



Japan Society for the Promotion of Science San Francisco Volume XXXI Issue October 2013



ANNOUNCEMENT OF UPCOMING EVENT



JUNBA 2014

“Educational Quality Assurance in a Globalized Higher Education Environment ~What might the future bring? ~”

The Japanese University Network in the Bay Area (JUNBA) is pleased to announce that JUNBA 2014 will be held on January 9 and 10, 2014. This event will bring together Japanese university leaders to exchange views on educational quality assurance in globalized higher education environment from various perspectives.

Following lectures by presidents of two California State Universities and a keynote speech by the representative from MEXT, we will discuss various tools and different models of quality assurance which higher educational institutions need to tackle together to promote the educational internationalization and gain stronger global competitiveness.

- Date & Time: Thursday, January 9, 2014: 11:00 a.m. - 5:30 p.m.
Friday, January 10, 2014: 8:30 a.m.-5:45p.m.
- Location: Hilton San Francisco Airport Bayfront
600 Airport Blvd., Burlingame, CA 94010, USA
- Organized by: JUNBA: Japanese University Network in the Bay Area
- Co-Organized by: Consulate General of Japan in San Francisco *
Japan Society for the Promotion of Science (JSPS)
- Supported by: Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology in Japan (MEXT) *
JETRO San Francisco *

* Prospective organizations

For further information, please visit JUNBA’s webpage. ↓
<http://www.junba.org/junba2014.html>

+++ What’s JUNBA? +++

JUNBA is a network among Japanese universities which have their offices in the Bay Area. The mission of JUNBA is to assist the enhancement of education and research activities and the creation of new businesses for Japanese universities by helping their internationalization movements, by helping the training of their students and personnel and by promoting a development of academia-industry relationships between Japan and the United States.

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THE OFFICE STAFF SWITCH

JSPS San Francisco Wishes a Heartfelt Farewell to an Adviser Shino Inomata, an Adviser from MEXT

Ms. Inomata has completed her stay in California as a visiting scholar for one year at UCOP (University of California, Office of the President). She was the 12th MEXT (Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology) fellow to work and learn at UCOP. At the same time, she worked at JSPS San Francisco office as an Adviser.

She mainly researched the relationship between the role of the Academic Senate and President, the support for post-docs to find jobs in industry over academia, and the standard to divide the academic budget between the ten campuses of the University of California. To research these themes, she interviewed UC staff who are in charge of these aspects and surveyed numerous research documents. Through her research, she found that the University of California also has some difficulties similar to those of Japanese universities. The measures which UC took to solve these problems were very useful for her to evaluate the cases of Japanese universities.

This eleven months' stay was her first time to live and work in a foreign country, however, thanks to the support from the JSPS SF staff, she could enjoy her life here. She would like to express her sincerest gratitude to them.

From all of us at JSPS SF, we appreciate your warm support on many points and we wish you all the best luck in your future endeavors!



Upcoming Event of Winter 2013

Announcement of December 13

The 6th meeting for Japanese university faculty members in the U.S.

JSPS San Francisco office will hold the 6th meeting for Japanese university faculty members in the U.S. on December 13 in Berkeley, CA.

The purpose of this meeting is to provide Japanese researchers in the U.S. with a good opportunity to share useful information, promote the exchange of research, not only in common but also distinct research fields, and support network-building among these researchers. We are looking forward to the attendance and participation of many researchers.

DATE: December 13 (Fri), 2013 4:30PM - 8:00PM

VENUE: JSPS San Francisco 2001 Addison street, suite260, Berkeley, CA 94704

ELIGIBILITY: Japanese Researchers in U.S who hold a faculty position at a Japanese University

See the website for full schedule and RSVP details: <http://www.jspsusa-sf.org/news/?p=1060>

THE OFFICE STAFF SWITCH

JSPS San Francisco Welcomes Two New Members

Chihiro Watanabe, a new Deputy Director

Chihiro Watanabe, the 6th deputy director for JSPS San Francisco Office, has over 15 years of experience working at educational institutions. Prior to JSPS, she was in charge of university evaluation and analysis for institutional research and university accreditation at the University of Tokyo. Her experience is complemented by a master's degree in education with a major in university management and policy.



Chihiro Watanabe

Her duties at JSPS San Francisco cover almost all of its work including holding symposium with American universities, creating networks among Japanese researchers studying in the States, and promoting JSPS fellowship programs for American researchers. Her responsibilities also include administration of the Japanese University Network in the Bay Area, JUN-BA.

She also completed a one-year internship exchange at UC Irvine to familiarize herself with the American university system. Ms. Watanabe hopes to use her knowledge and experience to promote research and educational exchange between Japanese and American universities. She has always been passionate about international education programs.

She is excited about living in California for the second time and hopes to visit as many American colleges and universities as she can to meet faculty and administrative professionals for expanding her network and deepening her understanding of the American higher education system and culture.

Yohei Takahashi, a new Adviser

Yohei Takahashi came as an adviser of JSPS San Francisco from MEXT (Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology) at the beginning of July 2013. As adviser, Mr. Takahashi supports the operation of our office. He worked at MEXT for 8 years prior to working for JSPS. He has mainly been engaged in the government's policy on elementary and secondary education. His last mission at MEXT was to draw up a basic plan for the promotion of education in Japan. After the plan had been decided by the Cabinet in June, he took up this post.

He hopes to survey as many universities and school districts as possible to identify the strengths and weaknesses which might help improve the Japanese system. You'll find a part of his survey introduced in this newsletter. Now his greatest concern is to improve his English, so he has just started to go to English classes every evening on weekdays. He has a very fulfilling life of work and study.

And, of course, he is going to enjoy life in California with all of its delicious food and wine because his hobby is cooking and tasting wine!



Yohei Takahashi

EVENTS OF SUMMER 2013

Symposium with the University of British Columbia “Early Modern Japanese Values and Individuality”

On 28-30 August, JSPS San Francisco held a jointly sponsored symposium with the University of British Columbia on the theme of “Early Modern Japanese Values and Individuality”. The aim of this symposium was to revisit our understanding of the values of pre-industrial Japan, and how those values contributed to the emergence of today’s Japan. As recently as the 1960s these values were thought to be rooted in diligence, honesty, frugality and obedience, and to have their roots in societal homogeneity. Over the last half-century, however, scholars both inside Japan and outside Japan have come to appreciate the comparable contributions of values like purposeful pleasure, leisure, extravagance and playfulness, and to see how these values both privilege and emerge from diversity and individuality.

The event held on the first day began with opening remarks by Prof. Ross King, Head of Asian Studies at UBC, Dr. Seishi Takeda, Director of JSPS San Francisco, Mr. Seiji Okada, Consul General of Japan in Vancouver and Dr. David Farrar, UBC Provost and Academic Vice President. Following that, Prof. Peter Nosco of Asian Studies at UBC and the coordinator of this symposium, gave us introductory remarks.

This symposium with six panels over three days, included presentations by five lecturers from Japanese universities, eight lecturers from American universities and five lecturers from Canadian universities.

The lectures looked at the changes in Japanese values and individuality from the end of the Edo era to the beginning of the Meiji era using many different contexts such as nineteenth century legends, ukiyo-e (Japanese woodblock prints), the emancipation moment for outcasts in Japan, bushido (the way of the samurai), and so on. Their unique lectures gave the audiences strong impressions about the culture and thought of early modern Japan which opened the door for the many questions and discussions that followed.

This event also gave valuable opportunities for young scholars with an interest in Japanese history and culture to gain in-depth knowledge from the top researchers in the field of early modern Japanese values.

JSPS San Francisco will continuously support such symposiums which inspire and broaden networks between academics, students, and the interested community and to foster young researchers.



Opening remarks by Dr. Seishi Takeda, Director of JSPS SF



One of the symposium panels

EVENTS OF SUMMER 2013

The 5th Meeting Held of Japanese University Faculty in the US

On 19 July, JSPS San Francisco Office held its fifth meeting of Japanese university faculty members in the U.S. The purpose of this meeting is to exchange information and establish mutual networks among Japanese university researchers staying in the United States. The meeting was attended by ten faculty members of Japanese universities here on short stays to conduct research at Stanford University, UC Berkeley, and UC San Francisco. At the beginning of the meeting, participants briefly introduced themselves and talked about their current research activities. They then exchanged views regarding actual global activities of Japanese universities and the ideal situation for training Japanese young researchers. Afterwards, a sociable gathering was held where participants enjoyed comparing notes on their various research activities and sharing information on their living environment in the United States.



The 23rd Gathering of JSPS Japanese Fellows in the US



On June 7th, JSPS San Francisco held its 23rd "Gathering of JSPS Japanese Fellows in the U.S." in Berkeley, California.

These gatherings are held for young Japanese researchers coming to the US under JSPS's fellowships for research abroad, postdoctoral and doctoral fellowships, and program to promote the international mobility of gifted young researchers.

Twenty fellows attended this 23rd meeting, some of whom came from distant regions, such as New York, Florida, and so on. A visiting scholar from MEXT (Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology - Japan), staff from JSPS Tokyo Headquarters and San Francisco office also attended.

The meeting started with warm greetings from Ms. Toko Ueta, Deputy Director of JSPS San Francisco. Following that, Mr. Yasuharu Sasaki, Coordinator of Overseas Training Program Division, gave an explanation on the institutional system of JSPS fellowships for Japanese doctoral and postdoctoral researchers. Then each fellow made a presentation about their current research activities followed by a short Q&A session. It appeared they were very interested in each other's research fields regardless of whether it was similar to their own.. For the last presentation, the visiting scholar from MEXT, Mr. Takegami, spoke about the future of the Japanese government's science innovation policy. At the reception which followed, they engaged each other in free conversation about their diverse activities and experiences in the U.S.

The meeting provided a good opportunity for them to meet other researchers which they appreciated, because it can be hard to become acquainted with those who work at different institutions. This gathering is also a good opportunity for JSPS staff to hear about researchers thoughts on JSPS fellowship program systems and to exchange opinions.

JSPS San Francisco hopes to continue providing such valuable opportunities for network building events among young Japanese researchers.

The next gathering for young Japanese fellows will be held in Boston this coming November.



BAY AREA & JAPAN RELATED NEWS



The Center for Twin Research and Japan Twin Festival at Osaka University

Center for Twin Research, Osaka University Graduate School of Medicine, was founded in 2009 as the very first Japanese research institution specializing in 'Twin Research'. The term 'twin research' may sound unfamiliar to many; however, it is a great tool to better understand how genetic and environmental factors influence people's health and well-beings.

Twins can be classified into two groups; identical/ monozygotic twins share 100% of genes, and fraternal/dizygotic twins share on average 50% of the genes. Using the differences of similarity between monozygotic pairs and dizygotic pairs makes it possible to estimate which genetic and environmental influences are important for individual variation in a trait or an illness. Research findings are applicable not only to twins, but also non-twins; they can be used to build a healthier society for all.

As part of our center's effort to disseminate research findings and to offer a place for twins to get together, the very first Japan Twin Festival was held last year at Osaka University. More than 100 people, including about 50 pairs of twins, attended the festival. Twins from all over Japan, aged from 0 to 80's, gathered and learned how twin research can make our society healthier and better.

This year on November 10, Japan Twin Festival will be held again on Osaka University's campus. Twins and higher order multiples, and their families are all welcome to attend. Please contact info@twin.med.osaka-u.ac.jp or visit <http://www.twin.med.osaka-u.ac.jp/en/> for more information.



A group photo from Osaka University Twin Festival 2012.

BAY AREA & JAPAN RELATED NEWS



Brown-Kobe Joint Simulation School 2013

Six students from each university, twelve in total, participated in a two-week joint summer school designed for graduate students from Brown University of the U.S. and Kobe University of Japan. During the first week from August 15 to August 21, 2013, the students took lectures and training courses at Brown University in Providence, Rhode Island, in a variety of disciplines including basic computer simulation, methodologies, advanced research in simulation, and practical simulation training using the FX-10, a supercomputer with the same architecture as the K computer. From August 26 to 30, they moved to Kobe University where they continued their studies. Specifically, they developed three-dimensional images of the simulation results using Kobe's

3D Visualization System.

The first objective of this program was to provide students with opportunities to acquire fundamental knowledge and skills in computer simulation as well as learning about the most advanced simulation research both in Japan and the U.S., which enables them to enhance their ability in applying what they learned to their own research. The second objective of this program was to provide students with opportunities to develop cooperative projects through which they can enhance their communication skills in English and deepen mutual understanding in this highly technical area.

The program consisted of three distinctive features: a) small-sized class with an effective curriculum which provided individually tailored instruction and support, b) a two-week intensive summer school to enhance multi-cultural competencies among students, and c) participation of distinctive researchers as guest lecturers. In order to stimulate communication among students, the program provides the students with opportunities to develop collaborative projects under facilitation techniques which enable students to organize events by themselves. In addition, Kobe invited outstanding researchers from the RIKEN Advanced Institute for Computational Science (RIKEN AICS) to give special lectures for this program. AICS is an independent research center, established in 2010, with the objective of advancing scientific research through computer simulation using one of the world's most powerful computers, the K computer.

This simulation school brought together students from five countries: Japan, the U.S., Germany, Chile and China who worked together as project team members. It was a great success not only in intensively training the students to acquire the fundamentals of computer simulation, but also in providing a global perspective amongst the participants in the field of simulation technology and beyond.

Written by: Nobuyuki KAYA and Yukari MITSUHASHI, Kobe University and Björn SANDSTEDT, Brown University



Collaborative workings on the 3-dimensional displays of the simulation results



Collaborative presentations on the simulation projects at Kobe University

BAY AREA & JAPAN RELATED NEWS



公立大学法人
宮城大学
 MIYAGI UNIVERSITY

Go Global MYU! From Miyagi to the World

Miyagi University (MYU) has implemented various global activities in order to become a world-scale university. With this in mind, members of the school

took part in the J-POP Summit Festival 2013 held this year in San Francisco on July 31 and 28. The goal was to provide students with an educational opportunity in a global setting to boost their international abilities and significantly increase the University's presence in the world.

To introduce our project in support of reconstruction after the Great East Japan Earthquake and Tsunami of March 11, 2011 in Minami Sanriku Town, one of the hardest-hit disaster stricken areas, MYU students exhibited some of their datascape graphics. The graphic designs were created to visually express the outline of the project. One University faculty member also demonstrated his creative work made from Japanese lacquer with the aim of introducing a novel approach in the field of design. We were pleased that there were over 70,000 visitors at the Summit, many of whom were Cool Japan fans. It was especially good that many young people came to see us and showed a great interest in our projects.

The MYU delegates also had the privilege of exchanging ideas and opinions with students and staff at the Academy of Art University and at the Department of Architecture and Urban Design at UCLA's School of the Arts and Architecture.

[Reference]

The Department of Spatial Design and Information Systems, School of Project Design at Miyagi University has begun offering a brand-new design education which combines digital craft design with local materials. The Tohoku Region or Northeastern Region of Japan, where the University is located, is a major producer of "urushi" or Japanese lacquer. As one of the reconstruction assistance projects in the Nagashizu District in Minami Sanriku Town, we are promoting Japanese lacquer to apply to the sextic industry which is a collaboration of primary (planting), secondary (harvesting and producing) and tertiary (commercializing) industries. The project is known as "Nagashizu Urushi."

Please visit our website. <http://www.myu.ac.jp/index.html>



INTERVIEW WITH JSPS FELLOW IN THE U.S



Dr. Amy Poh Ai Ling

2006: B.B.A., Business Administration (Marketing), National University of Malaysia (UKM).

2007: M.S., Quality and Productivity Improvement, National University of Malaysia (UKM).

2012 Ph.D., Mathematical Sciences, Meiji University.

2012-present: JSPS Postdoctoral Research Fellow at the Department of Technology Management for Innovations, Graduate School of Engineering, University of Tokyo.

2013 April-September: Visitor (Postdoctoral Research fellow) in Computing and Mathematical Sciences in the Division of Engineering and Applied Science, in the field of Computer Science, at the California Institute of Technology (Caltech).

Amy is a visitor in Computing and Mathematical Sciences at Caltech this spring and summer. She is currently affiliated with the Department of Technology Management for Innovations at the University of Tokyo. She is a member of Professor Nawata Kazumitsu's Laboratory and Meiji Institute for Advanced Study of Mathematical Sciences.

1. Why did you choose the U.S. to pursue your research?

My desire to pursue research in the U.S. was prompted by a unique opportunity in working with prominent researchers at Caltech on various topics that are relevant to my research interests. This unique learning experience has not only enhanced my knowledge, but also broadened my perspective on conducting research, especially the open brainstorming atmosphere in discussing research ideas. The opportunity to take part in smart grid demand response research with Dr. Chin-Woo Tan is an especially rewarding experience and learning prospect for me. Dr. Tan works on a smart grid project for the Los Angeles Department of Water and Power and is also affiliated with Stanford University. The smart grid project focuses on investigating statistical properties of household en-

ergy consumption data and forecasting their consumption.

The rich databases collected by the U.S. government are especially relevant to my research. I have a lot of scientific contacts in U.S. universities, and the scientific schools in the U.S. are very advanced. A sophisticated set of mathematical tools has been applied to my area of studies, and by going to the U.S. I get a unique chance to learn these techniques.

2. What is your impression of the research environment in the U.S.?

It is a very open environment, with professors giving strong support to their students. All students starting from undergraduate studies being actively involved in the research process. In the host institution, the research group is very productive. They pursue various cutting-edge topics in modern Electrical Engineering. I was engaged with the Rigorous Systems Research Group at Caltech under Prof. Steven Low's supervision. RSRG is distinguished by its rigorous/analytic approach to design. The group develops new theory, uses theoretical results to provide new design tools and methodologies, puts these new design tools and methodologies into practice, and develops new theory motivated by

practice, thus closing the loop.

In addition, I heeded the elders' advice to be involved in the local cultural immersion that did me a lot of good. I have learnt a lot about the U.S., and life in California. It offers a cultural context that is undoubtedly different from Asia.

3. What is your vision for the future?

I am writing a short paper based on my work in the U.S., and would certainly look forward to meeting my U.S. colleagues at the conferences held in Asia. Considering the visitation as an important stepping-stone for me to move forward in data management and a statistical analysis career, it would certainly be a nice experience for me to learn from within. I look forward to contribute the knowledge that I possessed through this visitation into my future research endeavors.

4. Do you have any advice about doing research abroad for young researchers?

Be open-minded and take on difficult tasks - this way your stay abroad will be most productive. Be sure to participate in the social life to get to know your group members better. There are numerous opportunities for networking in the U.S.~!