Japan Outreach Initiative Annual Report

Seventeenth Year Coordinator
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Overview
August 2018 – July 2019

My main targets for the first year were K-12 and college students, so I started my JOI outreach with on-campus activities and K-12 public school visits. I was assigned to the Education department, so I have had a lot of opportunities to visit public schools. I have also visited public libraries, other higher education institutions, and local communities. Along with giving presentations and activities, I also positively attended a lot of community services and events such as church services, local festivals and events.

The map on the right shows the areas I have visited in the first year, from August 2018 to July 2019. Glenville State College is located in Gilmer county, the red colored area. The other counties I visited are colored in blue.

In the next pages, I explain the following topics: Campus activities, School visits, and Library activities.
CAMPUS ACTIVITIES
1. **Student Activities**

To enliven campus life, I organized student activities periodically. I had movie nights, calligraphy nights, origami nights, and a Japanese traditional game night. I also presented Japanese culture at several school events including Homecoming and International week. I gave demonstrations and provided Japanese cuisine at those events.

2. **Presentations for College Courses**

I was invited to give presentations for business courses, social science courses and education courses as a guest speaker. A lot of business majoring in students are athletes, so they are usually busy and can not participate in student activities. Having presentations in their business courses gave me a lot of opportunities to meet those students who do not participate. The Education department is one of the largest departments at Glenville State College. Due to the efficacy of my presentations for Education majors, student teachers became interested in JOI activities and invited me to schools where they were assigned for their teaching internship.

3. **Campus Tour Activities for High School Students**

I had activities for high school students who visited Glenville State College for campus tour. With other campus activities, I usually reach 10 to 30 students. However I can reach hundreds of students through the campus tour activities. At the same time, I meet a lot of public-school teachers, so I have opportunities to make connections for future school visits.

4. **Studying Abroad Program**

This year, 2019, Glenville State College started a summer study abroad program to Tenri University, Nara, Japan. At an initial meeting with Tenri University, I agreed to take part in this project. I worked to promote the program, and to support students who are interested in studying in Japan. I am planning to have a JET info session this fall to give them more information.
1. **K-12 School Visits**

   Public school visiting was one of the highlights of my first year. I focused my outreach initiative on K-12 school visits, so I took trips to many schools in West Virginia. I focused mainly on schools in Gilmer, Braxton, Lewis, and Grant counties. This way I could visit the same students multiple times. I plan to return to these schools during my second year.

   Some of the schools I visited more frequently invited me to their summer programs. This allowed me to spend more time giving presentations and orchestrating activities so I could share deeper information and a lot of different topics. In the second year, I would like to continue visiting those schools and provide more unique activities. I also plan to visit more new schools in other counties.

2. **Higher Education Institution Visits**

   I visited a few higher education institutions during my first year. I provided similar activities and presentations to those I conducted at Glenville State College. Visiting higher education institutions expanded my network very well. Beyond reaching out and building relationships with college students, I was privileged to get to know faculty members and different communities. I shared a teacher’s workshop at Shepherd University. This visit provided me with opportunities to follow up with these teachers at their local classrooms. During my second year, I would like to have joint events with Glenville State College and other universities.
ACTIVITY TIME AT PUBLIC LIBRARIES

Public library activities turned out to be one of my most successful outreach endeavor. Libraries allowed me to do more interactive and imaginative workshops and activities.

I had visited several libraries previously and started to coordinate monthly workshops at Gilmer Public Library and Burnsville Public Library. Initially I expected to engage more seniors. However, I found that these library workshops appealed more to children.

Libraries are the important place to outreach to homeschooling children. Also, they are a great place to talk to their parents.

During my second year, I would like to reach out to homeschooling children, adults who are interested in Japan, and I would like to give presentations for after-school activities.
Having a JOI Coordinator based at Glenville State College has been of enormous importance to our community. Masahiro has strengthened ties between Japan and our college, community, and state. In an era when many distrust reports online or through traditional media, the ability to interact with the Coordinator allows students and community members to get a real understanding of Japanese culture without the worry of it being inauthentic. Especially as we are so rural, the Coordinator’s strong willingness to travel to far flung schools and events has enhanced the learning opportunities for our students and strengthened ties between the United States and Japan. It is with bittersweet anticipation that I look forward to the coming final year, as I am sure that Masahiro will build on the work he has already done and establish a strong foundation upon which the college and the community can continue to strengthen ties.