



JAPAN-AMERICA  
SOCIETY OF HAWAII

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February 6, 2013

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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**Japanese Children from Tsunami Disaster Area Again Set to Visit Hawaii**

**Honolulu** – Two years after the tragic events of March 11, 2011, twenty-two Japanese junior high school students ages 12-15 will visit Hawaii under the Rainbow for Japan Kids (RFJK) program. This will be the sixth group of Japanese students to visit Hawaii under this program, which will have brought more than 100 students from the three affected prefectures – Iwate, Miyagi, and Fukushima.

The Hawaii RFJK Committee, composed of Japan-America Society of Hawaii (JASH), Japan Airlines Hawaii Office, First Hawaiian Bank, Studio Rim Hawaii, Hawaii Senior Life Enrichment Association and its Nadeshiko Club, Lighthouse Hawaii, and other supporters, will welcome the Japanese students on March 25<sup>th</sup> for an eight-day stay taking them to locations on Oahu and the Island of Hawaii. As in previous programs, the students will spend several days at North Shore's YMCA Camp Erdman with Hawaii students from the Bridge Club of Hawaii engaging in outdoor activities specifically designed to forge teamwork and create friendships, a major goal of this program. Following activities on Oahu, the students will travel to the Island of Hawaii to experience its incredible natural beauty. In Kona, the students will learn about ancient Hawaiian culture and customs and then visit Hawaii Volcanoes National Park, and finally, the students will stay at Kilauea Military Camp. Through hiking tours, story-telling sessions and night-time stargazing, the students will learn about Hawaii's volcanic origin and how Polynesians first colonized Hawaii. The program aims to free the students from their day-to-day lives in Japan under less-than-ideal conditions, and focus on their own lives and dreams, create friendships, and return to Japan refreshed and dedicated to bettering their lives and their communities.

Back on Oahu, the students will engage in water activities at Hilton Hawaiian Village's lagoon where the Hilton Grand Vacations (HGV) staff will prepare kayak races and paddle-boarding lessons. Several days will be dedicated to making personal ukuleles, courtesy of KoAloha Ukulele. The students will take the ukuleles back to Japan as a reminder of their visit. Organizations providing in-kind donations of hotel rooms, meals and local transportation include Pagoda Hotel, Suntory Restaurant, Beijing Restaurant, Natsunoya Teahouse, Lawson, Warabeya, Waikiki Trolley, Iyasume, and Ito-En. Hawaiian Airlines is assisting with air travel to the Island of Hawaii.

The group includes three students from Onagawa City in Miyagi Prefecture. Last year, Susie Roos, wife of U.S. Ambassador John Roos, donated funds from the sales of her cook book to this project after visiting Onagawa City and seeing the devastation and visiting with the children. Several students from Onagawa also visited last year.

The RFJK program is a proud partner with TOMODACHI, a private-public partnership led by the U.S. Embassy and the U.S.-Japan Council that aims to invest in the next generation of Japanese and Americans in ways that strengthen cultural and economic ties, and deepen the friendship between U.S. and Japan over the long term. More information on these programs can be found on JASH website at [www.jashawaii.org](http://www.jashawaii.org), or call JASH at (808) 524-4450 and on the U.S. Embassy website at <http://japan.usembassy.gov/>.



**TOMO  
DACHI**

