

BRINGING BACK SMILES TO TOHOKU

Categories: Community Development/ Volunteer Dispatch/ Psycho-Social Care/ Empowerment

BE A PART OF THE PROJECT: PARTNER WITH JEN AND CONTRIBUTE

<http://www.jen-npo.org/en/contribute>

Community Development

Empowerment

Revitalizing Ajishima Island's Fisheries



Above: JEN and Miyagi Prefecture Fishery Cooperative pose in front of the newly donated forklift truck.

In efforts to revitalize Ajishima, an island about one hour by ferry from the Ishinomaki jetty, JEN helped fishermen living on the island acquire new fishing gear starting on November 18th. The population decreased to only four hundred after the Great East Japan Earthquake because this island was the closest to the epicenter and therefore was hit by the tsunamis first. This unfortunately resulted in many damaged houses, fishing facilities and ports, but luckily there were no casualties.

To a branch of fishermen part of the Miyagi Prefecture Fishery Cooperative, JEN provided a forklift truck, octopus trap baskets and fishing nets. Although the restoration of Ajishima is only about twenty percent complete, there has been no sign of quitting among the people. Thanks to JEN's help, the fishermen can catch flatfish, rockfish and rock trout with their new fishing nets year-round.

Kadonowaki's Flower Garden Enters its Second Year

The "Spread Flower Gardens through Human Connection" movement, which was initiated by the students of Kadonowaki Junior High School, has entered its second year. In support of the students' wish, JEN, locals and volunteers have been aiding the reconstruction of the district through planting flowers.

On November 6th, flowers were planted in the shape of a four-leaf clover with each leaf in the shape of a heart. First year members of the art club created this design because "being one in heart makes people happy," and each leaf of a four-leaf clover represents fame, wealth, love, and health.

On that day 700 viola roots and 1,500 tulip bulbs were planted. This movement has created a community-school relationship, and some of the bulbs planted that day were donated by people living in the area.



Above: First year students at Kadonowaki Junior High School replant flowers in front of their school.

COUNTRY: Ishinomaki City, JAPAN

Volunteer Dispatch

Harvard Business School Students Visit Ishinomaki

On January 16th, fifteen students from Harvard Business School, located in Boston, Massachusetts USA, came with three escorting staff members to Tanigawahama in Ishinomaki to experience fishery and meet people from the community. Of the fifteen students, some were from all over the world including Turkey, China, and Norway, and their engagement with JEN is part of their school curriculum.

A young fisherman, Mr. Masao Atsumi, welcomed the students, talked about post-disaster life, and explained ascidian and scallop farming. Specifically, he explained that Tanigawahama holds ninety-percent of the shares of the national market for seed production and cultivation for ascidians. They are mostly exported to Korea, however Korea banned imported products from Tanigawaha due to the Fukushima incident. This has caused major problem in the fishing industry in Ishinomaki.

After learning about the community, the students experienced ascidian and scallop farming preparation then enjoyed a potluck BBQ lunch with fresh scallops and oysters from the fishermen and beef brought by the students.

The students tried tonjiru, miso soup with pork and vegetables, and one student smiled at a local lady and said, "tonjiru oishii! (The tonjiru soup is delicious!)"



Above: Harvard Business School students participate in preparing mother shells for ascidian farming.

Psycho-Social Care

Ishinomaki Soccer Cup is a Success!



Above: Sixth graders enjoyed their last tournament.

The second annual Ishinomaki Nichi Nichi Shibun's (Newspaper's) Cup for Boys and Girls was held at the Ishinomaki Football Association's soccer field on January 12th and 13th. JEN organized the event along with the Ishinomaki Football Association, the Ishinomaki Nichi Nichi Shinbun Newspaper, and Meiji University and High School.

Twelve teams from Ishinomaki, Higashimatsushima, and Onagawacho came and thirty-seven volunteers from Meiji High School, including soccer club members, refereed served as the score keeper and cooked shiruko with residents of temporary housing complexes. Children could also play with be-goma, a spinning top, and participate in true/false quiz contests.

When the second day of the tournament was cancelled due to inclement weather, Mr. Tetsutaro Tanaka, the vice principal of the school, said, "This time, the students were able to not only contribute by managing the soccer event but also socialize with residents and children living in temporary housing. Today's youth tend to keep to themselves, but this event provided them the opportunity to enjoy the company of others."

DONATE NOW AND HELP THE CAUSE!

NGO JEN (Japan Emergency NGO)

7/F, Daini Tobundo Bldg, Ageba-cho, Shinjuku, Tokyo, JAPAN 162-0826

Phone: (81) 3-5225-9352 / Fax: (81) 3-5225-9357

Email: info@jen-npo.org / web: www.jen-npo.org

©JEN, All Rights Reserved.