects, I also work on research of biochemistry using various enzymes and electron transfer proteins, the biochemical and biophysical study on interactions of proteins with other molecules, and analytical chemistry.

Have you made any new discoveries?

I have been investigating green tea catechins as an inhibitor of formation and degradation of protein aggregates. I have demonstrated that catechins inhibit formation of amyloid fibrils of Aβ peptides, which are responsible for Alzheimer's diseases, based on a new method which I and my students developed. Most interestingly, "Oi Ocha" containing catechins prevented excellently Aβ amyloid formation containing catechins. Protein-level research has a lot of great merits as it can produce nice reproducibility of results within a shorter period of time, compared to experiments at the cellular or animal levels.

What are your plans for the near future?

I have been working at Osaka University for a long time, and I think it would be a good time to start my new research life at my own laboratory. I have applied to several universities. My wife has just completed her doctorate at Osaka University, and she likes Tokyo a lot, so we may move to Tokyo in the near future. If so, I would be able to attend the meetings of the Honjo International Scholarship Foundation. I'm looking forward to that.

Visiting Old, Learn New

Visiting old friends shakes our mind, on the other hand, new network of HISF alumni has been established and spread out all over the world.

Thank you for visit us at HISF office when you leave Japan, when you come to Japan.



Jazag Amarsanaa (Mongolia)



Nicole Chun (Malaysia)

A current student visited the first scholarship recipient when he traveled in Sri Lanka. This shot represents the history of HISF for twenty years.



Sunil Nawaratne (Sri Lanka) Kyohei Hisano (Tokyo Institute of Technology)



Nguyen Bao Ngoc (Vietnam)



Bui Thi Kim Ly (Vietnam)



Agus Santosa Sudjono (Indonesia)

A Japanese Graduate student visited a Japanese student studying in overseas at Stanford University.

We met him, the scholarship recipient of the beginning year, at Kabuki Theater in Ginza.



Hirosyuki Igarashi (Tohoku University) Akitada Kasahara (Stanford University)



Find Us on Facebook!

We have a group page account on Facebook. Find our page, Honjo International Scholarship Foundation. We make event announcements, and current scholars and alumni exchange information regarding their study, work, countries, and their private events as well. Please send us your request.

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/HISFhonjo/>



Send us your information!

We are making the Honjo scholars contact list through the same online form as we confirm the attendance of the 20th Anniversary International Symposium. Please visit the special website of the symposium and you can access to "My Page". Please contact us to know your ID and password to log in.

<https://hisf.or.jp/update/form.html>



We would like to offer my sincere gratitude to Ms. Li Jen Chen whom supplied English translations for this issue of our magazine. Furthermore, I must thank everyone who so readily cooperated in writing unique and interesting essays or articles and sending us many photographs, despite busy schedule.

HISF Annual Activities

March 2015 ~ March 2016

1 Orientation Camp

April 12 ~ 13, 2015

The first orientation camp was organized at Great Island Club. Likened treasure hunting to the thought of late President Masanori Honjo in establishing the scholarship foundation, search and found the answer under team competition.



2 Doctoral Dissertation Presentation Program

May 25, 2015

Doctoral dissertation presentation program was held with four presenters who graduated in March 2015.



3 Shizuoka Field Trip

June 19 ~ 20, 2015

Visited and observed Central Research institute and Hamaoka Plant of Itoen and Pet bottled drink manufacturing factory.



4 Fukushima Tour

July 4 ~ 5, 2015

A special tour program for learning about The Great East Japan Earthquake and Fukushima nuclear plant was organized at Fukushima University. Prof. Ha Donghyun (a scholarship recipient in 2006) and his seminar students from Korea participated.



Special

5 HISF Workshop Vol. 9

July 5, 2015

A lecture titled "Natural Resource and Conflict Dynamics" by Dr. Miko Watanabe



6 Tohoku Water Distribution Volunteer Excursion Tour

September 25 ~ 27, 2015

Iwate Prefectural University, Ohio University and Honjo International Scholarship Foundation organized a joint program to assist recovery from the Great East Japan Earthquake.



7 Barbecue Party and International Cooking Festival

October 24, 2015

Enjoyed cuisines cooked by students from six countries and BBQ under the autumn sky.



8 A seminar of Food and Health Research fellowship Program

November 6, 2015

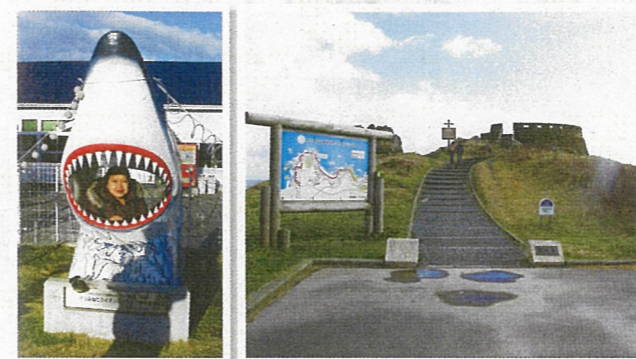
Research grant awardees presented their result of "Food and Health" research.



9 Hachinohe Tour

November 29, 2015

After the water distribution volunteer work, enjoyed the hiking along Michinoku Coastal Trail (Hachinohe-Tanesashi Coast).



Special

10 HISF Workshop Vol. 10

December 5, 2015

A lecture titled "Japanese Women in Science and Engineering" by Dr. Naonori Kodate



11 Year-End Party

December 28, 2015

The party was rocked by the "quiz iPS cell" performed by Mr. Komatsu Richard from Kyoto University.



12 Alumni Meeting in Taiwan

March 19, 2016

Alumni Reunion was held in Taipei. The OBs and OGs of Taiwan gathered and reconfirmed their union.



13 Welcome & Farewell Party and Research Grant Awards Ceremony

March 29, 2016

The party room was fascinated by the Latin dance performed by Ms. Laura Liliana Abril Garcia from Colombia.



14 Mizu Volunteer

In 2015, we've participated in fourteen times of water distribution volunteer activities during which we've visited more than fifty temporary housings and private homes.



19年間の軌跡

Journey of 19 years

1期生から19期生まで思い出の写真を集めました。
懐かしい顔が見つかりますか？
Pictures from 1997-2015.
Find someone looks familiar !!



1997年 11月4日
懇親会
伊藤園本社会議室
November 4, 1997
The annual party
at Itoen head office building



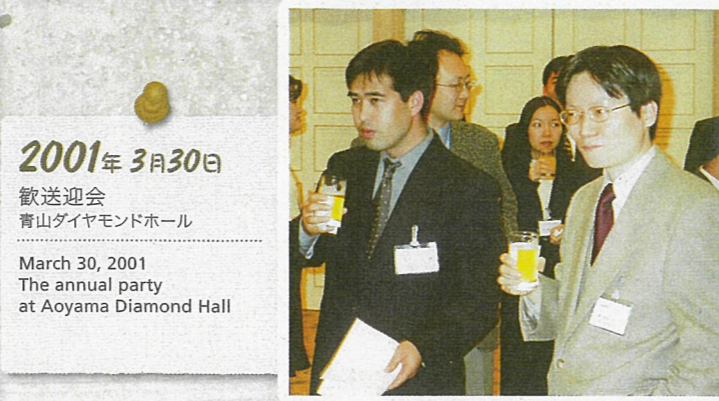
1998年 12月10日
忘年会
伊藤園本社会議室
December 10, 1998
Year-End party
at Itoen head office building



1999年 7月19日
静岡研修旅行
浜岡工場
July 19, 1999
Shizuoka trip
at Itoen Central Research
Institute



2000年 6月28日
懇親会
伊藤園本社会議室
June 28, 2000
The annual party
at Itoen head office building



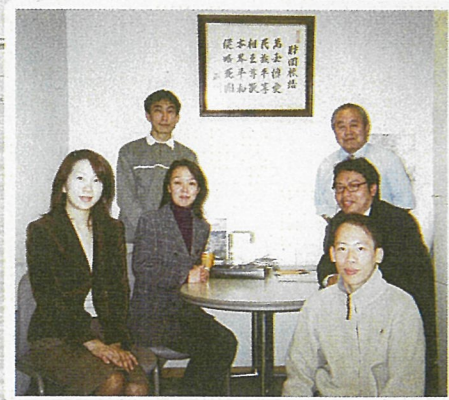
2001年 3月30日
歓送迎会
青山ダイヤモンドホール
March 30, 2001
The annual party
at Aoyama Diamond Hall



2002年 3月29日
歓送迎会
センチュリーハイアットホテル
March 29, 2002
The annual party
at Century Hyatt Hotel



2003年 9月5日
静岡研修旅行
忍野八海
September 5, 2003
Shizuoka trip
at Oshino Hakkai



2004年 3月某日
財団事務所で
March 2004
In Honjo International
Scholarship Foundation office



2005年 12月某日
忘年会
東天紅東京オペラシティ店
December 2005
Year-End party
at Toh Ten Koh Operacit



2006年 3月某日
歓送迎会
センチュリーハイアットホテル
March 2006
Welcome and farewell party
at Century Hyatt Hotel



2007年 7月7日
静岡研修旅行
伊藤園浜岡工場
July 7, 2007
Shizuoka trip
at Itoen Hamaoka Factory



2008年 6月6日
静岡研修旅行
伊藤園浜岡工場
June 6, 2008
Shizuoka trip
at Itoen Hamaoka Factory



2009年 5月17日
博士論文発表会
国立オリンピック記念青少年センター
May 17, 2009
Doctoral Dissertation
Presentation Program
at National Olympics
Memorial Youth Center



2010年 6月18日
静岡研修旅行
伊藤園中央研究所
June 18, 2010
Shizuoka trip
at Itoen Central Research
Institute



2011年 9月27日
懇親会
ハイアットリージェンシー東京
September 27, 2011
The annual party
at Hyatt Regency Tokyo



2012年 3月28日
歓送迎会
ハイアットリージェンシー東京
March 28, 2012
Welcome and farewell party
at Hyatt Regency Tokyo



2013年 3月27日
歓送迎会
ハイアットリージェンシー東京
March 27, 2013
Welcome and farewell party
at Hyatt Regency Tokyo



2014年 10月17日
スポーツ大会
国立オリンピック記念青少年センター
October 17, 2014
Sports Exchange Program
at National Olympics
Memorial Youth Center



2015年 10月24日
BBQと国際料理大会
東京国際交流館
October 24, 2015
BBQ and International Food
Exchange Program
at Tokyo International
Exchange Center