



Nara JETNet - 35th Event “International Arts Festival”

On June 19th, 2010, Nara JETNet held its 35th event entitled “International Arts Festival” in cooperation with Kawanishi Town at the Kawanishi Culture Hall. Nara JETNet is a committee which plans events to promote cultural exchange and understanding between the members of the JET Programme and citizens of Nara Prefecture. The organizers of JETNet events are the 5 Coordinators for International Relations (CIR) in Nara City, and members are JET Programme participants located throughout Nara Prefecture. This event saw approximately 400 citizens of the prefecture participate alongside 50 JETs who worked hard to present country/regional booths, artwork and other cultural performances.

The event began at 13:00 after greetings from the JETNet chairperson and a koto musical performance, visitors were able to interact with JETs at country/regional booths, interactive experience corners and at an art exhibition. The art exhibits featured works by JETs such as photos, egg art, and stuffed animals. At the country booths, the UK, South Africa, China, Korea, Australia, the Philippines, Canada, France, Kenya, America (Texas and Seattle), and Egypt were introduced. Experience corners featured a “1-minute sketch” activity, rugby experience, swing dance, square dance, hula dance, latin dance, teas of the world, and an opportunity to try the Japanese koto instrument, among other activities.

From 15:00, performances by JETs and people from the region were held in the Cosmos Hall auditorium. Those featured were taiko drum groups from Kawanishi Town as well as a group featuring a Nara JET, a traditional Irish music performance, and a pop dance and pop song concert. The stage was alive with energy and originality.

According to JETs and participants alike, the event was a truly enjoyable one. Some survey comments included “I’d like to participate in other events like this!”, “I was moved by such great performances! Good luck with your next events!”, and “I enjoyed this even more than I can put into words. I plan to come again.” Many other comments made referenced the fact that participants also enjoyed speaking directly with JETs at the experience corners and country booths, with one participant writing, “I was able to interact with a great number of people from different countries.” Many JETs also reflected this sentiment in their surveys, with some writing, “This event was really fun. I’m receiving really positive feedback from the friends I invited,” and “There should be organizations like JETNet in other prefectures to plan events like this.” Thank you again to Kawanishi Town and all who worked hard to make the day a success!

