



JET and Grassroots Programs Task Force Report

Task Force Mission

Review and explore the following:

- Role of JET returnees and alumni as civil society actors
- Programs undertaken by the Japan Foundation Center for Global Partnership
 - Japan America Societies Initiative
 - Role of Japanese-American Communities (Japanese American Leadership Delegation Program)
 - Japan Outreach Initiative
 - Civil Society Cooperation (NPO Fellowship, Disaster Prevention & Recovery, Social Entrepreneurship)
- Other Grassroots Exchange (Private Sector Initiatives, sister cities, cultural and sport exchanges)
- Corporate Social Responsibility(CSR) Activities of Japanese Companies in the US and US companies in Japan
- Japanese civil society organizations (current state and problems, links and cooperation with US civil society organizations)

Task Force Members

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Activities Since CULCON XXIII

1. JET and Grassroots Programs Task Force Meeting, June, 2009

A record of the meeting is attached.

2. Review of the Japan-US Grassroots Exchange activities undertaken by the Japan Foundation Center for Global Partnership

See attachment "CULCON Grassroots Exchange: Information and Ideas for Discussion"

3. Communications following up on the civil-society related discussions at the Fulbright-CULCON Joint Symposium in June 2009

4. JCIE Survey on Japan-US grassroots exchanges in Japan (sister cities, Japan-America societies and the use of IT) in March 2010

A summary is attached.

Recommendations

Background

Since the adoption of the CULCON Report "Re-defining the Japan-US Relationship" at CULCON XXIII in 2008, this task force has been working to shed light on the perceived weaknesses of Japanese civil society/grassroots organizations with respect to funding, staffing and effectiveness on the international arena as well as on the need to step up efforts in various parts of the US for greater understanding of Japan at the grassroots level. From this perspective, the task force has identified the following priority areas and recommendations.

Priority Areas and Recommendations

A. denotes steps to be taken with respect to ongoing programs, and

B. denotes concrete projects for CULCON to undertake. (See the details as attached)

1. Youth/Student Exchange

A. CULCON should strongly endorse the JET Program and encourage the JET alumni in the US to play their roles as key actors in civil society exchange/cooperation.

B. CULCON should pursue the creation of a program for JETAA members which would stimulate the interest of US students in Japan.⁽²⁾

2. Role of civil society /grassroots exchange and cooperation

- A. CULCON should encourage the strengthening of the agenda- setting and issue- framing role of civil society or social entrepreneurship as agents of change and innovation, particularly in Japan, and promote their interactions with American counterparts.
- B. CULCON should encourage further development of joint activities of Japanese and US civil society organizations. CULCON should pursue projects to promote US-Japan civil society cooperation in areas of common interest including projects in third countries.

3. Sister cities, Japan-America Societies and Japan Societies

- A. CULCON should help revitalize grassroots exchanges such as sister cities and Japan-America Societies in Japan/Japan Societies in the United States.

Next Steps

The JET-related steps should be taken in implementing the JET Action Program drawn up by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan, in cooperation with the JETAA. CULCON should examine appropriate advocacy roles to play regarding the strengthening of civil society exchange and cooperation and the revitalization of grassroots exchanges. The Japan Foundation Center for Global Partnership is expected to take these points into consideration in drafting the new guidelines for its grant programs in JFY 2010.

Attachments

1. Priority Themes and Recommendations
2. Grassroots and JET Action Program Group Meeting (June 2009)
3. CULCON Grassroots Exchange : Information and Ideas for discussion (November 2009)
4. JCIE survey on Japan-US Grassroots Exchanges in Japan (March 2010)
5. NHK World TV