

## Greetings from the Association President



Chiba-Wisconsin Association  
**President Yuzaburo Mogi**

I would like to extend my best wishes to everyone with the publication of the first CWA NEWS of 2022.

I would also like to express my deepest appreciation for your continued support and understanding with 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.

Since then, to build on the friendly relations established by the Prefecture, we have continued to widen and deepen our circle of community-based exchange by expanding into a wide variety of activities in the private sector.

Although the 2009 H1N1 pandemic and the 2011 Great East Japan Earthquake interrupted the sending and receiving of our respective Friendship Delegations, through the great efforts of all involved, we were able to resume our regular exchange. I am confident that as we have done in the past, we will also be able to overcome the Covid-19 pandemic that has continued for the past two years.

Last December, we exchanged video messages commemorating the 30th anniversary of our sister-state relationship. These videos served as a reflection on our past exchanges, a prayer for further development in the future, and an affirmation of the strong bond between Chiba and Wisconsin.

This year, we are preparing to host a Friendship Delegation from Wisconsin, as we had planned to do the year before last. However, the Covid-19 pandemic continues to make the situation unpredictable. Therefore, we must respond by closely monitoring the spread of Covid-19 as well as maintaining discussions with both the prefectural government and Wisconsin-Chiba, Inc.

It is my hope that we can continue to further expand our circle of exchange and deepen our mutual friendship in order to make the wonderful qualities of Chiba Prefecture and its citizens known to the people of Wisconsin.

In closing, I would like to express my sincere appreciation for the continued support and cooperation of our Association's board members, regular members, and all others involved in our exchange programs.

## 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 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:



**Inserted Photos (from the Left):**

|                     |   |
|---------------------|---|
| Julie Mae Engelmann | Prefectural Nagareyama Otakanomori High School          |
| Joseph Simurdiak    | Prefectural Nagareyama Otakanomori High School          |
| Max Gumble          | Prefectural Board of Education, ALT Program Coordinator |

**Front Row (from the Left):**

|                    |   |
|--------------------|---|
| Clara Faile        | Isumi Municipal Misaki Junior High School,<br>Choja Elementary School, Nakane Elementary School,<br>Ohara Elementary School |
| Tyler Jossart      | Prefectural Matsudo Kokusai High School   |
| Jon Kangas         | Prefectural Sakura High School  |
| Grace Burzinski    | Prefectural Chiba Higashi High School   |
| Hanna Nam          | Prefectural Narita Kokusai High School  |
| Libby Sattler      | Prefectural Narita Kokusai High School  |
| Josephine Kirkland | Asahi Municipal 2 <sup>nd</sup> Junior High School,<br>Higata Elementary School, Kyowa Elementary School                    |
| Lewis Hurd         | Prefectural Matsudo Kokusai High School   |
| Jamison Taube      | Prefectural Togane High School  |
| Alexie Bollman     | Prefectural Chiba Minami High School  |

**Back Row (from the Left):**

|              |   |
|--------------|---|
| Carly Rowley | Isumi Municipal Ohara Junior High School,<br>Choja Elementary School, Ohara Elementary School |
| Matt Vosters | Prefectural Matsuo High School  |

## CWA Newsletter No. 51

March 22, 2022 (original Japanese version)

|                    |  |
|--------------------|--|
| Ben Alden          | Prefectural Sosa High School   |
| Matt Rath sack     | Prefectural Toke High School,<br>Prefectural Chishirodai High School |
| Alexis Lipkie      | Prefectural Awa High School,<br>Prefectural Nagasa High School       |
| David Garcia       | Prefectural Kashiwai High School                                     |
| James Aguilo Ramos | Prefectural Kimitsu High School                                      |
| Sophia Silva       | Prefectural Matsudo Kokusai High School                              |
| Grant Smith        | Oamishirasato Municipal Oami Junior High School                      |

### <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 (in terms of hand-washing, sanitizing, avoiding the 3 Cs, etc.)?
5. After finishing your time on the Program, would you prefer to work in Japan or the U.S. in the future? Why?
6. What are some of the differences between the school where you are currently working and high schools where you are from?



**James Aguilo Ramos**

**Prefectural Kimitsu High School**

1. I am from Spain, I love curry rice, and I always dreamed of living in Japan!
2. My final goal for getting my MA in TESOL was to find a job in Japan. I joined several symposiums about teaching in Japan, and one of the presenters talked about this program. I thought it was a perfect match for me. If I were accepted, I could go to Japan (awesome), teach English (my favorite subject!), and learn from professional teachers how to teach in Japan (double combo).
3. Maybe I expected every Japanese kid to be fluent in English despite all I had read about the issues of second language learning in Japan. It was really shocking to experience first hand how English is taught in this country.

## **CWA Newsletter No. 51**

March 22, 2022 (original Japanese version)

4. It feels to me that the US became more and more lenient with the restrictions when faced with the idiosyncrasies of its culture. In Japan, the culture seems to support long-term strict sanitary regulations.

5. As of today, I would say I would like to work in Japan. Health coverage is a very important matter. Also, I am scared of guns beyond belief. In general, I feel safer in Japan. But that doesn't mean I don't love the US (which I do with all my heart!).

6. Club activities! We do not have those in Spain. To me, that is absolutely phenomenal. I try to participate in as many clubs as I can to make up for all the fun I missed when I was a kid. Also, I feel like Japanese students are excessively quiet in comparison to US or Spanish children.



**Matt Rathsack**

**Prefectural Toke High School, Prefectural Chishirodai High School**

1. I am 22 years old and I have been interested in Japan since I was in high school. I like food, beautiful scenery, and good times, so I'm glad that Japan is exactly what I had hoped.

2. I decided to join the program because I wanted to get better at my Japanese. I also want to be a teacher in the future so this was the perfect experience.

3. Japan had always seemed like a dream land to me. However, after living in Japan, I am able to see the difference between Japan and America. I enjoy my time in Japan but I am able to appreciate the difference between the two countries even more now.

4. Japan, in my opinion, is much safer than America in terms of COVID. Many more sanitization

5. I would prefer to work in America. My wife and I have talked about this and decided that America is the place for us due to family and also food allergies. My wife cannot eat gluten due to a disease and Japan does not have many gluten free options which makes eating very hard for her here.

6. The politeness and respect from the students in Japan is admirable. The students here are always very kind and considerate and that is one of the things I love about Japan.

## CWA Newsletter No. 51

March 22, 2022 (original Japanese version)



**Libby Sattler**

**Prefectural Narita Kokusai High School**

1. Hello! My name is Libby, and I'm from Cedarburg, WI. I graduated from the University of Wisconsin-Madison with majors in Educational Studies & French and a minor in TESOL (Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages). I am currently an ALT at Narita Kokusai High School in Narita, Japan.
2. I knew about the Chiba-Wisconsin relationship long before I decided to apply for the program. For several years, I volunteered at an English-immersion summer camp for Makuhari-Sohgoh High School. I really enjoyed sharing Wisconsin culture with the students and I learned about the Chiba-Wisconsin program through this experience.
3. I really knew very little about Japan before I came, so I learn something new every day! There are many different sides to Japanese life that I feel like anyone can enjoy living here... there is something for everyone. I enjoy cooking, so my hobby has become learning about Japanese cuisine and trying to cook things at home.
4. When I left the US last summer, almost no one was wearing masks anymore... but I also witnessed a lot of tension between people concerning COVID prevention practices. It seems to me that Japan is much more stringent and united about COVID prevention.
5. So far, I really enjoy living in Japan, and I want to continue working in language education. Right now, I study Japanese as much as possible, and I hope that with time I will be able to reach professional proficiency so I can have a career here.
6. High school here is so different! A negative aspect is the amount of exams the students have here, which are much more difficult and frequent than they are in the US. However, the students at my school are wonderful to work with and many of them are very enthusiastic about learning English. Overall, I think high school students in Japan and the US are more similar than different.



**Julie Mae Engelmann**

**Prefectural Nagareyama Otakanomori High School**

1. I moved to Nagareyama from Milwaukee, Wisconsin, which isn't my hometown but where I lived for the majority of my life milestones. I have a BFA in Metalsmithing as well as Digital Design and Fabrication. In my free time, I enjoy venturing outdoors, cooking, and finding ways to stay creative.
2. It seemed like a well-rounded, supportive, and professional program. It was reassuring to have a detailed contract, especially when working in a foreign system.

## CWA Newsletter No. 51

March 22, 2022 (original Japanese version)

3. My impression has definitely been grounded. Before moving, I had the impression that Japan was idyllic because even news programs from NHK seemed very positive. After moving, it reminded me that people are human and share many universal elements.
4. Sanitization and temperature checks are about equal in practice. Vaccinations and tests were free and readily available with no appointment necessary by the end of summer 2021. On the other hand, masks weren't enforced and really depended on the business' management whether they were required or not.
5. It is hard to say so early on in the program- both countries offer many enticing reasons to stay. In an ideal world, I would continue to broaden my international working experience.
6. The high schools in my area generally had smaller class sizes (but the same student body size) and students went to teachers' classrooms. Club activities weren't as big but we did have school pride days and assemblies that gave a similar sense of pageantry. Individuality, diversity, and self-expression are more accepted. The curriculum itself was structured differently and required student discussion for participation grades.



**Alexis Lipkie**

**Prefectural Awa High School, Prefectural Nagasa High School**

1. I was raised in a small town in northern Wisconsin. I graduated from the University of Wisconsin - Madison in Dec. 2020 with a BA in Japanese and Political Science. My hobbies include hiking, watching movies, and traveling.
2. When I was in university, I volunteered to tutor high schoolers learning Japanese and really enjoyed my experience. I also have an interest in Japan and wanted to experience/learn more about its culture.
3. I have been to Japan several times before this program, so it has not changed much. However, I feel I am learning new things nearly everyday from working in a high school here.
4. I can't really say. I would say people in Japan are better at wearing masks, but hand sanitizer/soap is more readily available in public spaces in the US.
5. Undecided
6. They're very different, but some examples would be that back at my high school in the US, there is more technology used in the classroom. Every room has a projector and students have access to iPads/computers for projects and such. On the other hand, my schools here have more club activities and nearly all students participate. Back home, there were fewer clubs to choose from and quite a few people didn't participate in any.

## 2020-2021 New ALTs Welcomed with Traditional Japanese Musical Instruments!

A welcome party for newly arrived ALTs was held on October 24th at the Chiba Municipal Soga Community Center. Attendees included six new ALTs who arrived in Chiba in 2020 and 2021, five members of the Asanuma Troupe, and eleven Steering Committee members. As the theme of the event was hands-on experience with Japanese musical instruments, a Japanese-style room was chosen for the location, which made for a scene that was strikingly different from years past. However, the venue proved to be well-suited for an introduction to Japanese culture.

The event began just before 1 p.m., with the performance of “It’s a Small World” by the Asanuma Troupe, followed by a welcome speech by Steering Committee Chairperson Moriyama and brief introductions of the participants. After rousing performances of Japanese folk songs “Kujukuri Tairyō-bushi” and “Tokyo Ondō,” it was time for the day’s main event, a chance for the ALTs to try the instruments for themselves.

The Asanuma Troupe first modeled for the ALTs the three songs, “Ue wo Muite Arukō” (known in English as “Sukiyaki”), “If You’re Happy and You Know It,” and “Sanpo” (from the film My Neighbor Totoro, known in English as “Hey Let’s Go”), then moved to the hands-on experience. The ALTs split into three groups, one for taiko drums, one for shamisen, and one for shakuhachi flute, each led by a member of the Asanuma Troupe who instructed them in how to play, beginning with “Ue wo Muite Arukō.” Once the ALTs were prepared, everyone performed the song that they had practiced. Each ALT group then moved to a different instrument and began practicing for the next song, repeating the process. Notably, the shakuhachi group used empty Yakult yogurt bottles, which produced a similar tone to the flutes, leaving participants feeling impressed at the ingenuity of the Asanuma Troupe.

Not only were the Asanuma Troupe members able to teach the basics of their instruments in a short time using mostly gestures, but the ALTs also participated actively and rose to the challenge. Through these interactions, the participants' feelings of nervousness seemed to fade little by little. After their hands-on experience, the ALTs introduced themselves in English or Japanese, including their hometowns and hobbies, creating a friendly atmosphere throughout the room. The event concluded with a commemorative photo of the participants.



Taiko drums



Shamisen



Shakuhachi flute  
(Empty Yakult yogurt bottles)

## CWA Newsletter No. 51

March 22, 2022 (original Japanese version)



Commemorative photo of the participants

### CWA Notices

In regards to the FY 2022 Board of Directors Meeting and FY 2022 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.

FY 2022 Board of Directors Meeting

- Tuesday, May 16, 2023 May 31<sup>st</sup>, Hotel Port Plaza Chiba

FY 2022 Annual General Meeting and Exchange

- Sunday, June 19<sup>th</sup>, Hotel Plaza Nanohana
  - General Meeting begins at 11:00
  - Exchange begins at 12:00

### 【Editor's Note】

Last year during the pandemic, we were able to exchange video messages between Chiba and Wisconsin along with publishing the 30th Anniversary Special Edition of CWA NEWS. Currently, it is difficult to predict what the next year will hold for our exchange activities. However, we have newly begun sharing videos of our exchange events, and we are preparing to resume our usual exchange activities once the spread of Covid-19 is under control.

### Published by the Chiba-Wisconsin Association

Publisher: Shigeo Moriyama Edited by the Publicity Working Group

<http://chiba-wisconsin.net/>

〒261-7114 14F Marive East WBG, 2-6 Nakase, Mihama-ku, Chiba City

Chiba Convention Bureau and International Center

TEL: 043-223-2394 (International Affairs Division, Chiba Prefectural Government)