Japan Outreach Initiative
Annual Report

Seventeenth Year Coordinator
Masahiro Yamaguchi
Glenville State College, WV
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 cannot 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.
SCHOOL VISITS
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 endeavors. 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.
Supervisor’s Comments

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.

Supervisor: Dr. Marisha Lecea
Interim chair
Assistant Professor of Political Science
Glenville State College
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Glennville State College, WV

Activities
1. Overview
2. Educational Involvement
3. Online Activities
4. Sustainable programs
5. Supervisor's Comment
The map above shows the areas I have visited in the last two years, from August 2018 to July 2020. Glenville State College is located in Gilmer county, the red colored area. The other counties I visited are colored in blue.

My main targets for the last two years were K-12 and college students, so I have visited numerous K-12 public schools, public libraries, and other higher education institutions in those sixteen counties. My goal for the second year was to nurture sustainable Japan related programs, so I focused working more at Glenville State College.

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, all the face to face programs...
were cancelled since March 2020. Since then the situation became very challenging, but also provided me an opportunity to start new types of Japan Outreach Initiative (JOI) activities such as online activities. It allowed me to reach out to more people without being bound by geographical constraints.

The past two years as a Japan Outreach Initiative allowed me to understood the importance of mutual understandings especially in a grass-roots level for a constructive relationship between two countries and learned both U.S. and Japanese culture.

I really appreciate all the opportunities I had and I hope my JOI has been positive impact to people in West Virginia.

In the next pages, I explain the following topics: Educational involvement, Online programs, and Sustainable programs.
Educational Involvement

On-campus programs
Presentations for college courses and student activities

Just as the first year, I hosted a lot of student activity events and gave presentations for college courses many times. I also hosted the JET program info session in October.

Glenville State College
International Education Week
is an annual event to celebrate the benefits of international exchange and to recognize the many positive contributions to our campus and community of the international students, faculty and staff among us.

Glenville State College offered a lot of international cultural activities in November. I hosted two movie nights and a calligraphy workshop, and I gave a presentation about Japanese culture. During the event week, we, all international faculty and staff members, decorated our office to represent our countries. A lot of students stopped by my office to learn Japanese culture. Over 240 students participated in our events.
I have been invited to a lot of schools continually from the first year. I was grateful to a welcoming atmosphere of people in WV. Fundamental network which was built in the first year brought me the continuing and new outreach opportunity.

**West Liberty University**

**International Education Week**

I visited West Liberty University and hosted a movie night, an origami workshop, a calligraphy workshop and Takoyaki and Sushi cooking workshop for International Education Week events. Also I was invited to some college courses and had presentations. Over 200 students participated in my activities.
Online Activities

Facebook Live Sessions
Kamishibai reading on library Facebook page

Since I had to cancel all of my face to face activities after March 2020, I started to offer JOI activities online. I offered the following outreach: Hands-on activities, Kendama club, and Kamishibai reading on Facebook live, Bilingual blog about Japanese culture, and some presentations and workshops on Zoom.

Gilmer Public Library
Facebook Live Kamishibai

I had weekly Kamishibai reading live session on local public library’s Facebook page. When I started this program, I was not sure if I was able to reach out to a lot of people in the community with this approach, because I was told that about half of the library users do not have any internet at home. However, each of my live session got over 100 views.
I read "The Story of Tanabana" a week before July 7th. Looking up at the sky on a summer evening, we can see Altair and Vega sparkling clearly on both sides of the Milky way. The story of Tanabata says that these stars are supposed to be a couple, and they are allowed to meet only once a year on the night of July 7th. People in Japan write wishes on pieces of oblong paper, and put them on a branch of bamboo on that night.

Since I could not offer a face to face presentation, I decided to put all our wishes on a branch of the tree right next the library. A week after the live session, I found a lot wishes tied to the trees.

Summer Immersion Camp

Summer Immersion Camp and Energy Express

Summer school programs for K-12 schools in West Virginia had to cancel or shift their classes online. I was continually invited to summer school programs in Glenville and surrounding counties. A lot of families do not have internet in these areas, so I also offered physical learning materials. I was invited to teach Japanese art and craft on Japanese Summer Immersion Camp in Cabell county of West Virginia. We worked hard on adjusting our teaching approach for the new environment and accomplished our online programs.

Students learned the following topics: Kendama, Totoro drawing, Origami, Chopstick challenge, Teru Teru bozu, Radio excercises, and Japanese language.
Since I was no longer able to offer face to face Kendama workshops after March 2020, I started Kendama loaning service at Gilmer public library and Burnsville public library, and I had Kendama online workshops. We also have a Facebook group "Kendama Community of Huntington WV", so our Kendama community will be carried on even after I leave.

Sustainable Programs

GSC International Student Association

During my second year, enhancing sustainable cultural programs in Glenville community was one of my main focuses. I launched Glenville State College International Student Organization, and I encouraged students to create student-centered cultural activities. International students and local students who are interested in cultural exchange became the members of the group. We hosted a pot luck party, and a bake sale.

Kendama Club
Gilmer Public Library and Burnsville Public Library

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Supervisor's Comment

by Dr. Marisha Lecea

Masahiro has made a strong impact on both Glenville State College, the local community and the larger region. He regularly made himself available to schools and organizations that were significant drives away, as well as local schools, libraries and classes. He also created personal connection in informal situations, and his impact will be felt long after he has moved on to other endeavors.