JOI ANNUAL REPORT
AUG. 2017 – JUL. 2018
Ayako Nakajima
WORLD AFFAIRS COUNCIL OF KENTUCKY AND SOUTHERN INDIANA
My Site has lots of events for adults and high school students. However, we didn't have activities for Elementary or Middle school students. So my focus for the first year was school visits especially for younger students. I was able to do after school programs as well. It is very good that I could go to same school and teach same students every week. Through the Outreach, I feel very lucky that I get to see their reactions and expressions about Japan when I do the workshops. Because everything about Japan is normal to me, but to them everything is new, different, and exiting. And that is great. I love what I do for Japan Outreach and students are my biggest motivation.
Since I arrived in Louisville last summer, I sent out emails about Japan Outreach to principals for all schools in Louisville. There are over 200 schools in Jefferson County alone. Teachers asked me to be involved with Culture Nights at their schools. Not all schools have it but some schools have it once a year. It is like an after school Culture Festival and is not only for students but also parents too. Students and parents get to learn about many different countries and cultures. A lot of people are very interested in Japanese culture and I am very happy to share with them.
I had my first Summer Camps during July. My supervisor and I have been planning Summer Camp since March. I have never created Camp from scratch before. However, I didn't feel of anxiety or concern but very excited to do it. Because I will be able to have an impact on students' lives, and some of them will be inspired to come to Japan when they are older. That would be amazing and I am very happy to be a part of their life even it is only for one week. I had two groups, each for a week. The younger group was very challenging for me but they told me they would love to come next year again! The older group was much easier! I am already looking forward to Summer Camp next year. I hope I will get to see more students next Summer!
FOR THE SECOND YEAR

I would like to focus on the community outreach especially around the site for my second year of JOI. Our office is located in an area of Louisville that is stricken with poverty and low education rates. The area is starting to redevelop and doing out reach around this area is a very good opportunity. I am trying to reach out the neighborhood library and having Japanese workshops regularly on the weekends. For the first year, I was focused on mainly in-school outreach. This year, I would like to continue working with schools and do more work with the communities in general, specifically targeting community centers and senior living centers. I will be continuing school visits and after school programs, however looking forward to meeting more people and teaching them about Japan!

The JOI program is the first of its kind that our organization has ever hosted onsite. We have been very lucky to have Ayako assigned to us - she is youthful, creative and connects with kids so well. We have wanted to offer cultural programs in grade schools for a long time but lacked the capacity and resources to do so. The JOI program, and particularly Ayako's work, has helped us tremendously. Through Ayako's outreach to schools and the programs offered, she has helped us establish important links. The JOI program also makes it possible to reach disadvantaged schools and give their students a cultural experience they have little access to. The feedback from schools that Ayako has worked with has been very positive.
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Sake Tasting was one of the biggest events. My supervisor and I have been planning to have this event for a long time. We were able to be a partner with SASAKAWA USA. It was one of our speaker series, "The U.S.-Japan Alliance Working in Kentucky," We invited four speakers. For Sake Tasting, I had five different Japanese sakes including Plam sake, Umeshu. For many people, it was their first time to try Umeshu. Over 100 people attended this event and they became big fans of Japanese sake! Mr. Kobayashi, Consulate General, attended this event and he was very interested in having Sake Testing again. I am very happy to be a part of this even and very glad people loved it.
One of my goals for second year was going to library and share Japanese culture with local people includes adults. I was able to go to every library in Louisville this year. At the main library, they have "How-to Festival". It is very big event for library and many people attend every year. This event is for people to learn how to do things by themselves. They invited me to do cooking workshop there. My workshop starts from 8:30am and it was raining on that day. So I was worried that not many people come. However, over 50 people participated rice-ball workshop. I introduced Japanese table manner as well. It was very interesting to watch and hearing their thoughts of Japanese manners.
This was my second time having Summer Camp! Some students from last year joined again and I was very happy to see them. It was not easy to do all things by myself. Scheduling, making lesson plans, making materials, making Power-Points, contacting parents, making sure students are having fun and they learn something every day. However, parents told me that they begged to join this camp this year, I was more than happy and very glad that they remember about this camp from last year. Also they asked me if I have another camp next year, it was so hard to tell them that I will not be here. It has been so much to me, in a good way, that JOI workshop is not only sharing Japanese culture to people, but connecting people in many ways. It was only two week of camp, but I hope they remember about what they learned and visit Japan sometime in the future.
COMMENT FROM SUPERVISOR

For the past two years, we have had the great pleasure of having Ayako Nakajima as a team member at the World Affairs Council. Ayako has the perfect combination of being an engaging educator and someone that kids can relate to on a more personal level. We have had excellent feedback from schools and parents who have had their kids in the Japanese enrichment classes, workshops or camps. They all say that Ayako is very good with kids and that they all loved learning from her. She brings lots of fun to learning about another culture and relate well to kids. Overall, she is an excellent cultural ambassador for Japan and Japanese culture. We will miss her very much and the great work she has done on behalf of JOI and the World Affairs Council.

THANK YOU CARD FROM TEACHERS IN SOUTHERN INDIANA

LETTERS FROM STUDENTS