



Nara JETNet – 42nd Event “International Arts Festival”

On June 16th, 2013, Nara JETNet held its 42nd event, “International Arts Festival” at the Kawanishi Cultural Hall. Nara JETNet is a committee which plans events to promote cultural exchange and understanding between the members of the JET Programme and the citizens of Nara Prefecture. The organizers of JETNet events are the 3 Coordinators of International Relations (CIR) working in the Nara Prefectural Government. The members of JETNet are the rest of the JET programme participants located throughout Nara Prefecture. About 450 people came out to the event and enjoyed the country/regional booths, experience corners, and performances that the 48 JETs put on for the day.

The event started at 12:30 with a koto performance by Tenri Junior High school and an opening speech by the CIRs. On the second floor, there were booths featuring 9 different countries/regions: UK, America, Singapore, South Africa, Canada, Australia, New Zealand, Tibet, and Sri Lanka. In activity rooms, visitors had the opportunity of interacting with JETs by joining in on hula dancing, stepping, taekwondo, super dance party, tea around the world, arts and crafts, photo exhibits and an art collage.

From 3pm, performances started inside the Cosmos Hall. Following the Kawanishi taiko group, there were musicals, J-pop songs sung in English, guitar performances, hip hop dancing, Haka (New Zealand’s traditional maori dance), and more taiko. JETs have put many hours and months of practice in to their performances, which showed making it a fantastic event overall. The day turned out to be a great day for both JETs and visitors. 82% of the people who wrote the surveys (60 visitors) said the event overall was “very good”, and 73% said they really enjoyed talking to the JETs. Some comments include “I had so much more fun than I had expected to, for my first time at this event!” and “The level of the performances were really high today. The dances and the singing were wonderful.” There were many other positive comments by the visitors. The event overall was a great success.

We would like to thank the town of Kawanishi and all the visitors for supporting our event. We will continue to organize more events to promote grass roots internationalization within our community.

