

## Long-Awaited 2022 Exchange Event Held after Three-Year Hiatus

Following the General Meeting on Sunday, June 19th, participants moved to the third floor of Plaza Nanohana Hotel to take part in the first Exchange Event in three years.

42 people, including Executive Director Minoru Ito, who greeted participants at the start of the event, as well as both board and regular members, took part. Also in attendance this year was former Governor of Chiba Prefecture Akiko Domoto, an instrumental figure in the establishment of the CWA, who excitedly shared memories of her own visit to Wisconsin. The Minami Gyotoku Hanagumi, who visited Wisconsin in 2019 as a Goodwill Delegation, added a touch of color to the gathering. They performed yosakoi folk dances to the energetic songs “Omatsuri Mambo” and “Tankobushi” with the audience joining in to create a dance circle and liven up the venue.

After lunch, which began with a toast by Director Ichiro Tatsuno, ALTs Jon Kangas and Lewis Hurd, who will be leaving their posts this summer, gave presentations. Jon reported that in addition to fulfilling his full five years as an ALT, he had recently gotten married. His face beamed with happiness as he recounted stories of his experiences with his wife, Ms. Toya, who works as a nurse. He talked about how they had met, and shared memories from their winter visit to Wisconsin. Lewis, who began working at Matsudo Kokusai High School in 2019, explained his confusion with certain aspects of Japanese culture such as natto and hot springs when he first arrived and how he has since come to love both. Additionally, he talked openly about encountering difficulties due to cultural differences in the Japanese education system and how he was able to overcome them through teamwork and the support of those around him. Both Jon and Lewis talked about going on to graduate school after departing from Japan.

After Steering Committee Vice Chairperson Ohara expressed her gratitude for the successful conclusion of the festivities, everyone took a commemorative photo before adjourning the event.



Commemorative Photo of Participants

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September 26, 2022 (original Japanese version)



Executive Director Minoru Ito



Former Chiba Governor  
Akiko Domoto



Director Ichiro Tatsuno



Members of the Minami Gyotoku Hanagumi



The Venue

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On Sunday, June 19<sup>th</sup>, departing ALTs gave reflection slideshow presentations during the Exchange Event. The two departing ALTs who did not present at the event have also contributed messages.

### **Jon Kangas** (Chiba Prefectural Sakura High School)

Jon Kangas served as an ALT at Sakura High School for the maximum of five years. In his presentation, he spoke about the differences between living in Narita, Chiba and his hometown of Watertown, Wisconsin. In his words, Watertown is much like any other small town in Wisconsin, with mostly cornfields and cows, with the occasional church or bar.

He also talked about his love of travel and experiencing other cultures, and how that has helped him to discover countless opportunities for new experiences in Japan. To demonstrate this, he showed pictures in his slideshow of several Japan travel guides explaining the Japanese tea ceremony in various languages, which he helped to create and edit. In addition, Jon also loves education, which he made clear through impassioned stories of his time as a language teacher. For example, Jon served as an integral part of the ESS (English Speaking Society) at Sakura High School, and spent many hours after school working with students who wanted more practical English experience outside of the classroom. His future includes education heavily, as he is planning to return to America in order to join a graduate program focused on English education, as well as to work as an English lecturer at St. Norbert's College in Wisconsin, where he studied Japanese as a student.

Finally, he also shared the story of his wife, whom he met while working in Chiba and recently married. They currently plan to spend the next few years living together in America but will eventually return to Japan. Jon's presentation was full of humor and happy memories, which were fully enjoyed by all participants.

### **Lewis Hurd** (Chiba Prefectural Matsudo Kokusai High School)

Lewis Hurd has spent the last three years as an ALT at Matsudo Kokusai High School. His presentation centered around the challenges of moving to another country and adapting to its culture. He started by telling the story of several things that surprised him when he first encountered them in Japan but has since become a part of his regular routine. In his story about *nattō*, Lewis explained how the first time he tried, it took him 30 minutes to finish one package. However, since he knew it was healthy, he continued trying and eventually came to love it, and now eats it every morning. When talking about the *onsen*, he explained how as an American he was not used to taking off his clothes around others, but once he had spent some time relaxing in the bath, it soon became one of his favorite pastimes.

He also explained the joys as well as the difficulties of teaching in a Japanese high school. The number of students that he taught while working at Matsudo Kokusai was very large, so things like remembering students' names were challenging, but he also enjoyed getting to know such a wide range of people through his work. He stressed that cooperating with

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other English teachers in the school could be difficult at times but was ultimately very rewarding. Finally, Lewis talked about problems of culture shock, homesickness, and feeling like an outsider in another culture, which many of the participants who had spent time abroad could relate to.

Lewis greatly enjoyed his time in Chiba and will be moving on to pursue a graduate degree in Taiwan, where he will study ancient Chinese literature and take on another international challenge.

### Messages from Departing ALTs

#### **Matthew Rath sack** (Chiba Prefectural Toke and Chishirodai High Schools)

I have been a part of this program for only one year but I have been able to experience so much thanks to it. Coming to Japan, I was nervous, scared, and unsure of what to expect during my time in Japan. However, thanks to all the support from my co-workers and friends, I was able to learn a lot and mature as well. I would like to thank everyone from both Toke High School and Chishirodai High School as they have both been amazing and kind to me over this past year.

I will greatly treasure all the experiences that I was able to have over this past year; such as, learning to play traditional Japanese instruments, getting to see the beautiful temples of Kyoto, or soaking in the hot springs of Kusatsu. Although my time is over, I will return to Japan someday so that I can see all the friends I have made over this past year. Thank you, everyone!

#### **David Garcia** (Chiba Prefectural Kashiwai High School)

I entered the Chiba Program not only for the rare opportunity to live and work in Japan, but also to better understand what direction I wanted to take in the future. Throughout the 2 wonderful years that I spent in this program, I was able to feel a sense of belonging and productivity at my school, experience a new and fascinating culture and society, and, perhaps most importantly, rediscover the day-to-day moments that made my life just a little bit brighter. I am leaving this program with a better understanding not only of the world, but of myself, and the path that I wish to take in the future. And, though I know that a paragraph cannot accurately capture the entirety of this program and what it has come to mean to me, I hope I can express the amount of gratitude and thankfulness that I feel.

I wish to sincerely thank the Chiba Program for giving me this extraordinary opportunity, and I hope for its continued success in changing the world, one person at a time.



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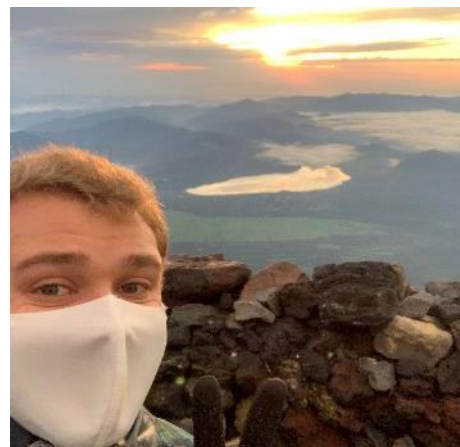
**Jon Kangas**



**Lewis Hurd**



**Matthew Rathsack**



**David Garcia**

## **2022 Board of Directors Meeting**

The 2022 Board of Directors Meeting was held on Tuesday, May 31<sup>st</sup> at Hotel Port Plaza Chiba (Chuo-ku, Chiba City). In attendance were Governor Toshihito Kumagai, who serves as a Special Advisor to the Association, one advisor (proxy), 11 Directors (including two Deputy Directors), and two auditors.

At the beginning of the meeting, President Yuzaburo Mogi opened with a statement, “Unfortunately, due to the ongoing pandemic, we were unable to celebrate the 30th anniversary of our sister state exchange in 2020 with a Goodwill Delegation from Wisconsin. We would like to ask for your opinions on how to further develop our exchange.” Governor Kumagai then addressed the participants, saying, “I would like to express my sincere gratitude to Chairman Mogi and all of you for your great efforts in promoting sister state exchange between Chiba Prefecture and the State of Wisconsin. The Prefecture would like to continue this exchange in cooperation with the Chiba-Wisconsin Association as well as municipalities, universities, and other organizations throughout the prefecture.”

Six agenda items were then discussed, including a business report and income/expenditure account settlement from the 2021 fiscal year and drafts of the business plan and income/expenditure budget for the 2022 fiscal year, all of which will be discussed at the General Meeting. Next, the secretariat reported on the status of exchange with the State of Wisconsin, and the meeting closed with an active exchange of opinions by the attendees. Please see below for an excerpt from this exchange.

## **2022 Annual General Meeting**

The 2022 General Meeting was held on Sunday, June 19<sup>th</sup> at Hotel Plaza Nanohana (Chuo-ku, Chiba City). 21 regular members attended, and 57 submitted proxy forms.

Vice President Osawa stated in his opening speech that it is precisely because of the current crises in international relations that the kind of local international exchange carried out by the Association must continue to build understanding between our two countries for the future to come.

Then, with Association member Mr. Kenji Saso serving as Chairperson of the meeting, the participants discussed income/expenditure account settlement from the 2021 fiscal year and drafts of the business plan and income/expenditure budget for the 2022 fiscal year, all of which were approved as proposed.



Board of Directors Meeting



Annual General Meeting

### **Excerpts from the Board of Directors Meeting Opinion Exchange**

- The Prefecture has recently established the Sports and Culture Bureau. We would like to return the legacy gained during the Tokyo Olympics and Paralympics to the people of the prefecture, promote sports and culture, and participate in international exchanges based around these efforts. We will continue to work closely with the Association to ensure that the exchange between our prefecture and the State of Wisconsin continues for the next 10, 20 years, using the recent 30<sup>th</sup> anniversary as a benchmark.
- So far, exchange events have largely been held at prefectural facilities. In the future, we hope to spread the Chiba's charms, food culture, and tourist attractions through social media.
- We plan to join forces with the prefectural government's Sports and Culture Bureau to promote culture and the arts throughout the prefecture. We look forward to cooperating with the Chiba-Wisconsin Association in any way we can in terms of cultural and artistic exchange.
- I hope that in the future we can have direct, face-to-face exchange with Wisconsin in order to deepen our relationship.
- Of course, it is important to understand each other's cultures.
- Since the opening of our university in 2009, we have gained valuable experience through participating in the sending and receiving of Goodwill Delegations. We would like to further expand our exchanges, as I believe that we have many things to learn from one another, such as how to cope with staff shortages and an aging society.
- Wisconsin is one of the major dairy-farming states in the US, and we would like to continue exchange with them, if even in a small way.
- ALTs from Wisconsin are quite good in terms of motivation, personality, and teaching skills, so we would like to see more ALTs from Wisconsin.
- There is already an exchange established between the Green Bay Packers in Wisconsin and the Obic Seagulls in Chiba Prefecture. We hope to see more American football-based exchanges, including with IBM BIG BLUE, another team in the prefecture.

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○We are providing support for overseas businesses, but in this difficult international climate, there are sometimes graphic stories which can affect trade. It is in these circumstances that exchanges between Chiba Prefecture and the State of Wisconsin become increasingly important, as the basis of business begins with a relationship of trust.



## Fiscal Year 2022 Plan of Activities

### [Activities Policy]

Based on the results of the previous fiscal year, we will further enhance the content of our activities in all fields so that even more people can learn about the charms of Wisconsin. In addition, we will take appropriate measures, such as changing the content of activities, while keeping an eye on trends in the government's measures to prevent the spread of Covid-19. We will also consider the possibility of new activities utilizing new platforms such as the internet, and implement them as needed.

### [Activities Contents]

#### 1 Regular Meetings

- Board of Directors Meeting and Annual General Meeting (held once a year)
- As a rule, the Steering Committee meets on the second Saturday of every month, with each Planning Group convening prior to the meeting.

#### 2 Planning and Management of Exchange Activities with Wisconsin

Reception of Wisconsin Goodwill Delegation

- Hosting Period: Postponed to 2023 (due to the COVID-19 pandemic)
- Number of Delegation Members: approximately 20

#### 3 Exchange Activities for Members, Etc.

- Members Exchange Event & Farewell Party (Sunday, June 19<sup>th</sup>)
- Welcome Party for New ALTs (Sunday, October 2<sup>nd</sup>)
- Food Culture Collaboration (scheduled to be held around November)

#### 4 Public Relations Projects Regarding CWA Activities and Wisconsin

- CWA NEWS (published three times a year)
- Providing a variety of information on the CWA homepage
- Participation in events
- Gathering of information on Wisconsin and exchanges with Wisconsin

## FY 2022 Revenue · Expenditure Budget

Revenue				Units: 1,000 yen
Item	FY 2022 (A)	FY 2021 (B)	A-B	Comment
Membership Fees	608	614	△6	
Subsidy	1,150	1,150	0	
• Subsidy from Chiba Prefectural Government for administrative expenses	150	150	0	
• Subsidy from Chiba Prefectural Government for business expenses	1,000	1,000	0	
Participation Fees of Exchange Activities, etc.	255	255	0	Food Culture Collaboration
Carryover	3,018	2,424	594	
Total	5,031	4,443	588	

Expenditures				Units: 1,000 yen
Item	FY 2022 (A)	FY 2021 (B)	A-B	Comment
Operating Expenses	297	285	12	Printing, disposable expenses, etc.
Activities Expenses	2862	2783	79	
• Meetings	150	150	0	Board of Directors, General Meeting
• Dispatch and Acceptance of Goodwill Delegations	1,900	1,900	0	Goodwill Delegation Acceptance from Wisconsin
• Member Exchanges	255	255	0	Exchange Activities
• Public Relations	557	478	79	Publication of CWA NEWS
Reserve Funds	1,872	1,375	497	
Total	5,031	4,443	588	

## FY 2022 Board of Directors and Steering Committee Members of the Chiba-Wisconsin Association (as of August 1<sup>st</sup>, 2022) [Board Members]

Title	Name	Affiliation
Special Advisor	Toshihito Kumagai	Governor, Chiba Prefecture
Advisor	Takao Hasegawa	Mayor of Kamogawa City (Sister City of Manitowoc, WI)
	Hiroshi Ota	Mayor, Isumi City (Sister City of Waupun, WI)
President	Yuzaburo Mogi	Honorary CEO and Chairman of the Board, Kikkoman Corporation Honorary Ambassador to Wisconsin
Vice President	Michio Oishi	Chairman, Kazusa DNA Research Institute
	Katsunosuke Osawa	President, Chiba Nippo Co., Ltd.
	Hidetoshi Sakuma	President, Chiba Prefecture Federation of Chamber of Commerce and Industry
	Yasuhiro Shida	President, Chiba Prefectural Cultural Promotion Foundation
Executive Director	Minoru Ito	President, Chiba Convention Bureau and International Center
Director	Yozi Aoyagi	President, Chiba Television Broadcasting Corporation
	Hiroyuki Ito	Dean, Faculty of Science and Technology, Tokyo University of Science
	Shokichi Kaneko	President, Chiba Economic Council
	Norio Saegusa	President, Chiba Prefectural Employer's Association
	Koji Inoue	Professor, University of Tokyo
	Hidetoshi Sakuma	Chief Secretary, Chiba Association of Corporate Executives
	Ichiro Tatsuno	Chancellor, Chiba Prefectural University of Health Sciences
	Toshinori Nakayama	President, Chiba University
	Yoshimasa Miyazaki	President, Chiba Taiko Foundation
	Hideyuki Takahashi	Chief Director, Chiba Dairy and Agriculture Organization
	Kazutoshi Miyama	Principal, Narita Kokusai High School
	Noboru Tomizawa	Executive Director, Policy and Planning Department Chiba Prefectural Government
Auditor	Kotaro Nakamura	President, Chiba Industry Advancement Center
	Kazunori Okuizumi	Chief Director, Japan External Trade Organization (JETRO) Chiba

## [Steering Committee]

### Delegation Planning Group

Kazuo Shimizu (Advisor)

Shigeo Moriyama (Chairperson of Steering Committee)

Tadao Ando (Secretary General)

❖ Yasuko Aoki

Tetsuji Ogawa

Akio Asanuma

Kenzi Saso

### Exchange Program Planning Group

❖ Kyoko Oura

Teruo Abe

Takako Ishii

Sanae Mitsuhashi

Shizue Yamazaki

### Publicity Working Group

Mihoko Ohara (Vice Chairperson of Steering Committee)

❖ Tadao Miyazaki

Maximilian Gumble

### Secretariat

Masahiro Ishida

Shuheï Oku

❖ *(Indicates Group Head)*

**Event Staff:** Tomiko Kakuta, Satoko Keigo, Madoka Usui, Yoshie Kato,  
Tomoko Ogawa

**PR Staff:** Naomi Sakakida

## [Editor's Note]

This year, we were able to hold an Exchange Event for the first time in many years, and it was a lot of fun. Thanks to the members of the Minami Gyotoku Hanagumi, the event was filled with the excitement of a Bon-Odori dance festival, and included all of the participants in the venue. Although we continue to feel the effects of the Covid-19 pandemic, we will continue to work toward the resumption of exchange activities.

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

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