

Hawaii Buddhist Women's News

HONPA HONGWANJI MISSION OF HAWAII FEDERATION OF BUDDHIST WOMEN'S ASSOCIATIONS

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Message from the President: Lois Toyama

I would like to express my deepest gratitude to all of the people who helped to make Hawaii's trip to the 16th World Buddhist Women's Convention in San Francisco over Labor Day weekend such a memorable experience. Those who attended were inspired by the keynote speakers, workshop presenters, and panelists. They made new friends from around the world and renewed old friendships. The World Convention, which happens once every four years, is an unforgettable, joyful experience.

Mahalo to Linda Nagai, our Federation 1st Vice President, for working closely with Francis Arakaki of Kintetsu to make our flight and room reservations and our registrations for the conference. Linda also was key in planning the post-convention tours. She worked with her committee of representatives from each United to get the information to members and to troubleshoot last-minute changes.

Mahalo to Sharyn Sekine, Wendie Yumori, BJ Soriano, and the entertainment team who put together a much lauded performance. They sang, "Life in Harmony," and then danced a beautiful hula to the gatha "Golden Chain." BJ Soriano and Joy Nishida accompanied the singers on the ukulele. Thanks go out to every performer for their willingness to participate, and for their dedication to practicing and striving to improve each time they practiced (some singers even memorized the words).

Lillian Inatsuka helped with performing in the first instructional hula video and attended every practice at Betsuin to help with instructing the dancers. She put in all that time even

though she did not attend the convention. Lois Ohta and Donna Higashi helped with organizing and coordinating the entrance and exiting of the singers and keeping them together and orderly before the performance. Charlene Kihara was instrumental in organizing a group of Betsuin BWA ladies to make the lei which represented the Golden Chain. Tamayo Matsumoto provided the Japanese translation as my co-MC.

Suzue Nishiyama of Jikoen provided information and instruction for crocheting the beautiful purple lei we wore. Mahalo to members from around the state who not only crocheted their own lei but also made extra to give away. Ann Nakata of Moiliili made many of the ribbons for the lei.

Mahalo to Carol Valentine who served as Hawaii's representative on the panel. BWA members representing Japan, Canada, Buddhist Churches of America, South America and Hawaii each spoke on the theme of the convention, "Living the Nembutsu."

Arigato to everyone who helped by attending, participating, and supporting those who attended. Thank you to those who made omiyage to share.

The 17th World Buddhist Women's Convention will be held in Kyoto on May 11-12, 2023. We hope to see you there!



Federation Student Exchange Program

2019 BWA Student Exchange Program Report #1

To begin our trip, Katelyn Otani and I were seen off at the airport by numerous BWA members from the federation and our home temples. We left Hawaii on July 15 for a day full of traveling. We made a very brief stop in Korea before arriving at the Monbo Kaikan at midnight.

Our first day, July 17, was spent at Honzan participating in the YBICSE program. Although it was brief, I enjoyed meeting all the new participants from BCA, Canada, and Brazil. It made me reminisce about when I was a participant in YBICSE two years ago. In the afternoon, we had our audience with Monshu Ohtani and took a tour of the Hongwanji. For dinner, the YBICSE participants, Japan's YBA members, staff, and Katelyn and I gathered for a lively banquet. We played games together, exchanged omiyage, and with the YBICSE participants from BCA and Hawaii, sang "Somewhere Over the Rainbow" together.



Chloe Oshiro
Mililani Hongwanji

On July 18 with Honzan staff Sara and Sou, we took a day trip out to Osaka. First, we visited the Tsumura Betsuin BWA. I was very nervous to be introducing myself to them in Japanese but they were all very patient and kind. Located underneath the Betsuin, we were given a private tour of the Kitamido Museum. To my surprise I learned about the Hongwanji's involvement in Feudal Japan's history. Before returning to Kyoto, we rode Japan's tallest ferris wheel that stands at 404 feet.

On the 19 of July, we left Kyoto for Hiroshima. There we were greeted by members of the Hiroshima Betsuin. After conversing with them, we toured the Peace Memorial Museum. It was my third time going to the Peace Memorial, however everytime I go it is a completely new experience.

The next day, July 20, we were in Kitahiroshima and we visited Kogenji Temple. There, we participated in a tea ceremony and learned how to arrange ikebana. I enjoyed talking with the BWA ladies of that temple. We discussed their various ties to Hawaii. I found it interesting that they said their relatives came to Hawaii to work in the plantation, which is the same as my family. However, their families returned to Japan when they were done working.



July 21 was our first day with our homestay family in Shimane Prefecture. We participated in their annual Jokenji Temple Summer School program. We got to meet all the children who attend the temple. Throughout the day, we played games, read them stories, and taught them English and American

CONTINUED ON PAGE 3

Student Exchange Program Report: Chloe Oshiro continued from page 2

Sign Language. It was fun spending time with the children and being able to communicate with them in basic Japanese.

On July 22, we spent the day touring Oda City. Our first stop was to Iwami Ginza, a World Heritage Site, to learn about the silver mines. Later, we went to the Shimane Nature Museum of Mt. Sanbe. For dinner, we attended an outdoor barbecue at a farm with our host family and some other temple members. Katelyn and I sang various songs for our host families like the English versions of gathas that they know in Japanese, I even sang a Hawaiian 'oli (chant) for them.

On July 23, we drove out to visit Matsue Vogel Park and Matsue Castle. Matsue Vogel Park was very beautiful and we spent most of our day there. In one area, there hanging from the ceilings were dozens of brightly colored flowers. Throughout the park, we saw and fed various birds like owls, emus, penguins, and toucans.

On July 24, we spent the morning with BWA members of Jokenji Temple sewing and making origami together. With the help of a translator, we were able to discuss the effects of the Pearl Harbor bombing and how it impacted both Hawaii and the mainland. Later, we joined another BWA member for a tea ceremony at her house. She dressed us in yukatas that she generously gifted to us. That night, when we returned to our host family's house, we had a sushi party to celebrate our last night together.



On July 25, we tearfully parted with our host family leaving Oda City for Kyoto. By train, it took us six hours to arrive in Kyoto. Katelyn and I were lucky enough to have time to spend with my previous homestay family from when I was a YBICSE participant. It was very nice to see them after two years.

On July 26, we had an audience with Lady Ohtani. I was surprised as to how down to earth and kind she was to us. She was very welcoming and patient when talking to us with our limited Japanese. After, we relocated to Nara with four BWA officers from various cities in Japan. We went sightseeing throughout the city and were able to feed the deer along the way.

On our final day, we transferred from Nara to Osaka. We went shopping in Dotonbori, then went to a Shiba Inu Cafe, and ate delicious Kakigori before leaving Japan.

Looking back on this trip, I realize that everyone we met made it a very welcoming experience. Although we spent only a limited time with these people, they became like family to us. One day I wish to return to Japan to visit everyone. I am truly grateful to have been able to participate in the 2019 BWA Student Exchange Program.

I hope this program will continue for a long time inspiring other Buddhist Women.

Chloe Oshiro

Student Exchange Program Report #2

Reflections On Japan: Katelyn Otani

In late July, Chloe Oshiro and I were given the amazing opportunity to participate in the Buddhist Women's Association (BWA) student exchange program. Being selected as an exchange student was a huge honor. During the twelve days that Chloe and I spent in Japan, I learned a lot about Jodo Shinshu Buddhism and met many fellow Shin Buddhists.



Katelyn Otani
Pearl City Hongwanji

On July 17, we spent the day with the students who were participating in the Young Buddhist International Cultural Study Exchange (YBICSE) program. While we were with them, we participated in study sessions, had an audience with the Gomonsu and toured the Honzan. At the end of the day, we had a fellowship dinner with the YBICSE students. This was a good opportunity for us to meet other Jodo Shinshu youth from around the world and get to know them. We were also able to meet students from Ryukoku University who were all studying to become ministers.

The next day, Chloe and I were taken to Osaka for a day trip. During our trip to Osaka, I had the chance to learn about the history of Hongwanji. Prior to this trip, I did not know that the Hongwanji was headquartered in Osaka before moving to Kyoto. It turned out that I was not the only one who was unaware of this information. In order to help teach the residents of Osaka about the history of Hongwanji, a museum called Kitamido Museum was opened in Tsumura Betsuin. The day before we went to Osaka, we participated in the afternoon service at Honzan. There, we watched two ministers chant a sutra, which normally takes about 20 minutes to chant, in under five minutes. While at Tsumura Betsuin, we were told that the reason why ministers from the past had to chant so quickly was because they never knew when they were going to be attacked by the Shogun's soldiers. Therefore, they chanted much quicker than they were supposed to.

On July 19, we were taken to Hiroshima Betsuin and met temple members. Prior to this trip, I was fortunate enough to go to Hiroshima twice. On my prior trips to Hiroshima, I walked around the Peace Park and visited the Hiroshima Peace Museum. This time, however, Chloe and I were able to spend time with residents of Hiroshima. One of these residents lived in Hiroshima during the dropping of the atomic bomb in 1945. He now dedicates his life to ending the use of atomic weapons around the world. The next day, we spent the morning at Kogenji temple in Hiroshima. At this temple, we were able to try ikebana and learned how to perform a tea ceremony. We then had the opportunity to talk with the temple members to get to know them.

After our time in Hiroshima, Chloe and I went to our homestay family. Our homestay was one of my favorite parts of our trip. Our host family was from Oda City in Shimane Prefecture and was the resident family of Jokenji Temple. We were able to spend five days with the Okusa Family and during this time, they welcomed us into their family with open arms. During our first day with them, we participated in their annual summer school. During the summer school, we helped run the activities the family planned as well as getting to know other temple members. Over the course of the next few days, Chloe and I were taken around Shimane Prefecture. We were taken to Matsue Vogel Park, Matsue Castle and the Ginza Silver mines, which is a World Heritage Site.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 5

Student Exchange Report: Reflections On Japan: Katelyn Otani continued

During our time with the host family, we were also taken to a BBQ hosted by one of the temple members. At this BBQ, we were introduced to other temple members who we had not yet had the opportunity to meet and participated in some fellowship activities. We also were able to interact with the BWA ladies by making Japanese bean bags and participating in a tea ceremony at the house of a BWA member.

After we left Shimane Prefecture, we returned to Kyoto for a day. On that day, we had an audience with Lady Ohtani. This audience with Lady Ohtani was huge honor. Before our audience, Chloe and I spoke to a Honzan employee who told us how she had only



met Lady Ohtani once before. Lady Ohtani was gracious, kind and beautiful. She also gave us a beautiful onenju.



After our time with Lady Ohtani, we met four BWA officers who took us to Nara. I really enjoyed our time in Nara. I had never been to Nara before and it truly was an eye-opening experience. While in Nara, we were taken to Todaiji Temple where we saw a breathtaking giant Buddha statue and all of the deer throughout Nara.

Our time in Japan was an amazing learning opportunity and gave me the chance to grow as a

Jodo Shinshu Buddhist. I was sad to leave Japan and the many new people that I met. I hope to continue the friendships that I made. I would like to thank the BWA for giving me this life-changing opportunity. I know that the experiences I had will stay with me for life as I continue my life as a Buddhist woman.

For anyone considering applying for the BWA exchange program in the future, I would highly recommend it. You will not regret it.

Katelyn Otani

KAUAI UNITED BWA

Lynette Miyamoto



Kauai Delegation to the 16th World Convention in San Francisco

Carol Valentine: A Great Panelist!

One of the highlights of the 16th World Buddhist Women's convention was a panel discussion from each of the BWA districts (South America, Canada, Hawaii, Japan, and BCA). Carol Valentine from Lihue Hongwanji on Kauai was Hawaii's choice and shared how she "Lived the Nembutsu."

Carol said the Nembutsu should reflect real life, our everyday lives, which to her is "Living the Dharma." What does living the Dharma mean? How do we show the Dharma in our lives? Carol said it has to be a part of our lives every single day including how we treat others and how we deal with adversity every day. In other words, actions speak louder than words.

She talked about four qualities that are important to practice as a Buddhist. These four qualities are Gratitude, Kindness, Compassion and Interdependence. Gratitude means saying "thank you" and "please." We should be grateful every day for things being done for us and to those we are asking to help. According to Carol, science has found that grateful people are happier, less depressed, less stressed and more satisfied with their lives.

Kindness means to do the right thing without promise of a reward. Examples she gave were smiling, apologizing when appropriate, and using kind and gentle words. Examples of compassion were to listen with your heart, to lose the need to be always right, and to help others, if we can. The greater our compassion, the more we will be at peace.

Lastly is Interdependence. Carol says we no longer live in a world where we depend only on ourselves. Others help us so we can help others. Carol did a great job representing Kauai and Hawaii. Thank you!

The Kauai delegation attending the convention in SF included Shirley Kakuda (and daughter Susan from Oahu), Fay Tateishi, Lynette and Alton Miyamoto from West Kauai, and Diane Fukuyama and Carol from Lihue Hongwanji. (Shared by Lynette Miyamoto of West Kauai BWA)

HONOLULU UNITED BWA

World Convention Veterans And First Timers

(Shared By Donna Higashi)



vention. They performed side by side to a hula to "The Golden Chain" with sign language motions. Each United had at least one member who was a First Timer. I hope they'll share their stories with you too.

Here's Cynthia Alm of the Hawaii Betsuin BWA and her reflections about the 16th World Buddhist Women's Convention.

"I thought the convention was outstanding! The program was inspiring and well-organized. The opening service and closing service were beautiful. Most uplifting was the presence of the Gomonsu, Hongwanji bishops and ministers. The attention to detail for the banquet was extraordinary. One of the best part of the world convention was getting to know others from Canada, the continental United States, Japan and South America.

Mrs. Toku Umehara served as the Hawaii Federation of BWAs second president from 1975 to 1993, a span of 19 years. During her lifetime she might've attended the most World Conventions and Representative meetings amongst us all. Today, I learned that Doris Oshiro has attended SIX previous World Conventions since 1998 -2019. She is very active at Jikoen Hongwanji where she serves as Kyodan President and supports the BWA at all levels. She is articulate, talented and a true leader which I believe was nurtured by her attendance at these Conventions where she learned that the Dharma is shared by all peoples around the World.



However, even a first timer to a World Convention can also be a leader at her own BWA unit and temple and such a person is Wendie Yumori of Hawaii Betsuin. She is hard working, a poet and composer, and sings beautifully too. She exemplifies a strong Jodo Shinshu Buddhist woman.

Both women performed with other BWA members during the entertainment portion of the World Con-

Having now attended the convention, I have a better understanding of the huge and important undertaking it must have been for Hawaii to host the convention. One of the convention leaders for San Francisco told me that they used Hawaii as a model for their convention. I am not sure when it will be Hawaii's turn again, but I do know that we will need to start building capacity; to reach out to new and younger members to be prepared to undertake the responsibility in 8 or 12 years. It was clear that the convention took a tremendous amount of volunteer time and coordination."

MAUI UNITED BWA

Sharon Nohara
Jean Heselden



Flocks of origami cranes arrived with their message of peace at the Hongwanji temples of Maui and Lanai. Displays of origami cranes unique to each temple brought awareness to the community with banners that stated "Peace Day Hawaii September 21." Under the sponsorship of the Hawaii Honpa Peace Committee, Maui United Buddhist Women's Association took the leadership role to plan organized peace centered activities at their home temples and to work together to reach out to the greater community to promote Peace Day. MUBWA used the origami crane which is the universal symbol of mankind's wish for peace and harmony. While

each temple worked towards their origami peace crane display for the month of September and to incorporate the peace theme in their services through gathas and readings, the MUBWA Peace committee planned activities to spread the message of peace within the community. Working with the Maui Hiroshima / Nagasaki Remembrance Committee their annual event was held on August 6 at Kahului Hongwanji Mission. Guest speaker Helen Jaccard, of the peace sailboat Golden Rule spoke of their mission promoting global disarmament as they travel worldwide to spread this message. Maui Mayor Michael Victorino recognized the

Hongwanji Buddhist temples of Maui for their commemoration of Peace Day 2019 by issuing a proclamation at an award ceremony with the Maui United BWA presented by Maui County Managing Director, Sandy Baz on September 19. As each unit finalized their origami crane display, a culminating joint Peace event "Walk in Peace" was held at Makawao Hongwanji on Peace Day, September 21. The community was also invited to join the Maui Hongwanji temples in observing Peace Day 2019. Following a Buddhist service officiated by resident minister Reverend Kerry Kiyohara, a walking meditation on the temple grounds was led by the nuns from the Maui's Vietnamese Buddhist Center Chua Tu Hanh and the

vacationing monks from the Blue Cliff Monastery in upstate New York. Before the walk, Brother Emptiness explained how they conduct a walking meditation. On the beautiful grounds of Makawao temple with over 2,000 white cranes displayed, our Vietnamese Buddhist friends sang the song, "Breathing In and Breathing Out", which was written by their founder Thich Nhat Hanh.

MAUI UNITED BWA PHOTOS

Peace Day Observed On Maui



OAHU UNITED BWA

Susan Morishige
Claire Tamamoto



Oahu United Delegates to the 16th World Buddhist Women's Convention



In May, Aiea "at-large" members of the O'ahu BWA toured Hokkaido with friends and family.

In July, we were very happy that two O'ahu young women were selected as the BWA exchange students in 2019. We were also happy to support six O'ahu youth (and advisor) who participated in YBICSE. All left on the same day, which helped with the send offs. Thank you to the ladies, including Honolulu District who supported their send off.

In September, O'ahu members and family attended the 16th World Buddhist Women's Convention in San Francisco. For many, it was their first world convention and we think we can say we had a great time. Hawaii's por-

tion of the entertainment (hula and singing) was well received. Those who went on post-convention tours also enjoyed themselves. We are looking forward to Kyoto 2023. . . the welcome video was charming and fun. Let's all plan to go!

The United is making a commitment to update our By Laws to correctly reflect our organization and its functions. Some key questions are how to/if we accommodate men; classification of members (active or associate) and representation for temple and at-large members. We have also been operating with suspended Rules and Regulation. We are open to discussions, suggestions and opinions.

We are planning our annual convention and educational seminar to be held November 9th at Waipahu Hongwanji. Rev. Toshiyuki Umitani will be our memorial service speaker with Dave Atcheson talking about "Going Green" and a presentation on "Safe Falling" by Kupuna Aikido. The O'ahu BWA has been successful in planning and hosting together so we are trying that again this year. It is our hope that shared responsibilities will bring in new members.

Lastly on November 17th, we will have our Installation meeting at Waianae. Our 2020 officers have all agreed to stay another term.

Photos From The World Conference



16th World Buddhist Women's Convention
San Francisco Labor Day Weekend 2019



Hawaii attendees performed a beautiful hula to the gatha "Golden Chain" at the 16th World Buddhist Women's Convention.





More Convention Photos...

