

“Tohoku to the World: Survivors’ Voice”
Orphaned Students to Join Summer Davos in Dalian, China
for Dialogue with Top Leaders

29th August 2011

Global Fund for Education Assistance

“BEYOND Tomorrow”, a leadership development program organized by the Global Fund for Education Assistance for youths adversely affected by the East Japan Great Earthquake, will send seven young students severely affected by the disaster, some of whom also lost parents, to the Summer Davos Forum in Dalian, China from the 14th to the 16th of September, where they will send a message on behalf of Tohoku to the world’s top leaders.

◆Summary of the Summer Davos Junior Leaders Program◆

Organizer : Global Fund for Education Assistance

Participants : Seven students who were adversely affected by the Eastern Japan Great Earthquake, including students who were orphaned and who have the desire and motivation to send out a message to the world on behalf of the disaster affected areas whilst also gaining international experience

Concept : The students will participate in the Summer Davos Forum (to be held on the 14th-16th September, in Dalian, China) where they will partake in exchange with top leaders gathered from all over the world, including political leaders, scientists, entrepreneurs, and journalists. The program will also provide the students with an opportunity to meet with young people orphaned by the Great Sichuan Earthquake and contribute to mutual understanding between China and Japan. It is also planned for the Sendai Ikuei Gakuen High School’s Taiko Drumming Group to give a performance during the event.

◆Participant Profiles◆

Participants were selected through open recruitment and school recommendations.

Sayaka Sugawara (Sendai Ikuei Gakuen High School, 1st Year Student)

- Herself injured by the tsunami, she spent two nights atop her roof while waiting to be rescued. She lost her mother and grandmother to the tsunami, and her Great-grandmother remains unaccounted for
- Sayaka is currently enrolled in the Special Advancement Course at high school, preparing for entrance into University whilst boarding away from home. In this year’s summer holidays she undertook short-term language

study in Canada, learning English. Of the upcoming program, she says, “I feel honored to be given an opportunity to tell Tohoku stories to the leaders who can make a difference for the world”.

Maria Kusaka (Sendai Ikuei Gakuen High School, 1st Year Student)

- Maria’s father was killed in the tsunami. She acted as high school student ambassador for orphans of the Eastern Japan Great Earthquake and Tsunami, travelling to New York City to raise the attention of the world to the current situation for orphans who lost parents in the Tohoku tsunami and the necessity for emotional care, alongside young people orphaned by the New York 9/11 Terrorist attacks and Hurricane Katrina.

- She says, “There are still people who are suffering more than me. For those people I really want to try my best. I want to interact with people from many countries, and talk to a variety of different people”.

Asaka Yanada (Iwate Prefectural Morioka First High School, 1st Year Student)

- She hails from a middle school in Kamaishi, which had a particular focus on performing fire and disaster drills to prepare for disasters. During the tsunami the school and its students including herself played a crucial role in leading local lower school students and citizens to safety, saving a number of lives. Standing in safety from high ground, she watched the tsunami wipe her town away without a trace.

- She would like her life’s mission to save even just one person from becoming a victim of an earthquake or tsunami through sharing her experience, and in the future she thinks she would like to become an actress.

Eisuke Kato (Toryo High School, 3rd Year Student)

- Eisuke is a resident of Kesenuma - one of the areas which received the highest levels of damage, and he just escaped death having evacuated in terrifying circumstances immediately following the earthquake. The hotel run by his parents was used as an evacuation shelter through which a large contribution was made to the community; however the business received a crippling blow.

- Eisuke would like to convey to the world the things he has learned from his close communication with victims of the disaster and from those engaging in the recovery and reconstruction efforts.

Mamoru Okoshi (Fukushima University, Faculty of Economics and Business Administration 2nd Year Student)

- He resides in an area 70km from the Fukushima nuclear plant. Daily life has been constrained because agriculture, fish, and livestock from Fukushima prefecture have been prohibited

- Having experienced the terror induced by a nuclear accident and continuing to remain resident in the area despite ongoing fears, Mamoru longs to send a message to the world concerning energy issues. He would like to communicate to the world’s leaders the need for comprehensive discussions with regard to energy policy.

Junpei Shida (Iwate University Faculty of Engineering, 1st Year Student)

- Junpei’s home was completely destroyed by the tsunami. Both his parents lost their jobs, and they continue to live in temporary housing. He also lost many of his friends to the tsunami.

- In the future he hopes to study urban planning, and would like to work in the City Planning Division of the

prefectural office and contribute to the regeneration of affected areas through starting with the development of reassuringly safe towns prepared for potential disasters.

- He states, "I want to convey to the world what the current situation is actually like in the devastated areas. I want to talk about the large number of people who thought there was no way a tsunami would come so far inland and who got swept away, and about the circumstances people face now."

Kazuki Kondo (Tohoku University Faculty of Economics, 3rd Year Student)

- His family home was completely destroyed by the earthquake. His family is now staying with an acquaintance having moved to Morioka.

- In the future Kazuki would like to engage in rejuvenation of local areas and promotion of the area's special qualities. He thinks he would like to undertake a role which allows him to act as a bridge between global and local domains. He states, "I would like to convey gratitude for all the help offered in response to the earthquake disaster. On the other hand, I do not want this situation to be treated as a short term boom. I want it to be viewed as a long term problem and not something just relevant to this year."

◆Summer Davos Forum◆

Summer Davos, the official name being "Annual Meeting of the New Champions", is an annual international program hosted by the World Economic Forum, a Geneva-based non-profit organization. The meeting convenes top leaders from all over the world including politicians, business people, journalists, artists and performers to discuss from various viewpoints the actions required to open up a new era through dialogue and interaction. Since its inauguration in 2007 it has been known as a meeting where the Chinese Premier Wen Jiabao delivers a speech (More details can be found on the website: <http://www.weforum.org/node/97933>)

【Key Participants from Japan】

Yorihiko Kojima (Mitsubishi Corporation, Chairman of the Board), Yoshihiko Miyauchi (Orix Corporation, Director, Chairman and Group CEO), Heizo Takenaka (Keio University, Professor, Director of the Global Security), and many more.

◆Summer Davos Forum Junior Leaders Program Advisory Board◆

With the aim of ensuring that the program's objectives and directives are effectively met, the Advisory Board provides advice and guidance to the program.

Members

Aiko Doden (NHK Senior Commentator), Kanae Doi (Lawyer, Human Rights Watch Japan Director), Yoko Ishikura (Keio University, Professor of Media Design), William Hiroyuki Saito (Intecur, K.K., Founder and CEO), Yoshikazu Tanaka (GREE Inc., CEO and President)

◆**Partners and Supporters**◆

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◆**BEYOND Tomorrow**◆

BEYOND Tomorrow is a project established to support the young victims who, despite facing great adversity, did not lose hope and continue to embrace a dream to give back to society in the future. By offering scholarships to attend top-class universities domestically and abroad, as well as providing opportunities for leadership development, BEYOND Tomorrow aims to give these young men and women the opportunity to continue pursuing their dreams and become leaders of tomorrow.

◆ More information can be found at: <http://www.beyond-tomorrow.org>

【For Inquiries】 Global Fund for Education Assistance
Contact : Mayu Sakamoto TEL : +81-(0)90-6964-3033
e-mail : info@beyond-tomorrow.org

*** The project name "BEYOND Tomorrow" refers to the mid- to long-term perspective 'beyond tomorrow' of cultivating those people who will be in charge of the future ***