

Third JETAA International Conference



“Ni-Ju-I-Seki”: Challenges and Opportunities for the Future

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Conference Coordinators

The Japan Exchange and Teaching Program Alumni Association held its third International Conference August 8th through 10th, 1997 at the Queen Elizabeth Hotel in Montreal. Sponsored by the Japan Local Government Center and hosted by JETAA Montreal, it was attended by close to 50 representatives from Canada, the United States and, for the first time, the United Kingdom, Ireland, Australia and New Zealand, making this the first truly international JETAA Conference in its three year history.

Representatives participated in seminars, workshops, discussions and social activities, with an overall focus on defining JETAA’s role, purpose and direction in preparation for the 21st Century.

Opening Day

Introductory remarks were offered by Anita Chandan (Acting President of JETAA Montreal), Ronn Patton (Host of the Second International Conference in San Francisco), Toshiyuki Otaki (Director, Japan Local Government Center) and Consul General Tadanori Inomata (Consulate of Japan in Montreal).

Two formal sessions followed. *Globalization of JETAA* was presented by a multinational group including Jason Hicks (Canada), Elisa Hernandez (US), David Briggs (UK), Donal Garvey (Ireland), Keith Parker (Australia) and David Taylor (New Zealand). Each representative profiled his or her local chapter, followed by question-and-answer periods.

A workshop on *Membership* was led by

Mike Levy, one of two representatives from Houston. Its focus was on defining the aims and goals of individual chapters, assessing member needs, effective communication and incentives to encourage JETAA membership.

Day Two

A variety of individual workshops targeted specific issues.

— *World Wide Web Update* presented by Michael McVey (Arizona) highlighted

discussed creating identities and promoting chapters, and a committee was formed to create a JETAA International logo.

— A workshop on *Career Development* was presented by Joy Haywood of Pasona, Inc., a Japanese employment agency with offices worldwide, covering opportunities after the JET Program, and skills and tools for finding a job.

— *Social Outreach* was the subject of a workshop led by Libby Wolfensperger (San Francisco), and participants again broke into smaller groups to identify activities for involving members with the Japanese and local communities.

— In light of the news that JLGCC funding for future Conferences would be limited, the workshop on *Successful Funding* was of universal interest. Jean Stutsman, Executive Director of the Royal Victoria Hospital Foundation, offered a step-by-step approach to fund raising which should be extremely useful.

A panel and open discussion forum concluded the program for Day Two. Panelists gave short speeches on future directions for the Association. They included Naozane Utada of Yomiuri Shimbun America underscoring the important resource provided by JETAA; Ms. Satoko Ingram of the Japanese Cultural Community Center in Montreal, who stressed the need for further involvement with the Japanese community; and Fumiaki Kuraishi of JETRO Montreal and Consul



Donal Garvey from Ireland spoke during the “Globalization” session; listening to his presentation are (l. to r.) Toshiyuki Otaki, JLGCC-NY, and authors Shaun McMahon and Anita Chandan.

progress since last year. All but six chapters in the US and Canada now have e-mail addresses, and all but five have web sites. The main JETAA site receives hundreds of visitors a month, providing communications for JETAA and information for JET applicants.

— In *Marketing Your Chapter*, Blaine Leckett (Montreal) provided practical advice on marketing and creating an easily identifiable image, using JETAA Montreal’s sumo logo, seen on letterhead, posters, t-shirts, web site and more, as an example. Smaller groups

Hokkaido's 1888 prefectural Government Building was modeled after the State Houses of Maryland and Massachusetts.



Concentration is evident as (l. to r.) JETs Matthew Keeler (Minnesota), Mike Levy (former president, Houston JETAA), John Elsner (current president, Houston JETAA) and Guy Richard (Montreal) share ideas during the World Wide Web workshop.

General Inomata, who looked at JETAA's future from a business and government perspective.

Ronn Patton of JETAA San Francisco opened the discussion period which formulated the following goals and objectives for the Association:

1. Establish an open communication structure (each chapter should have an e-mail address, web site and permanent mailing address).
2. Create an international identity for JETAA (through an International Logo and International brochure).
3. Create a mission statement or mandate.
4. Increase cultural activities (such as a show of JETAA photos of Japan to travel worldwide, beginning in Philadelphia in 1998).
5. Find new sources of funding for promoting the Association and organizing the next conference in 1998.

6. Create a sempai-kohai relationship (where more experienced chapters help those that are not as advanced).
7. Encourage greater interaction with the Japanese community overseas.
8. Continue to support and promote the JET program.

Relaxation

Aside from much hard work, delegates also enjoyed the City of Montreal. On Friday evening, participants and speakers enjoyed a magnificent buffet at Consul General Inomata's residence and pool side interaction with members of Montreal's Japanese business community and the Quebec-Japan Business Forum. Many delegates continued the evening at the 42nd floor terrace bar and disco at Place Ville Marie offering a spectacular view of the city at night.

On Saturday night, delegates boarded 15 Caleches (horse-drawn carriages) to travel the cobbled streets of Old Montreal, followed by a 5 course dinner (and birthday cake for Michael McVey) at the Restaurant le Vieux Port, hosted by the Japan Local Government Center. On Sunday, the

Shokokai of Montreal and Mayor Bourque's office sponsored a tour of Montreal, with stops at the Botanical Gardens, Olympic Stadium, Biodome, Old Montreal and Mount Royal.

The conference was a great success, giving all chapters the occasion to regroup and move forward. It identified future challenges (funding, marketing, membership), opportunities (interaction, cultural exchange, business development) and immediate goals (a stable international structure, open communication, funding for future conferences).

JETAA provides an essential support system for former JET participants who are bonded by their JET experience. JETAA is also a valuable resource for the Japanese community abroad as well as local communi-



JET alumni had perfect weather for a most enjoyable Montreal tour sponsored by the office of Mayor Bourque at the conclusion of the conference.

ties in advancing interaction, whether on a social, cultural, education or business level. The 21st Century will certainly see the growth of JETAA in all of these areas. Until next year...