



Greetings from the President

I would like to extend my best wishes to everyone with the publication of the first CWA NEWS of 2021.

I would also like to express my deepest appreciation for your continued support and understanding in regards to the exchange activities of the CWA.

Chiba Prefecture and the State of Wisconsin established the sister-state relationship in 1990. Subsequently, the CWA was established in 2004, and became the focal point of exchange activities on behalf of Chiba Prefecture.

Chiba-Wisconsin Association
President Yuzaburo Mogi

During this time, the incidents of the Swine Flu pandemic in 2009 and the Great East Japan Earthquake in 2011 caused unavoidable postponements in the dispatching and receiving of Goodwill Delegations. However, thanks to the efforts of everyone involved, we were able to overcome these obstacles, and continue to develop robust and active exchanges over a wide range of fields at a local level. As a result, the scope of these exchanges at the grassroots level has continued to steadily expand and deepen.

Last year marked the 30th anniversary of the sister-state relationship, and it was also a year in which we planned to receive a Goodwill Delegation from Wisconsin. However, due to the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic, we were forced to postpone or cancel all exchange activities last year.

This year, we are beginning the process of preparing to receive the Goodwill Delegation from Wisconsin that we planned to receive last year. Unfortunately, the state of the COVID-19 pandemic has yet to subside, making the situation highly unpredictable. To that end, we are planning to move forward by continuing to monitor the situation of the pandemic and maintaining close discussions with Wisconsin-Chiba, Inc.

In the event that exchange activities move forward, we would like to provide relevant information at the earliest opportunity. Until then, I humbly ask for your understanding and cooperation.

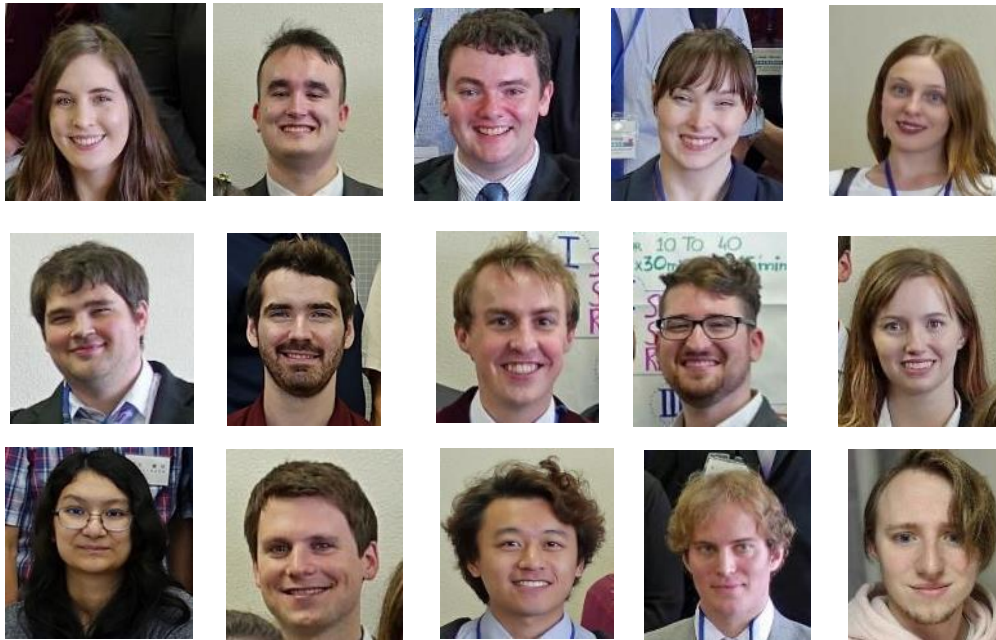
In closing, I would like to extend my sincerest gratitude to everyone, starting with the CWA Board Members and Regular Members, and humbly ask for your continued support and cooperation in regards to future CWA activities.

Introducing the Wisconsin ALTs!

There are many ALTs from Wisconsin teaching at schools in Chiba Prefecture.

ALT, short for “Assistant Language Teacher,” is a foreign language teacher who assists with foreign language education in Japan. Currently, there are several ALTs working in elementary, junior, and senior high schools in Chiba for the improvement of English and international understanding. Among them are the following ALTs from Wisconsin:

< Returning ALTs >



Top Row (from the Left):

Evelyn Ewald	Prefectural Awa High School, Prefectural Nagasa High School
Max Gumble	Prefectural Toke High School, Prefectural Chishirodai High School
Patrick Grimes	Prefectural Board of Education, ALT Program Coordinator
Josephine Kirkland	Asahi Municipal 2 nd Junior High School, Higata Elementary School, Kyowa Elementary School
Clara Faile	Isumi Municipal Misaki Junior High School, Choja Elementary School, Nakane Elementary School, Ohara Elementary School

Middle Row (from the Left):

Jon Kangas	Prefectural Sakura High School
Ben Alden	Prefectural Sosa High School
Matt Vosters	Prefectural Matsuo High School
Jamison Taube	Prefectural Togane High School
Amanda MacDonald	Prefectural Kimitsu High School

Bottom Row (from the Left):

Sophia Silva	Prefectural Matsudo Kokusai High School
Lewis Hurd	Prefectural Matsudo Kokusai High School
Jesse Chang	Prefectural Nagareyama Otakanomori High School
Joseph Simurdiak	Prefectural Nagareyama Otakanomori High School
Grant Smith	OamiShirasato Municipal Oami Junior High School

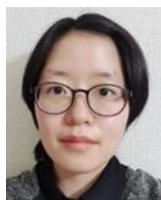
CWA Newsletter No. 48

March 19, 2021 (original Japanese version)

< New ALTs >

We asked the new Wisconsin ALTs the following questions:

1. Please briefly introduce yourself.
2. Why did you decide to join the Chiba-Wisconsin ALT Program?
3. How did your impression of Japan (before coming) change after you came to Japan?
4. Are there any differences between the way the U.S. and Japan are dealing with COVID-19 (in terms of handwashing, sanitizing, avoiding the 3 Cs, etc.)?
5. After coming to Japan, what was the toughest part of adjusting to life here?
6. After coming to Japan, is there anything about Japan or Japanese people that you have come to like or appreciate?



Hanna Nam

Prefectural Narita Kokusai High School

1. I am a Korean-American born in Milwaukee! My biggest hobby is cooking. So if I am not working, I will be cooking meals for myself or others! Otherwise, I enjoy playing tennis or badminton.
2. I chose the Chiba-Wisconsin ALT Program because it is close-knit group. I wanted to get to know the other ALTs to share information and motivate each other!
3. The people are much more friendly and willing to help than expected!
4. Not much. I think Japan is doing better since they have temperature checks inside buildings and hand sanitizers everywhere.
5. The toughest part was trying to understand how things work in Japan. I always ask someone if doing something was socially rude or impolite, just to make sure I wasn't making big mistakes.
6. I appreciate how Japanese people are very friendly and willing to help! I am always grateful for the support.



David Garcia

Prefectural Kashiwai High School

1. Hello! I am a recent graduate from UW-Madison that majored in Japanese, Jazz Trumpet Performance, and received a certificate in TESOL. My hobbies are exercising, practicing piano and trumpet, drawing, and baking.

CWA Newsletter No. 48

March 19, 2021 (original Japanese version)

2. While I was accepted to join the JET Program as well as the Chiba-Wisconsin ALT Program, I ultimately ended up selecting the Chiba-Wisconsin ALT Program because, while it was smaller, I knew that I would receive more personalized interactions and get to know more of my coworkers on a deeper level. In a smaller program, I knew that I would be valued more as an individual than as just another number. In short, I chose this program because I knew that I would be able to make deeper connections with this program than with the JET Program.
3. My impression of Japan actually got a little bit nicer. I've met a lot of people around the area that I teach who, despite my sometimes broken Japanese, still try to talk with me and have nice conversations, and all of my students always seem delighted to talk to me despite me being nervous about making mistakes and not understanding them all the time.
4. I mean... There's a LOT of differences, the main one is that everyone here wears masks because it helps to keep others safe, and as someone with a poor immune system and asthma, I really appreciate everyone doing their best to help keep others safe.
5. I think the time zone differences. I've lived in Japan for extended periods of time before, and I was fully prepared for teaching (having a great time with it), but I honestly wasn't prepared to feel lonely. This is the first time I've ever lived by myself, and I'm doing it in a foreign country with my closest friends 15 hours away from me. Sure, I can talk to them sometimes in the morning and usually on the weekends when they're not busy, but I'd say the hardest part of my day is walking home to an empty apartment (though playing music and having a lot of hobbies to pursue does help to keep me occupied).
6. I really appreciate how normalized going to a restaurant or cafe alone is here. In America it was my experience that if you went to a restaurant or even some cafes by yourself, you were seen as a "loser" or "someone who was avoiding being social," and here it's just a normal thing. One of my new favorite things is going to a cafe on the weekends and drawing/reading for a few hours and enjoying coffee, so even though it's a small thing, it's really nice for someone who suddenly has a lot of alone time.



Grace Burzinski

Prefectural Chiba Higashi High School

1. I grew up in Saint Louis, Missouri, but graduated from University of Wisconsin-Madison, which is why I was able to take part in this program. I love to draw and create other art, so I ended up majoring in Art in college. In my free time I enjoy playing video games, reading fantasy novels, baking pies, playing piano, and exploring Japan with my friends!
2. I've known for years that I wanted to try to live abroad, and when I started to learn Japanese in college, it just kind of clicked that I would try teaching in Japan. My mother was a teacher for over 35 years, so growing up I was constantly involved in her classroom, and in high school I volunteered in classrooms around Saint Louis as well. Although one day I hope to maybe explore some art-based jobs (hopefully here in Japan), I know that I enjoy teaching and being involved with the development of young adults and children, so I get to do something I love and experience a whole new culture and way of life while I do it!

CWA Newsletter No. 48

March 19, 2021 (original Japanese version)

3. I had been to Japan once before, but only for two weeks as a tourist, and never to Chiba. I of course knew that Japan valued tradition, but I was still surprised by how strong of a regard it is held in. Since America is a young country with a diverse population, we don't have any single, strong culture that we all uphold. So seeing how united Japan was in terms of tradition and mentality was very interesting.

4. Japan definitely seems to be handling COVID better in terms of people wearing masks, which I think stems from their past use of masks during allergy or flu season. Americans also seem to be much more vocal and opinionated in their dissent. Oddly enough though, everyday life seems to be fairly similar - many people are still going to restaurants and shopping malls, and the trains are still packed, with many people sitting next to each other.

5. Definitely dealing with minor culture shocks, such as the size of the ovens, lack of a clothes dryer, and how expensive certain foods are, like butter, or even lack of common American foods, like turkey. In addition, I wasn't particularly prepared for how much I was going to stand out here, since in America I am a part of the majority. The stares I receive when just walking to work are something I'll probably never really get used to.

6. Overall, I appreciate how kind everyone is to me despite my broken Japanese and occasional lack of proper manners.



Alexie Bollman

Prefectural Chiba Minami High School

1. I'm from Chicago, Illinois and I attended the University of Wisconsin, Madison for my undergraduate education. In my free time, I enjoy baking, painting, and watching YouTube. I also love cars and art museums.

2. I chose the Chiba-Wisconsin program largely because it was a smaller network compared to JET. I have been interested in teaching since my second year of undergrad. The economic outlook of the United States, particularly as a result of the pandemic, was a motivating factor in my decision to come here instead of pursuing other job opportunities. I'm hoping by the time I return home, the market will have healed enough for me to either enter the workforce again or have time to reapply for graduate school.

3. My impressions of Japan were realistic before I arrived, but I certainly think COVID has affected life everywhere in the world. The Japan I am in today is certainly not the one I envisioned, but life in the past year is not something anyone could have predicted. I'm happy here, I feel safe, and nature is beautiful. Public transportation is not as convenient as I imagined!

4. In my opinion, individuals in each country choose to follow guidelines or not. People wear their masks (properly or improperly) in Japan, generally, without much fuss. However, the frustrated attitude about the virus and imposed rules are similar. We cannot disregard media images, but there is economic oppression, systemic racism, and class division present in America. In many ways, COVID has exposed a lot of existing issues in the American society and

CWA Newsletter No. 48

March 19, 2021 (original Japanese version)

government. In general, I feel safe here because I take necessary precautions, like hand washing and sanitizing, not because I perceive my environment to be particularly “more safe”.

5. COVID makes things complicated, but the toughest part for me has been not being able to travel. I really enjoy traveling, and also I missed the holiday season at home. With the two-week quarantine and travel restrictions imposed, I don't feel comfortable leaving. I also worry about becoming sick and affecting my students. So, I want to stay as healthy as possible in the new year!

6. I appreciate a lot of the kindness my friends and co-teachers have given to me. I am young and still unsure about many things in the world. I get a lot of help from the people around me and I can be successful because of it. I also enjoy the cleanliness of the country and the safety! I hope to have a lot more fun in the future.



Tyler Jossart

Prefectural Matsudo Kokusai High School

1. Hello! I just recently turned 25 years old in December. I graduated from The University of Wisconsin – Madison, where I studied politics, focusing on East, Southeast Asia. In college I also started studying Japanese about 3 years ago, and studied abroad at Sophia University for one semester. My passions are both language learning (and now teaching it!), and also, studying politics and international relations. My main hobby is hiking! I love to go out in nature and hike, especially climbing mountains. It's great to do with friends, is active and thankfully is pretty safe to do, since it is outside. Wisconsin does not really have mountains, so I want to take advantage of my time here to go to hiking often.

2. There are many reasons I decided to join the Chiba-Wisconsin ALT Program. The first reason is because I was always interested in becoming a teacher, but I wasn't sure if it would be the correct career choice for me, so I thought the Chiba-Wisconsin ALT Program would be a good opportunity to see if teaching really is correct for me. So far, the answer has been yes! I absolutely love my job, my students and the teachers around me! Also, after starting to study Japanese, I became very interested in language learning in general because our classes were a lot of fun. I looked forward to my Japanese classes, and saw them as a breath of fresh air, compared to normal college courses. I hope to share that experience of language learning with my students and turn English to something that is fun to use, and a class that they look forward to. The main reason I chose The Chiba-Wisconsin Program over other programs is because of the location, and because it is smaller than other larger programs. I wanted to be in the Kanto area, so I could see my friends again from Sophia University. Because it is in Tokyo, most of my friends live in Tokyo, Kanagawa, Chiba, and Saitama, so being able to be in Chiba is a great location! Also, I like that The Chiba-Wisconsin Program is smaller compared to other programs. Because of that, I feel like it is easier to make friends with others and develop a closer sense of community, compared to if it was a larger program with hundreds or even thousands of people. So for these reasons, and a few others, I felt that the Chiba-Wisconsin Program was the perfect fit for me.

CWA Newsletter No. 48

March 19, 2021 (original Japanese version)

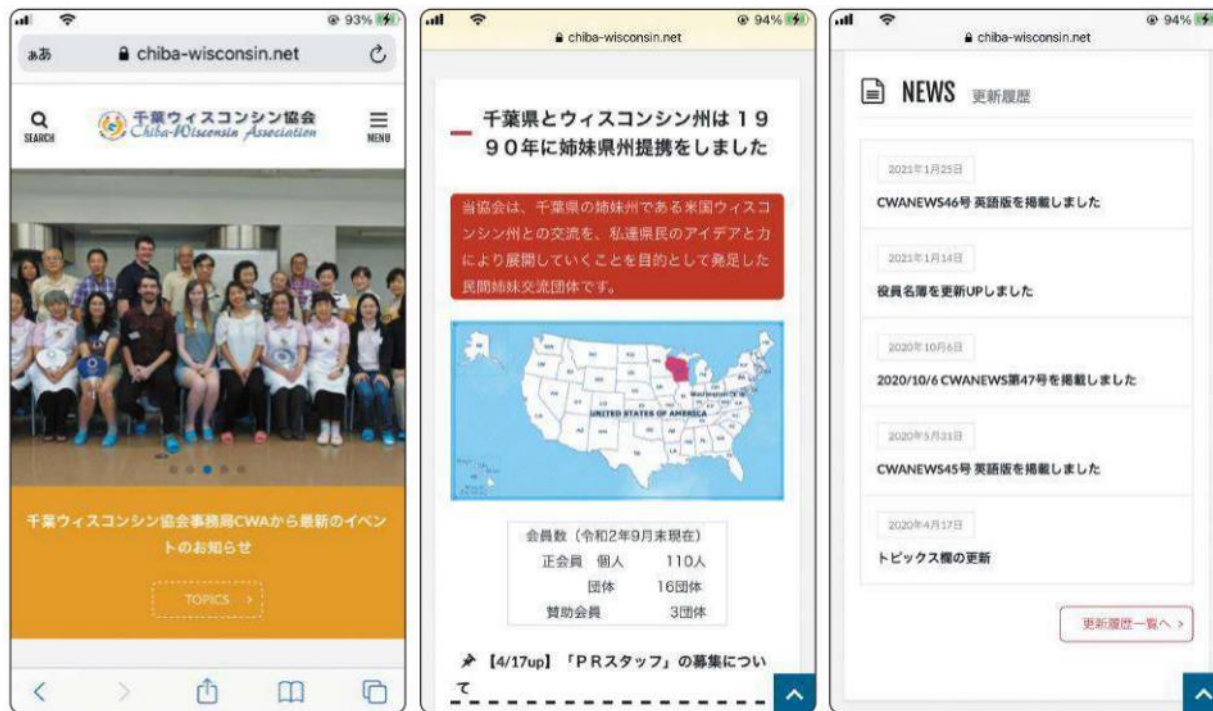
3. I was surprised by all of the large cities that are in Chiba and areas surrounding Tokyo. When I lived in Tokyo I did not really go to Chiba, other than to go to the airport. But now that I'm living in Chiba I am surprised by all of the cities in Chiba. You can do most things, like go to most stores or restaurants in Chiba without having to go to Tokyo. And of course Disney is in Chiba! I hope to go sometime after coronavirus calms down.

4. I think in the United States it is much easier to get tested for COVID compared to Japan. It is very easy to get tested in the US, and is often free. I have heard from other people that even with a fever and cough they were not able to get a COVID test here. I think handwashing might be better in the US because every restroom always has soap in them, but in Japan it is common to have restrooms with no soap unfortunately. On the other hand, in Japan most stores have hand sanitizer outside of stores in Japan, and some even have temperature checks. In the US, only a few stores have hand sanitizer outside of shops, and temperature checks are extremely rare. I think people in Japan are also much better with wearing masks compared to the US. I think because of that Japan has been able to keep their school mostly open, while most schools in the US are unfortunately closed and online even now.

5. The most difficult part for me is being away from my family. It is very difficult for me because my family is very close, so I miss them a lot. I worry about their health, especially my grandparents because of COVID-19. It is difficult to feel so far away. Also the holidays, like Christmas and Thanksgiving were a little sad, because that is a time you spend with your family. Other than that, I am really enjoying life here in Japan and I love my school! All of the other teachers are super friendly, and the students are great!

6. I love the trains here. It is so easy to go anywhere you want, and the trains are very quiet, so it is a good time to relax. If you manage to find a seat of course! Also using trains are better for the environment and it also causes me to walk more than I did when I lived in the US since I would mostly drive everywhere. Especially in the winter since it is so cold there. The winter seems to be very nice in Chiba, so even during the winter walking outside is no problem!

The CWA Homepage March Renewal —Aiming to Provide More Useful and Easier to Access Information—



〈Main Changes〉

- Easier to read on a smartphone screen!!

These days, more and more people are accessing the Internet using smartphones, tablets, and other devices besides a computer. With this renewal, we introduced an optimization system that automatically changes font size, menu layout, and picture size depending on what device you use to access the homepage. (Please look at the screen shots above.)

- Posting of introduction video for the State of Wisconsin

Previously, we shared travel and other information about the State of Wisconsin on our homepage using words and pictures. With this renewal, we took the opportunity to post a video (produced by Wisconsin's State Government) showcasing the scenic and natural beauty of Wisconsin, and allow viewers to better experience the charm of Wisconsin.

Furthermore, you can access the video from the State of Wisconsin's Official Homepage.

- We plan to continue to improve the content on the homepage to provide you with more useful and easier to access information moving forward.

CWA Notices

In regards to the FY 2021 Board of Directors Meeting and FY 2021 Annual General Meeting and Exchange, we plan to hold them at the times and venues posted below. However, due to the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic, it may become necessary to hold these meetings on paper only. We will inform all CWA members of relevant details regarding the meetings by mail when they are determined.

CWA Newsletter No. 48

March 19, 2021 (original Japanese version)

FY 2021 Board of Directors Meeting

- Monday, May 24th Hotel Port Plaza Chiba

FY 2021 Annual General Meeting and Exchange

- Saturday, June 5th Hotel Plaza Nanohana
 - General Meeting begins at 11:00
 - Exchange begins at 12:00

【Editor's Note】

Due to the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic, the CWA was unable to hold most of its activities over the past year. Although the situation of planning exchange activities for the upcoming year remains difficult, in order to smoothly resume activities once the pandemic has subsided, the Steering Committee continues to hold monthly online meetings and other activities.