

Meet the 3rd TOMODACHI J&J Disaster Nursing Training Program Participants

(Japanese syllabary order)



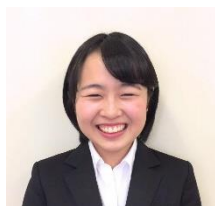
Name: Misa Abe
School: Ishinomaki Red Cross Nursing College
Hometown: Minamisoma City, Fukushima Prefecture

When the Great East Japan Earthquake and Tsunami hit, I was in Minamisoma, Fukushima Prefecture – the city I had to evacuate because of the nuclear disaster. Afterwards, I decided to enlist in the Japan Ground Self-Defense Force, thinking that next time something like this happens, I want to be able to provide help. While working there as a field medic for 4 years, I started thinking that I wanted get certified and work on-site whenever possible, which is why I decided to apply to the Ishinomaki Red Cross Nursing College. I have set three personal goals for this program: 1. To expand my network and acquire opportunities for more activities and learning experiences; 2. To promote disaster resilience by leveraging the learnings and experiences from this program; and 3. To broaden my knowledge through various seminars. I will do my best to achieve these goals and the goals of the program.



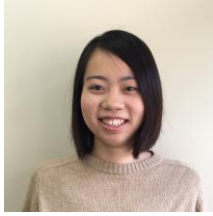
Name: Ayano Irikoma
School: Sendai Medical Center School of Midwifery
Hometown: Osaki City, Miyagi Prefecture

The reason I became interested in nursing has to do with my grandmother, who was in the hospital when the Great East Japan Earthquake and Tsunami happened. My grandmother's hospital faced a possible danger from the tsunami. However, as soon as they heard about the tsunami, the nurses at the hospital quickly made decisions to first move the patients who could not get out their beds by themselves, and then the patients who could not walk up the stairs by themselves, and lastly the patients who were panicking. They also made sure that the patients' conditions did not worsen afterwards. Ever since I heard this story, I have admired nurses – people who can think and act with their first priority being their patients, even under circumstances in which no one knows what is happening. During the U.S. study tour, I would like to absorb everything I can to become a nurse who can take on a leadership role when a disaster occurs, and be able to tell people about the Great East Japan Earthquake and Tsunami that I experienced.



Name: Kaoru Omiya
School: Sendai Medical Center School of Midwifery
Hometown: Shibata Town, Miyagi Prefecture

Ever since the Great East Japan Earthquake and Tsunami occurred, I have wanted to become a public health nurse who can actively help in a time of disaster, and to protect people's health to help them live longer and fight against disasters. However, I also know that I have been avoiding talking about the earthquake because I am scared to think about it. "How very little can be done under the spirit of fear." This quote by Florence Nightingale is perfect for who I am right now. I know that thinking I have nothing to do with disasters is very easy, but I also know that disasters can happen to anyone. I am determined to overcome my fear and face the reality of disasters during this program. There will be many things I will experience for the first time, but I will absorb everything I can to grow as a nurse.



Name: Kaho Kobayashi
School: Iwate Prefectural University
Hometown: Inawashiro Town, Fukushima Prefecture

I experienced the Great East Japan Earthquake and Tsunami when I was a third-year middle school student in Fukushima. Since I entered university, I have been volunteering for temporary housing units in Yamada, Iwate Prefecture. Through hearing people talk about what happened when the earthquake and tsunami hit and seeing the communities recover from the disasters, my volunteer experience made me think about the difficulty of volunteer activities and building new communities. This experience was what made me want to learn more about and work in the field of disaster nursing. I would like to do my best during the program to use what I will learn for people who have been affected by the disasters.



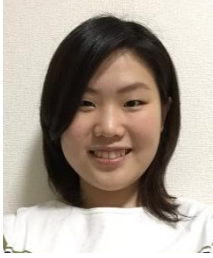
Name: Tomoyuki Sato
School: Iwate Prefectural University
Hometown: Rikuzentakata City, Iwate Prefecture

I am originally from Rikuzentakata, Iwate Prefecture, which is one of the areas that was most affected by the Great East Japan Earthquake and Tsunami. I have always been interested in disaster nursing, but I decided to apply to this program after taking a class called “Disaster Nursing Theory.” This class made me think that in a time of disaster, it is people like me, who have been greatly affected by disasters, who should contribute to the recovery of disaster-affected areas as nurses, and that it is people like me who can understand the feelings of people who were affected by disasters. Through this program, I would like to not only enhance my knowledge and capabilities, but also give what I will learn from this program back to the disaster-affected areas in Japan, as well as Japanese society as a whole. I will do my best during this one-year program as one of the participants.



Name: Mika Sato
School: Miyagi University
Hometown: Tome City, Miyagi Prefecture

When the Great East Japan Earthquake and Tsunami struck, I did not experience the tsunami like other people did, nor did my house suffer severe damage. However, being affected by the disaster made me realize the importance of being prepared. This is a rare opportunity: being able to share experiences and knowledge in the United States, whose culture, language, and customs are totally different from those of Japan. During the program, I would like to learn about how disasters are medically dealt with in the United States, and leverage this knowledge for my career. In addition, I would like to find out what the similarities and differences are between Japan and the United States in terms of disaster nursing, and what is required for the two countries to work together.



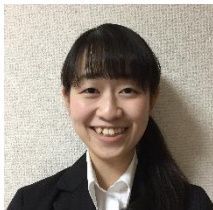
Name: Naho Shigihara
School: St. Luke's International University
Hometown: Minamisoma City, Fukushima Prefecture

Ever since I experienced the Great East Japan Earthquake and Tsunami, I have regretted being unable to do anything and felt helpless, which made me want to do something for the recovery of my hometown. That is why I decided to become a nurse, hoping to help people who have concerns with their health and lives, and to use my experience when a disaster happens somewhere in the future. Although there are not many schools that teach disaster nursing, I discovered this program that provides the rare opportunity to study disaster nursing. I used to live in Minamisoma, Fukushima Prefecture, where people experienced not only the earthquake and the tsunami, but also the nuclear disaster. There are still many problems including the prolongation of evacuation from the nuclear power plants and the instability in local medical systems. In this program, I would like to look at not only natural disasters but also chemical disasters and human-instigated disasters, and learn about the reality of disaster damage, medical approaches to disasters, and characteristics that are unique to disaster nursing and medicine. I would like to use my experience with this program to contribute to the recovery of the disaster-affected areas in Japan, including my hometown.



Name: Minami Shida
School: Iwate Prefectural University
Hometown: Kamaishi City, Iwate Prefecture

I became interested in disaster resilience because I lost a family member in the Great East Japan Earthquake and Tsunami and because I regret being unable to do anything about it. I am especially interested in mental health. I was immediately drawn to the program when I read a report written by one of the past participants who learned the importance of mental health from this program, which not only made me interested in mental health activities in the U.S. in a time of disaster, but also showed that all participants had clear goals and learned a significant amount. During the program, I would like to learn about mental health, and feed the knowledge back to Iwate. I will be sure to participate in the program with a sense of responsibility, while actively thinking about the meaning of each activity.



Name: Tomoka Yamaguchi
School: Sendai Medical Center School of Midwifery
Hometown: Osaki City, Miyagi Prefecture

I first became interested in disaster nursing when I did a research project on the Great East Japan Earthquake and Tsunami in high school. Reading about the disasters and interviewing doctors who were in the epicenter of the disaster made me want to take action and contribute to the local communities. In this program, I will be able to experience many things I would never be able to experience in daily life. There will be other nursing students who share similar interests with me, I will be able to meet experts in disaster medicine, and there will be many opportunities to hear about people's thoughts, ideas, and what they have done in the past. I would like to participate in this program with a mindset to always think hard, and take these experiences one step further than simply saying "It was great."