



Nara JETNet 46th Event “International Arts Festival”

On May 25th, 2014, Nara JETNet held its 46th event, the “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 5 Coordinators for 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. This event saw 49 JETs in participation with over 300 people coming out to participate in the various booths, activities and performances held throughout the day.

The event began at 12:30 with a musical performance by Kawanishi’s Kotoshiki no Kai, followed by the opening speech given by two of the CIRs, after which spectators were free to move around upstairs. On the second floor were country booths displaying the cultures of 10 different countries: the United Kingdom, USA, Singapore, South Africa, France, Australia, New Zealand, Mongolia, Jamaica, and China. There were also activity rooms which allowed for people to participate in Arts & Crafts, Maori Flax Weaving, a Rainbow Snake race, Stepping and Swing Dance lessons, Songwriting, Yunnori, Tea around the World, Face Painting, and a Koto Workshop.

From 3:10pm, performances began inside the Cosmos Hall on the first floor. There was an arrangement of different cultural performances starting with the Kawanishi Taiko group, followed by another performance by Kotoshiki no Kai, then a stepping dance performance, a tribute to Teresa Teng, a traditional New Zealand performance called Ti Rakau, J-pop sung in English ending with a wonderful musical performance of Sister Act 2.

The day was a great success and enjoyed by all the Japanese visitors according to the survey. 88% of the 33 people who answered said they really enjoyed this event while 67% told us that the communication with the JET participants was very good. They also told us that it was a really fun event and that they will come to our future events. Visitors would like to have more opportunities to participate in this kind of event at small, medium or large scales to be able to interact with foreigners and foreign cultures.

This event served as the last for many of our JETs and we would like to thank them for their continued hard work and support in Nara. As always we would also like to extend a huge thanks to the town of Kawanishi and all the visitors for supporting our event.

