

Essay Contest Awards Ceremony

The 5th Australia-Japan Relations Essay Contest for Secondary School Students in NSW and the NT was held at the official residence of the Consul-General of Japan in Sydney, Mr Keizo Takewaka, on Monday 3 December 2018.



Junior and Senior Division first prize winners with special guests, judges and sponsors

Some 80 guests attended and the reception was a wonderful opportunity to celebrate the achievements of the prize-winning students. It was an honour to have in attendance **Mr David de Carvalho**, CEO of NSW Education Standards Authority (NESA) as the representative of NSW Education Minister the Hon. Rob Stokes, MP. Guests also heard speeches from the first-prize winners **Ms Annette Kim** (Tara Anglican School for Girls) and **Ms Vicky Feng** (MLC School), as well as an interesting and stimulating speech from **Dr Hugh Clarke**, Emeritus Professor at the University of Sydney, who spoke about learning Japanese and IKIGAI.

For the full results, more photos and Prof. Clarke's speech, visit - www.sydney.au.emb-japan.go.jp/english/education/essay_contest_2018_results.htm

JET returns

Countless ties have been created between Japan and Australia thanks to the **Japan Exchange and Teaching (JET) Program**. Happily many of these people-to-people connections flourish beyond participants' actual time employed by JET, and the Program itself is keen to promote ongoing links through initiatives such as the **JET Furusato Vision Project**. It is envisaged that participants will develop and implement their own 'Vision Plan' utilising skills and connections acquired after JET to make new contributions to their former community—their *furusato*, or 'hometown' in Japanese.

Western Sydney resident, **Mr Justin Koek**, was a participant on the most recent Furusato Vision Project. His vision? To encourage sports links between Western Sydney and Fujieda in Shizuoka Prefecture, where he served as an Assistant Language Teacher (ALT) on the JET Program between 2002 and 2004. Justin's hometown of Penrith and Fujieda are sister-cities, so as he says the links are very strong.

In November 2018, Justin returned to his *furusato* of Fujieda as part of his vision plan to create ties through sport. With a focus on youth programs, which help make Shizuoka into such a strong footballing area, he met with coaches and administrators as well as professional J-League players.

For more about the Furusato Vision Project, see jetprogramme.org/en/furusatovisionproject/

SCHOOL VISITS

The final term in 2018 saw the school visit team visit several schools in the Greater Sydney area to give **calligraphy workshops**. Year 9 students at St Columba's Catholic College (26 Oct.) and at North Sydney Girls' High School (15 Nov.) were very focussed (with several St Columba's boys really getting behind the magic sound TON-SU-TON). At Birrong Girls High School (21 Nov.), students were in Years 8, 9 and 10, and again the character for love 愛 Ai proved popular despite its number of strokes.

It was a younger group of Japanese-language students at St Charles Catholic Primary School in Ryde (28 Nov.) where year 5 and 6 students also enjoyed the challenge of writing calligraphy with brush and ink.

Schools in New South Wales* are invited to apply for our 2019 program (Terms 1 and 2).

*Schools in regional areas are welcome to apply for visits, however, we may not be able to meet all requests.

Leading Japanese architect Kengo Kuma visits Sydney



Mr Kengo Kuma [left] is the world-renowned architect behind the New National Stadium in Tokyo, the main stadium for the Tokyo Olympic and Paralympic Games in 2020. He is currently making his mark in Sydney too with three projects under way, including The Exchange, a new civic space in the Darling Harbour precinct. Consul-General Takewaka had the pleasure of meeting him at an event organised in October 2018 by the Sherman Centre for Culture and Ideas (SCCI), also attended by **Mr John Coates** [second left], Chair of the International Olympic Committee's Coordination Commission for Tokyo 2020.