

# UNIVERSITY OF FINDLAY JAPANESE PROGRAM NEWS LETTER

January 2022

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## A Message from our Graduate!

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Hello everyone! My name is Thea Knapp and I graduated from UF in spring 2021. I currently work for Bridgestone APM as an executive assistant and translator, and I started working right after graduation. My job is a combination of things, but mostly, I help the Japanese expats at our company get acclimated to the U.S. and do Japanese translation in the office from time to time.

It's been a few months since I graduated, but my time in the Japanese program is always fresh in my mind. I got to do so much during my undergrad, like learn new things about Japanese culture, study abroad in Japan, and meet my best friends. I was also able to compete in a Japanese speech contest during my senior year and got 3rd place. It was scary, but a good experience that forced me to speak my second language in a nerve-wracking situation.

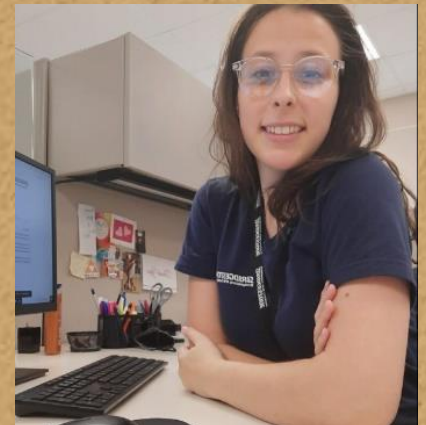
My favorite time was probably when I went to Fukui, Japan with my best friends and got to seriously study Japanese there. Being immersed in Japanese every day and not having worry about other classes was the most helpful thing I did for my Japanese skills, and I had a lot of fun times in Fukui. Singing karaoke for the first time, riding the train

into the city, and walking to the convenience store at 2 am with my friends to get snacks and drinks are some of my favorite memories there. Besides meeting Japanese people, I met exchange students from countries like Romania, France, Vietnam, etc, and I feel like my cultural knowledge really expanded then.

If I could say anything to my *koohai* (underclassmen), it would be that every minute of studying counts, and will be helpful in the future, so don't slack off and your Japanese abilities will show. Don't worry too much about the future and stay in-tune with your priorities. I'm confident you are all capable of doing whatever you want to do!

I'm grateful for all my time in the Japanese program and for the people that made it great for me. I hope to use everything I learned at school to continue my adventures and move forward in life.

*Thea Knapp*  
*(Graduated in 2021)*





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## News of FA 2021!

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### “A Translation Project with Students at University of Fukui in Japan”

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Recently, I had the opportunity to work with two students in Japan on a translation project. Together, we translated two passages of classic Japanese literature: “Essays in Idleness” by Kenko Hoshi, and “The Narrow Road to the Deep North” by Matsuo Basho. Both passages are incredibly old, so the Japanese used was very different from modern Japanese. Luckily, it was already translated into modern Japanese, which made my job much easier!

I actually did a similar project for Aoki-Sensei’s translation course last semester, though for that project we actually translated the older Japanese! Doing this project was a lot of fun. One of my favorite things about studying Japanese is that I get the opportunity to work with Japanese students pretty frequently! For this project I worked with two third year students from the University of Fukui in Fukui prefecture. Their names are Rikana Takeuchi and Hinako Itto, and both are studying Global and Cultural Communications. Both were very nice!

Together, we worked on improving my translation, as even in the modern Japanese there were parts of the passage that I didn’t quite understand. Rikana helped a lot in explaining the meaning of the Japanese in a way that I could understand, while Hinako was suggesting improvements!

The goal of this project was to create a translation for students who go to school in Japan, but may not be fluent in Japanese. It feels great knowing that my translation might be able to help a student who is struggling to understand their coursework. Not to mention how entertaining translation itself is; trying to fit the right English words to match the Japanese original’s tone and meaning is almost like a puzzle! Being able to work with these Japanese students to create this translation is an experience I won’t soon forget.

*Garrett Brown (Senior, Computer Science and Japanese Major)*

When I have nothing to do, I surrender myself to boredom. All day long I sit with ink at the ready, writing every fleeting thought that pops in and out of my head. Strangely my mind distorts, unable to regain presence of mind.

(Translation by Garrett Brown)



<https://kyoukashohonyaku.wixsite.com/honyaku>



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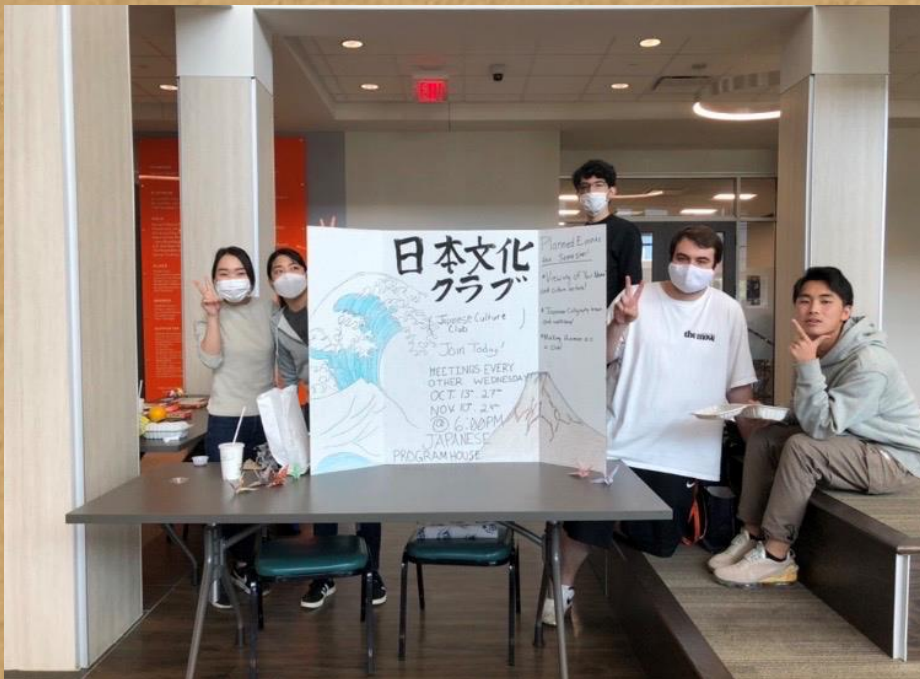
## The Japanese Culture Club News ~Fall 2021 Report~

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Good tidings from the University of Findlay! This is Tim Cunningham, the president of the Japanese Culture Club this year, and boy, what a semester the fall 2021 had been! Along from our weekly meetings, we have done so much as a club, together! Thankfully, the last semester, we have had such wonderful opportunities come to us thanks to organizations such as JASCO or the Japanese American Society of Central Ohio! They have really helped us this semester, and a lot of what we did would not be without their help and guidance!

Some of the fun things we have done this semester include, but are

certainly not limited to, A virtual Japanese temple tour of a small, but beautiful temple in the Kyoto! Next, we had the calligraphy workshop, where students got to learn the traditional Japanese art of writing kanji. The Wagashi Workshop was our next event, and it was probably our most popular event of the semester! There, we got to make traditional Japanese sweets and enjoyed green tea afterwards! Lastly, we had the campus-wide, 2-day event of showing the movie 君の名は (Kimi no Na wa) as well as a lecture talking about the culture behind the movie from Dr. Michael Tangemen and Ms. Jessie Tudor-Tangeman! We have also had a lot of experiences that, while were outside of J.C.C., were still involved in as well!





A lot of our members went and listened to the lecture about the Korean statute of peace. This lecture was very important for us here at Findlay, as we do not learn about the history of comfort women in our textbooks.

Another event that we participated in was going to see a Pipa player on campus! Pipa is a type of traditional Chinese instrument. I would now like to turn the spotlight on some experiences or members have had throughout the semester! I had the chance to sit and discuss the experiences of some of the Japanese exchange students that we have on campus, and it was very insightful!

Hikari Jonathan Tsukabayashi  
(塚林光ジョナサン)

JCC provides unique cultural experience. The activities were all great opportunities for us to understand and learn the Japanese culture, even for me who was born and raised in Japan. Some of my favorite activities were the Wagashi Workshop as well as the calligraphy!

Daichi Shimano (島野大地)

JCC gives me a lot of opportunity to interact with students through Japanese culture. Especially the Wagashi workshop was a very good experience. Because of Covid-19, Some events are

getting cancelled or moved online. However, Wagashi workshop was a hands-on experience. Doing something with people is a really easy way to get along with each other so I really appreciate my time so far in JCC.

Haruka Furuichi (古市陽香)

Through JCC meeting, I got various meaningful experiences. In JCC meeting, I was able to communicate with other students in the United States, and I got a number of opportunities to explain about Japan. Also, I was able to join some cultural programs, like the Wagashi Workshop.





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## What's Coming Next? "The Ohio Speech Contest"

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The Ohio Speech Contest sponsored by the Japan America Society of Central Ohio (JASCO) will be held in March. The Japanese program students will participate in it. Here is advice from *senpai* (upperclassman), Garrett Brown.

During the spring of this year, I had the pleasure of being a finalist in the Japan-America Society of Central Ohio (JASCO) speech contest. This competition takes students from all over Ohio across several different Japanese proficiency levels, ranging from high school to advanced (for those who have experience living in Japan). I've been participating in this speech contest for around seven years, having been a finalist four times.

To any *kouhai* reading and considering trying the speech contest, I highly recommend it! It's a great way to challenge yourself and improve your Japanese. While it may be daunting at first, your Japanese teachers will always be willing to help. In preparation for finals, my teachers were always willing to spend time outside of class. Since the final speeches need to be memorized, most of the practice needs to happen on your own time. Working with your teachers will help you with your intonation and pacing, not to mention performing in front of an audience.

The most difficult part of the contest to practice for is the questions and answers

section. After you perform your speech, the judges will ask a variety of questions related to your speech, and you'll have no idea what they are until they ask. Luckily, you can prepare with your teachers. Whenever I practiced with them, they'd ask me different questions every time so I'd get used to thinking of answers quickly. Occasionally the judges will ask questions you've practiced, but most of the time you just need to work on answering questions out of the blue.

Overall, I think doing the speech contest is an excellent experience for any Japanese learner looking to improve their skills. I won't lie and say it's not a nerve-racking experience, but doing it has helped me get over my stage fright as well as make my Japanese stronger. And of course, I have to thank my teachers for always being there to help!

*Garrett Brown (Senior, Computer Science and Japanese Major)*

