



KKC Alumni News

A Newsletter for the Keizai Koho Center
Fellowships Japan Alumni

Meet me in Kansas City

The National Council for Social Studies (NCSS) Annual Conference is the premier professional development event for the social studies community and an opportunity for Keizai Koho fellows to meet thousands of educators from around the world. This year's conference will feature a special focus on the position of social studies as the center of the curriculum, touching every other subject area.

NCSS 2005 can help you create effective citizens through more than 300 sessions, workshops and clinics. Renowned journalist, Jim Lehrer, is just one of the noted keynote speakers. Hundreds of exhibit booths (including the Keizai Koho Center located in International Alley #243) will showcase the latest products and services for teachers.



**Social Studies:
The Heart of the
Curriculum**

**November 17-20, 2005
Kansas City, Missouri**

**Japan Times Article with
2005 Fellows**

[http://www.japantimes.co.jp/cgi-bin/
getarticle.pl5?nn20050726d1.htm](http://www.japantimes.co.jp/cgi-bin/getarticle.pl5?nn20050726d1.htm)

**2004 Fellow Presents
NCSS Workshop**

**Keizai Koho Center
Fellowships: Teaching
Contemporary Japan**

3:00 pm

Friday, November 18th

KKC Fellow, **Keith Samuelson**, recipient of the 2003-4 Prime Minister's Award for Teaching Excellence & the 2005 Asper Foundation Award for Outstanding Contribution to Human Rights and Holocaust Education in Canada, will speak about teaching for international understanding.

KKC Fellow Alumni Reception

Former fellows and those interested in applying for a fellowship are invited to attend a Keizai Koho Reception on Friday, **November 18th** from **5:00—6:30 pm** at the Radisson Hotel & Suites, Kansas City-City Center. Representatives from the KKC office in Tokyo and the National

Association of Japan-America Societies (NAJAS) office in Washington, DC will be on hand to answer any questions you have regarding the KKC fellowship program and modern Japan. The reception is also a good opportunity to meet up with old friends. **Reservations required** (email

Elise: emoersch@us-japan.org) In addition, the KKC is looking for volunteer alumni coordinators. If you are interested in organizing alumni activities in your region please email Elise.

New Impressions of Japan: 2005 KKC Fellows

The 2005 KKC Teacher Fellowship study tour included nine U.S. educators, one Canadian, and one representative the National Association of Japan-America Societies. For all but one of the teachers, this was their first visit to Japan. Although it was my 9th trip, this was my first opportunity to visit Japanese companies and schools and to learn firsthand about contemporary social issues there. I gained new perspective and insight and share many of the impressions eloquently described by the teachers below.

Anna McFarland
Japan-America Society of
Dallas/Fort Worth

The most influential impression was my home visit. Family units are the center of Japanese culture. I was able to witness and enjoy gracious hospitality, familial care and concern, the importance of extended family, and see how the community demonstrates respect for the environment.

Amy Camardese
Youngstown, Ohio

The impression I got from Japan that is still on the forefront of my mind is the social consciousness of the Japanese. Their dedication to keeping their country clean and how each member of society has internalized this is truly im-

pressive. Everything from the streets, cars, buildings, and dress exhibited a high sense of cleanliness and respect. The fact that this is reinforced in their education system was very impressive. Other aspects of their collectiveness were exhibited in their everyday social norms. Everyone walked or stood on the left side on public walkways/escalators so that they would not be interfering with others. Even though my family had 4 very rambunctious children, they understood clear lines of respect with their parents and strangers.

Marc Brasof
Moorestown, New Jersey

Remarks at the Farewell Reception of the KKC Fellowships July 11, 2005 Qin Shao Professor of History The College of New Jersey

On behalf of the North American educators I'd first like to thank the Keizai Koho Center and all the sponsors, families, and staff involved in the KKC Fellowships for this remarkable experience we have had seeing Japan firsthand. In preparing for tonight's remarks, I've tried to think some of the highlights on this tour and I couldn't—everyday was a highlight, and the most recent one was our homestay from which we just returned yesterday. Now each of us refers to our host family as "my family." It seems we have forgotten our families in North America.

What we see in Japan, above all else, is perhaps a public-minded, cosmopolitan culture that contradicts the isolation mentality that was said to have characterized Japan. We see that culture in corporate Japan, not only in its world-class high tech and high productivity, but also in its commitment to social and environmental issues. We see that culture in public Japan as in the Aichi World Expo 2005 with the focus on the earth and in the little sign that reads "Save Water" at the schools we visited. We also see that culture in private Japan as our host families are members of the international associations of their regions. In my opinion, the Japanese miracle didn't end with the 1970s; the everyday living, from corporate to private Japan, is a miracle. What the Japanese people have achieved in the post-war era and what contemporary Japanese society bears witness to

is a triumph of the human spirit which we can all appreciate and cherish.

The impact of the KKC Fellowships is both immediate and long term. In fact, in about 40 days when schools in North America start, the profile of Japan will no doubt dramatically increase in our teaching. Such impact will multiply, simply because as teachers, we have one of the best and most influential positions to shape the young minds in North America for generations to come. It is on those young minds that the future well-being of Japan-US relations rest.

The KKC is of course not the only institution that focuses on the teachers. In this rapidly changing global community, the KKC and, in fact, Japan at large face great competition from other parts of Asia, not to mention other parts of the world, in capturing the imagination of North Americans. In the late 1970s and 1980s, the success of Japan stood out among Asian nations that compelled colleges in North America to offer programs on Japanese language and society. In the 1990s, China came to the scene. The Chinese government has since been actively promoting sinology and China's image overseas. In the recent five years, one of the major trends in American higher education has been the hiring of Southern Asianists which is in recognition of the rise of India. In the meantime, the profile of Korea has also become more prominent. The South Korean government and

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companies have used their economic muscle to sponsor various Korean studies programs at American colleges. All this indicates both the tremendous importance of the teaching profession in relation to the changing world and the competition among different national and strategic interests in capturing the attention of that profession.

In this regard the KKC is ahead of the game. While higher education is crucially important, the KKC North American Educators Fellowships invites mainly K-12 grade teachers to see Japan in person whose audience are at the most impressionable ages. This clearly shows your farsightedness and your profound understanding of the importance of the younger generation in North America to the future of US-Japan relations. Your efforts will be rewarded beyond your expectations. Indeed, I can't think anything more effective in bridging cultural gaps than firsthand experience, because seeing is believing. Thank you.

Highlights from a Visit to the Nissan Oppama Site

July 7, 2005

Today we went to visit the Nissan Oppama site. We headed out of Tokyo promptly at 9



O'clock and proceeded down the coast of Tokyo Bay. On the road we saw miles and miles of factories and ships waiting to take the products away to the world market. Once at the plant we had a brief orientation and then we were loaded onto a Nissan factory bus and were given a tour of the outlying facilities. Outside we were treated to a sea of

cars waiting to be loaded onto ships carrying 4 – 5000 at a time. Inside the factory we were immediately hit with the smell of grease like a repair shop. But what we saw was anything but broken. Instead the factory was a model of efficiency. Conveyor belts delivered parts to be spot welded together by robots. Sparks flew in every direction but was contained by huge plastic curtains. In the later stages of production human power was used and here too it was a model of efficiency. Cars were hydraulically lifted to the most comfortable position for the workers to do their job: installing seat

belts, rear window panels, dashboards, interior panels etc. Once the cars were finished, they were given a "free roll" test, where the workers drove the cars surprisingly hard to ensure that everything within the car was in working condition. The noises, sites and smells I wish I could take back to my classroom right away. Overall the factory visit was an enlightening experience.

Mitchell Vedar
San Francisco, California

Travel Report: Harry Lewis Greater Victoria School District, Canada

July 8, 2005
Tokyo, Japan

In the morning we made our way to Tullys Coffee Japan to hear about the company's leap into the Japanese market. Tullys Coffee is a smallish independent coffee shop based in the Seattle area and with some outlets based in the western states. The founder of Tullys Coffee Japan was a student in America when he first tasted the specialty coffees becoming popular in the 1990s. At this time coffee houses in Japan tended to be for older people, and certainly lacked the allure of the modern coffee shop popularized by Starbucks. With persistence and vision he managed to get in to speak to Tully executives when they were visiting Japan. Impressed by his energy they agreed to help establish the first store in Tokyo, and now some 8 years later there many more making Tullys second only to Starbucks in the Japanese market.

Tullys is presently fixing its sights on challenging Starbucks supremacy in the Japanese market. After the presentation we were able to sample the Tullys line from one of their outlets in the mall below our meeting area.

A tasty treat.

In the afternoon we attended Tokyo Metropolitan Ryogoku Senior High School where we observed classes and talked with students and staff. Established in 1901, the school's popula-

tion is 930, almost all of whom will go on to university. The school has a strong reputation in this regard and there is keen competition for entry. Student's university entry is almost exclusively determined by how they perform on specific university entrance exams, with almost no weight given to their school grades. Next school year (April 06) Ryogoku will become a junior-sen high, gr7-12, obviously a major shift in its mandate with students and learning.

The geography and history classes we observed were over 40 in number and students attentively followed the teachers lecture, referring to prepared worksheet notes and texts.

In my dialogue group, the students were a usual mix of outgoing and quiet with one of two happy to take on whatever questions were pitched at them by North American teachers. We enjoyed a pleasant hour in their company. In talking with staff the most significant fact about their practice was the absolute numbers of students they deal with at one time - in all cases the teachers had 7 classes totaling over 300 students!!

A foreign concept to North American educators!! Thanks to the staff and students at Ryogoku who opened their school to us and made us feel welcome.

The KKC fellowship program has been organized jointly by the KKC & The National Association of Japan-America Societies (NAJAS) since 2004. Current application information may be found on the NAJAS website—www.us-japan.org

The KKC fellowship certainly helped us transcend the mundane clichés and stereotypes too often associated with Japan and Japanese culture. Through a variety of unique, extraordinary, and even commonplace experiences, we truly received a very complete and well rounded representation of real contemporary Japanese life and culture in all its richness and nuances. Thank you KKC for this amazing and illuminating experience which I will never forget and will be certain to disseminate to my students and colleagues.

Robert Gangi
East Brunswick, New Jersey





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Let's Stay in Touch

Alumni Network in Progress

Please send Akemi Handa your contact details (email & postal) for all future correspondence.

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The KKC Alumni Newsletter will be sent by email starting with the next issue.

Keizai Koho Center Alumni Survey Project

Twenty five years have passed since the first KKC Fellow toured and studied in Japan as part of the Keizai Koho Center Educator Fellowship program. A quarter of a century later, KKC is asking alumni to help define the successes and impact of the program. How has the KKC fellowship shaped your teaching, extra-curricular activities and life? In essence what did/does the fellowship mean to you? Please help us gather data and reflect.

If you have not received a survey, please email Akemi Handa : akemi.handa@kkc.or.jp .
Thank you.

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