"Let's Share" Conveying our gratitude and Expanding our bond!

The 4th Support Our Kids Reunion at Tohoku Fukushi University

HABATAKI·翔 REPORT





December 2015 Support Our Kids Committee

Purpose / What is the HABATAKI Project?

Purpose

Thank you for participating in the 4th Support Our Kids Reunion and to your continuous cooperation and support to the Support Our Kids project. The Support Our Kids project is a 10-year project which aims to support the independence of children affected by the Great East Japan Earthquake and nurture them into becoming future reconstruction leaders. With the cooperation and support of embassies and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, we provide overseas homestay program to make this happen.

This year, we started a new homestay program in Australia and have now sent a total of 290 students abroad. With the cooperation of Tokyo Big Sight, we also held "STAND UP SUMMIT 2015" for students to discuss reconstruction. Returnees of our homestay program who started their own project, HABATAKI, are currently working on "Tohoku x Nepal Reconstruction Outreach Project" to support children affected by the Nepal Earthquake. I feel that these children are working their way to become the future reconstruction leaders of Tohoku.

The Reunion event is held for participants to present their opinions on the current situation of Tohoku, experiences abroad, and the plans for their future. We also have friends, guardians and supporters of these children in attendance to the event.

To those who will be presenting today, we hope you will tell us all about your experiences and to the listeners, kindly lend your ears and continue to support these children.

It is unfortunate that I cannot attend today, but I will be cheering you on from New Zealand.

November 29, 2015 Support Our Kids Committee Honorary Chairman Ian Kennedy (Former Ambassador of New Zealand to Japan)

What is the HABATAKI Project?

The Reunion was organized to make it a stage for students to grow and shine. Upon asking the students to help and suggest a name for this event, New Zealand program participant Saki Ito suggested "Habataki". Habataki in Japanese means to flap or flutter one's wings. She said, "We were able to fly because of the support of many. From now on, we will fly on our own and repay the kindness and support we received."



Summary/Program

Summary

Date: November 29, 2015 (Sun) 13:00~18:00 Location: Tohoku Fukushi University Keyaki Hall Hosted By: Support Our Kids Committee Co-hosted By: Tohoku Fukushi University Attendees: 211 (105 are students)

Program

Keyaki Hall

12:30 Reception

- 13:00 Opening / MC: Junko Akisawa (TBS Announcer)
- Opening Speech Yu Sakamoto (Reunion 2015 Committee / US Homestay 2013 Participant)
- Greetings Yukiatsu Akizawa (Support Our Kids Committee Executive Director)

<u>13 : 20 HABATAKI Symposium</u> *Participating in the overseas homestay program*

14:40 HABATAKI Symposium2

Fukkou no wa Project (Tohoku x Nepal Reconstruction Outreach Project)

15:40 Greetings by 2015 Poland & Switzerland Homestay Participants

16:30 Closing

Closing Speech Ryuta Goto (Reunion 2015 Committee / Ireland Homestay 2014 Participant)

Fudo

<u>16:30~18:00</u> After party









HABATAKI Symposium^①

With the theme "Experiencing overseas homestay", students from each homestay country presented their thoughts and experiences, as well as their gratitude for the support.



This spring, we participated in the Support Our Kids Charity Auction Dinner and KAKEHASHI Project US Program. Our group goal for this program was "Share Our Hearts" – we all shared our experiences during the disaster with each other prior to departure. We don't know how, what we learned will help us in the future. However, we definitely know it has become seeds of possibility. We know it will not be easy, but we will try our very best. Thank you to all who supported us and made this trip happen.



What we experienced and learned in France will not only be with us, but we hope to share it with others. I believe that there are two types of people: those who "send" information and those who "receive" information. I hope to become someone who sends and provides information to the world. "You may lose whatever you bought with money, but what you experience can never be stolen or lost. Therefore, cherish your memories and experiences". Our escort in France gave us these words. We shall do so and do our very best for our own future. We are very thankful for this experience!



We had a chance to visit the Lord Mayor of Dublin, Japan Embassy, Kendo Federation and presentations at a language school in Ireland. We were able to talk about our experiences to everyone there. After experiencing the disaster, I believe the most important thing to do is preparation. At the language school, we were able to talk about our own cultures and the students of the Kendo Federation taught as a lot about the Irish Culture. I am not very good in English but I am glad I was able to socialize and make new friends. We will continue to do our best.

HABATAKI Symposium¹

Each group had very unique presentations on their trip and experiences.



Australia was an amazing place. We met amazing people, had amazing experiences and found amazing discoveries of ourselves. "Take a step forward" – we are working hard to step forward. The Support Our Kids team, our families, friends and many more have supported us. We do not know how to thank you enough. We would like to move forward with our future and hope for your continued support. Thank you very much.



Before departure, we chose our group goal to be "Super Positive Thinking". Whatever we may face, we aim to keep our heads up and continue to challenge in a positive manner. Participating in this program itself was a challenge for us. Although we spoke terrible English, we tried to communicate and I feel that has made us better. We learned so many things through this program. It wouldn't have been the same if it weren't for all members of this group. The two weeks I spent with them are on my treasured experiences. From now on, I hope to continue to actively participate in Support Our Kids' activities.



We lost so many from the Great East Japan Earthquake, and some of us lost our dreams. However, I have a found a dream through this overseas homestay program. I realized how big our world is, and I developed a different and wider perspective of many things. From that, my hopes and dreams have also become bigger. I will never forget my experience in Canada. Thank you to everyone who gave us this opportunity. Like all the alumni of the Support Our Kids Project, we plan to participate in volunteer activities, and eventually grow to become adults who can contribute to Tohoku.

HABATAKI Symposium²

As the main project of HABATAKI, returnees presented the "Tohoku x Nepal Reconstruction Outreach Project".

♦ HABATAKI Project 2015 Report



The HABATAKI Project is a place of Support Our Kids participants to put their thoughts to reality. Last year, we helped the Support Our Kids Committee with planning and management of last year's reunion, STAND UP SUMMIT and more.

♦ About the Tohoku × Nepal Reconstruction Outreach Project



On April 25, 2015, a big earthquake occurred in Nepal and caused great damage and casualties. We realized it was a good chance for us to help others and decided to have a Support Our Kids program for the children of Nepal. We call it *"Fukkou no wa Project" (Tohoku x Nepal Reconstruction Outreach Project)*. This will include cultural exchange with children of Tohoku and reflection on what they can do to help their hometown. We believe, as receivers of all your support, that this is something we need to do. We kindly ask for your continued support and cooperation.

♦What I learned from this project



I participated in the US program 3 years ago. I met people who I consider my very best friends. Throughout high school, I was surrounded by people who helped, encourage and supported me with all their best. As a college student now, I believe it is my turn to provide help and support to those who need it.

I participated in the US program in 2013. I experienced a big culture shock, and seeing how passionate the around me were, it has encouraged me to reconsider my point of view. Within Japan, I have participated in the planning and management of Reunion 2014, the Nepal project and helped at Support Our Kids booths in various events. I hope find my dreams in my own pace as I go on an adventure and challenge many things.





I wanted to move forward and continue with reconstruction projects after the US program so I joined the HABATAKI Project team. I also went to Cebu, Philippines for 2 weeks last summer to develop my English skills. I was very nervous because it my first time to go abroad, but the teachers and the new friends I made me feel comfortable and independent. Going abroad alone has boosted my self-confidence and hope to continue on doing new challenges.

Photo Report1

♦ HABATAKI Photo Exhibition



◆ Student Presentations





Many of our supporters participated in the event



Photo Report²

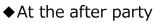
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Snacks and drinks provided by sponsors



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Media: The event was featured on the news section of Tohoku Broadcasting

November 29, 2015 **Tohoku Broadcasting News**



Parents' Association / HABATAKI Workshop

♦ Parents' Association

We held the 4th Parents' Association gathering for report of this year's activities and to create a better network for all guardians. It was a very significant gathering as we talked about the changes they've seen in their children after their overseas experience.



HABATAKI Workshop

The HABATAKI Workshop was held for a chance to prepare for student preparations, workshops and activities report of HABATAKI – all prepared, managed and scheduled by the students.



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2-16-6 3F Kojimachi, Chiyoda-ku, Tokyo, Japan 〒102-0083 TEL:03-6272-6252 E-mail : info@jidai.or.jp