

# Nihongojin Connect!

Issue No.4, December 2022

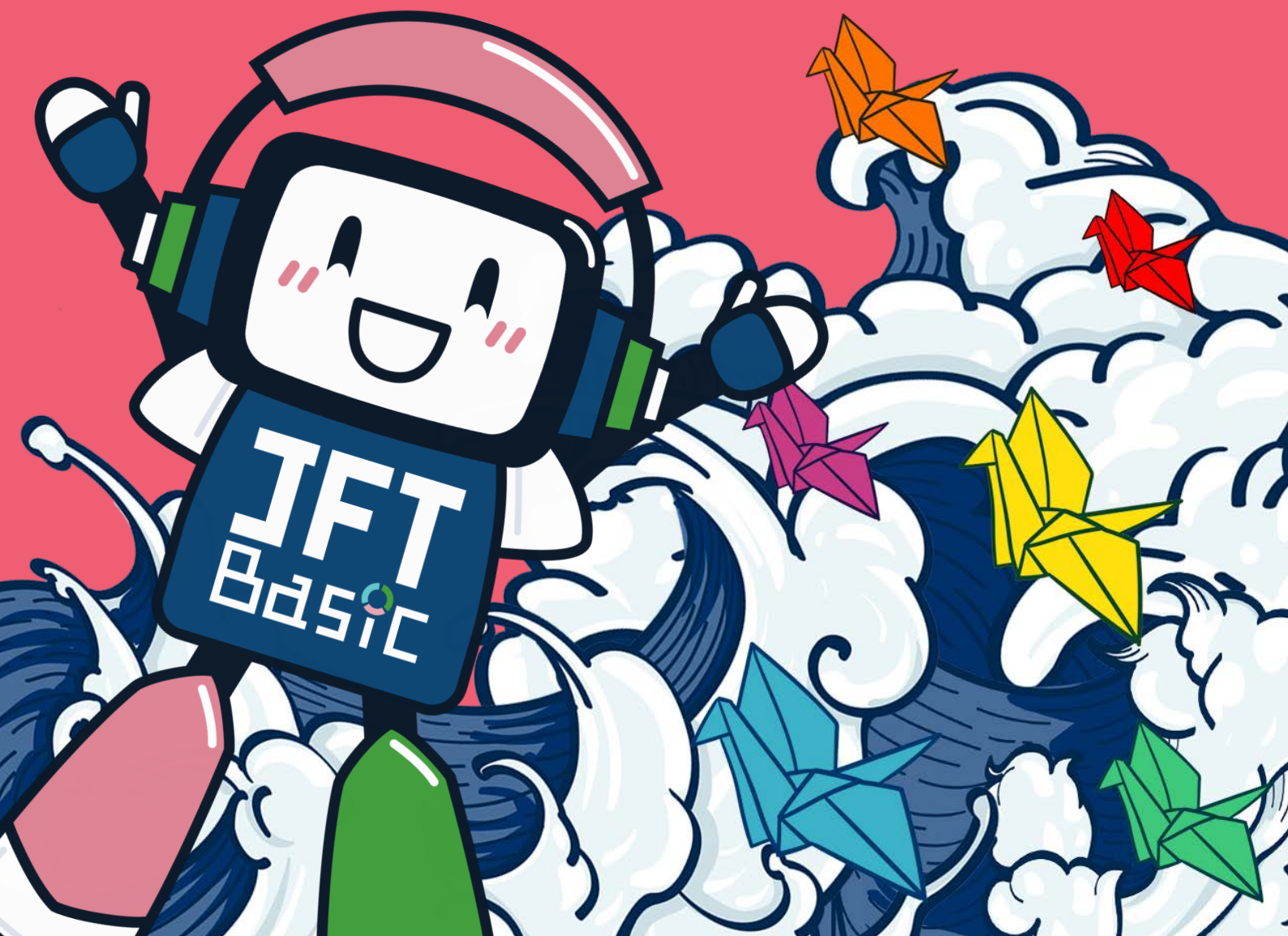
coined from NIHONGO (Japanese language) and JIN (person)  
- refers to native/non-native individuals involved in Japanese Language Education

## Nihongojin Journey in the New Normal!

As the end of the COVID-19 pandemic is in sight, The Japan Foundation, Manila (JFM) is delighted to finally resume many of its programs in 2022, including the face-to-face training of teachers, the Nihongo Partners (NP) program, the Immersion Program for teachers of the Course on Japan for High School (CJH), and many more!

This edition of the Nihongojin Connect! covers JFM's programs and accomplishments during the new normal. Now that restrictions are lifted, we are very excited to meet with fellow Nihongojins in person and to continue working together for the enhancement of Japanese language education in the Philippines!

みなさん、がんばりましょう



## ABOUT JFT-BASIC TEAM

The JFT-Basic (Japan Foundation Test for Basic Japanese) Team supports Japanese language education for those who wish to work in Japan under the Specified Skilled Worker (SSW) visa and disseminates information regarding the JFT-Basic and its corresponding teaching material, Irodori: Japanese for Life in Japan.

In 2022, the JFT-Basic Team conducted face-to-face training in several strategic locations in the Philippines and held regular online *benkyokai* (study sessions) on Irodori textbooks. The team was also assigned as a lead

team in the JFM for the implementation of a six-month Japanese language and cultural course for Nikkeijin: an initiative to support the Nikkeijin communities by JFM and the Philippine Nikkei Jin Kai Rengokai. Last but not least, the team has made regular visits to local Japanese language schools across the Philippines to promote the JFT-Basic, Irodori, and upcoming training for Nihongo teachers as well as to gain more insights to the schools' operational challenges and needs, so that we improve our programs and serve fellow Nihongojins better.

## NIHONGO TEACHERS DISCOVER IRODORI

The JFT-Basic Team has been conducting teacher training seminars for Filipino Nihongo teachers who wish to learn how to teach using Irodori: a Japanese coursebook for foreign people to learn basic Japanese communication skills that are needed for daily life and working in Japan. This year, the team had seminars for experienced teachers in Davao (March 19-20), Baguio (July 14-15), and Cebu (October 29-30) and also for those who are aspiring to become Nihongo teachers in NCR (June 25-26).

In these seminars, the participants discussed and shared their ideas and concerns about teaching Nihongo with the learner-centered, communication-based approach. Upon attending the seminars, participants commented, inter alia, "I learned a new way of teaching Nihongo that can also be applied in other subjects. I appreciate how Irodori is presented because it is very practical for both the teachers and students," and "I learned a lot about Irodori and it will serve as a good supplemental teaching aid and I hope I could use it in my next class."

As for the JFT-Basic Team, the seminar provided a valuable opportunity to finally meet Filipino Nihongo teachers in person, to see their reactions to the new teaching materials, and to learn from the various interactions. The team hopes that the participants will be able to maintain the peer network beyond the seminar periods.

More seminars and events are planned in 2023. Please visit our website and Facebook for announcements on our upcoming events. See you soon!





## IRODORI MARATHON BEGINS!



In August 2022, the JFT-Basic Team kickstarted the IRODORI MARATHON; a workshop-style course (*benkyokai*) for Filipino Nihongo teachers who want to learn more about how to use Irodori in their classes. In each class, the participants experience Irodori lessons in a classroom-setting to familiarize themselves with its contents.

They also discuss key points of teaching each activity - speaking (話す), listening (聞く), reading (読む), and writing (書く) and conduct a mock class. It is a good platform to gain teaching experiences on using Irodori, to get to know fellow Nihongo teachers, and to engage in peer learning. IRODORI MARATHON will be held twice a month beyond 2022.

## NIHONGO FOR NIKKEIJIN

In total, 21 Nikkeijin who have been recommended by their respective Nikkeijin community are attending the course: 9 from the Mindanao (Davao, General Santos, and Cotabato), 7 from Visayas (Iloilo, Cebu, and Bacolod), and 5 from Luzon (Palawan and NCR).

In September, a six-month Japanese language and cultural course for Nikkeijin (Japanese descendants) began. Titled Nihongo & Cultural Lessons for Nikkeijin, began, this is the first joint initiative by the JFM and the Philippine Nikkei Jin Kai Rengokai to support Nikkeijin spread across the country. The course aims to expand employment opportunities in and outside the Philippines and strengthening the network of Nikkeijin communities.

The course will run twice a week from September 2022 to March 2023. As of writing, sessions have been ongoing for over two months and the sense of camaraderie among course facilitators and participants is already getting stronger. We hope that all participants will be able to complete the course and get to know each other better through the course!



# STORY OF A NIKKEIJIN PARTICIPANT

BY JIKKO ALBERT E. RADAZA

はじめまして。私はジッコです。30歳です。フィリピンのセブ市から来ました。

I am a Nikkei Jin or Filipino-Japanese descendant. My late great grandmother, Aiko Nakasima, came to the Philippines together with her father a long time ago, even before WWII. Her father left her here and went back to Japan.

Every summer, my family used to stay at her place. While we were there, she used to teach us a Japanese birthday song and a few words in Japanese. Unfortunately, none of them stuck in my head. In my defense, I was too young. As I grew older I realized that having a Japanese lineage is much to my advantage. The special connection to Japan provides an incentive to work and study in Japan. To explore opportunities provided to Nikkeijin, I needed to learn basic Nihongo; this is why I decided to be part of the Nihongo and Cultural Lessons for Nikkeijin.

I am very thankful for JFM and the Philippine Nikkei Jin Kai Rengokai for offering this course. Initially, I was worried if I could survive the course as I did not have

much prior Nihongo learning experiences. With the help of our sensei (teachers), my course mates and I have already obtained basic Nihongo skills. In just a short span of time, we have become able to engage in basic conversations in Nihongo! Now I can pick up on words and sentences when I watch Japanese anime or movies. I also teach my nieces and nephews what I learn in class. I hope that when I complete the course I will be able to communicate and write well. Everyone in the class is working hard despite busy schedules, as we are determined and excited to attend each class because we know that we will learn new things.

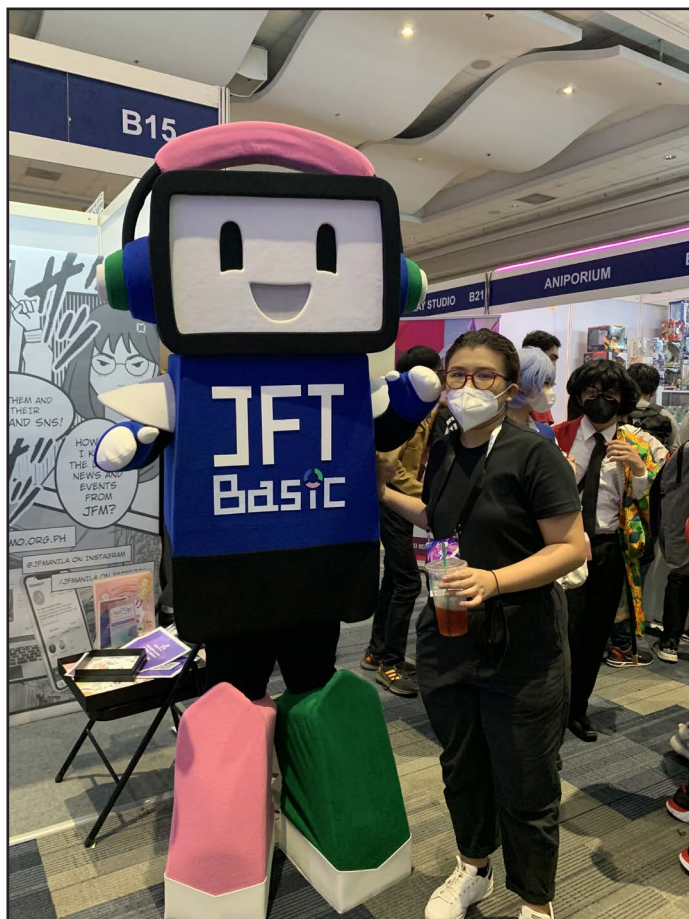
After I complete the course, I would like to visit Japan because one of my late great grandmother's wishes was to visit her hometown. When I make it there, I will visit her tomb and tell her all about my trip- how nice her hometown was and how I enjoyed Japanese culture and meeting Japanese people. I hope that after the course I will open a new chapter in my life and achieve more.

For all the people who made my Nihongo learning possible I would like to say どうもありがとうございます!



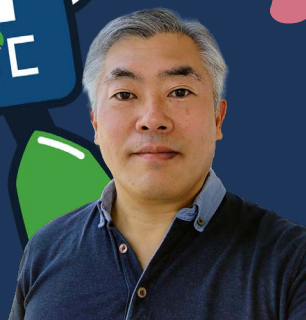
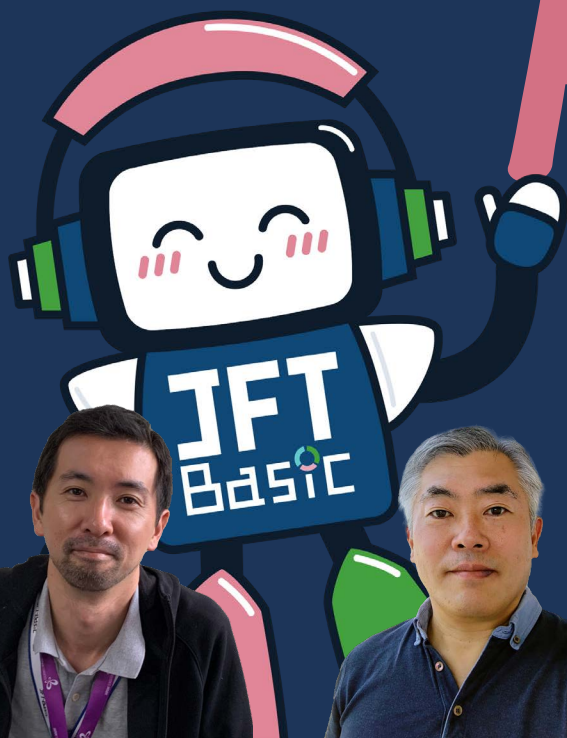
## JFT-BASIC KUN COME TO LIFE

In 2022, our very own JFT-Basic kun came to life. He made his first appearance at the Cosplay Mania 2022 held at the Convention Center SMX on October 2 and 3. Since then, he has been a regular visitor to our Facebook page (Irodori: Japanese for Life in Japan by JFM). Visit our Facebook, learn Nihongo with JFT-Basic kun, and take the JFT-Basic Exam!





# Hello! Hello!



## TANAKA Yojiro

みなさん、こんにちは!! 田中 洋二郎です。2022年4月にフィリピンに来ました。まだフィリピンのことは分からないことだらけ。皆さんにいろいろと教えてもらいたいです。ちなみに好きなフィリピン料理は「タホ」です。これから、どうぞよろしくお願いいたします。

## KUNO Gen

はじめまして。7月末に着任しました久野 元と申します。EPA研修の教務を担当します。これまでは、国際交流基金の仕事で、中等教育、高等教育、教師研修などに携わっていました。これからEPA研修やJFMのイベントなどを通して、フィリピンの学習者や先生方とお目にかかるのを楽しみにしています。どうぞよろしくお願いいたします。

## NISHIMURA Hisashi

はじめまして。西村 尚です。2022年7月からJFMで働いています。あかるくて、優しいフィリピンのみなさんと友達になりたいです。おいしいものをたくさん食べて、いろいろな所へ行きたいです。よろしく おねがいします。

## HAYASHI Tsuyako

10月末にフィリピンに来た林都矢子です。初めて来ました。2年間日本の寒い冬に耐えなくていいのと、おいしい果物・きれいな海が楽しみです。どうぞよろしくお願いいたします。



## ABE Ayako

はじめまして! 阿部 紋子です。昨年まで10年間住んでいたセブからマニラに引っ越してきました。JFMでの仕事を通して、皆さんのお役に立てたら嬉しいです。よろしくお願いいたします。



## NYUI Kaori

みなさん、こんにちは! はじめまして。乳井 香織と申します。2022年の7月に来ました。またフィリピンで生活できて、とてもうれしいです! フィリピンの明るくてやさしい人々と美しい自然が大好きです。これからみなさんに会ってお話する時間が楽しみです。どうぞよろしくお願いいたします!



## HIRUTA Yasuyo

みなさん、はじめまして! 2022年6月からJFMに来ました蛭田 恭代です。EPA日本語講師としてパンデミック前に2回、その前にセブに少し滞在していたのでフィリピンはこれが4回目です。暑い気候、人々の暖かさ...フィリピンに戻ってきた!と感じています。様々なことに挑戦し、そこで出会いを楽しんでいきたいと思っています。どうぞよろしくお願いいたします。

## Kelly Kathlene Ko

Hi, I'm Kelly - Program Coordinator for the Course on Japan for High School. I love Japanese tea and history. I started working at the JFM in December 2021, but I've already learned a lot and am excited to discover more. Yoroshiku onegaishimasu!



## ABOUT NIHONGOJIN SUPPORT TEAM

The Nihongojin Support (NS) Team provides support and means to connect the community of Nihongo learners, teachers, and institutions in the Philippines. Building a reflective professional community of Nihongo teachers in the Philippines is the primary goal of the NS Team. Supporting the goal, the team has been focusing on teacher capacity development by utilizing the Marugoto courses as a platform. Related activities include the Study Group: Sensei no Wa (Teachers' Circle), and the bi-annual Philippine Nihongo Teachers' Forum (PNTF). Meanwhile, learners can enroll in different course levels (A1 and A2 for basic users) that are based on the JF Standard for Japanese Language Education. The team also hosts events for Nihongo learners such as the Nihongo Speech Contest and Oshaberi Salon.

### Summary of the 36th Philippine Nihongo Teachers' Forum

- A**ctive professional community ALIVE!
- F**irst Hybrid Forum
- I**nteractive learning model
- N**ihongo speakers of diverse backgrounds
- I**nspiring presentations, facilitation and sharing
- T**eachers' leadership and excellent teamwork
- E**ngaging and highly energizing



## 35TH AND 36TH NIHONGO TEACHERS' FORUM

The Philippine Nihongo Teachers' Forum (PNTF) is a bi-annual event for Filipino Nihongo teachers to share information on their professional development. The forum serves as a venue for (1) discussion on recent developments in Japanese language education, (2) exchange of ideas and resources, and (3) professional community building. Every year, the first PNTF is hosted by JFM and the second one is hosted by the Association of Filipino Nihongo Teachers (AFINITE).

The 35th PNTF was conducted online on May 21 under the theme of "Love teaching? Let's step up together! Building Reflective Professional Communities of Nihongo Teachers." The 36th PNTF was conducted in a hybrid

setting, online and on-site, under the theme of "Towards a Student-Centered Japanese Language Classrooms: Using Irodori for Filipino Learners." The on-site venue was at the Filipino-Japanese Foundation of Northern Luzon, Inc. (also known as Abong) in Baguio City. In her concluding remarks at the 36th PNTF, Fujimitsu Yuko sensei, Senior Japanese Language Education Advisor, colorfully described AFINITE's vibrant mentoring culture to nurture Nihongo teaching skills of younger generations of teachers and its members' commitment to professional development. Through their work, JFM is looking forward to working with Filipinos who are proud to be able to speak Japanese. Good job, sensei!





## SENSEI NO WA 先生の輪



The theme for the June session focused on reflective practice and creating one's own challenge action plan. Participants from different language schools, institutions, training centers, and universities were introduced to JFM's own Reflective Practice Study Group composed of the Marugoto Teachers who shared their own self assessments and experiences on teaching Marugoto. Participants were then encouraged to share their own experiences, self-

assessment, and exchange ideas with their peers to support effective teaching.

Sensei no Wa (先生の輪: Teachers' Circle) is a platform or event developed with the aim of facilitating information exchange and community and network building. It is open to all levels of Japanese language teachers and has been conducted every quarter.

*"Being able to listen to other sensei's challenges and insights. It feels 'kokorozuyoi' being in this community to have a better quality of Japanese education in the Philippines together"*

*"Sometimes I get overwhelmed by the language. I feel like I am in the room with many great people and I am the weakest link (which I think is true) and that I need to keep up BUT EVERYONE is very welcoming and very warm so I just need to motivate myself because this opportunity is very educational for me."*

## LET'S TALK: OSHABERI SALON

Oshaberi Salon is a free event where Nihongo learners who are interested in a particular topic can improve their Nihongo conversational skills with other participants. The goal of this activity is to provide an opportunity for Nihongo learners to experience and use the Japanese language, form new networks, and to discover something new about Japan and/or Nihongo.

This year, Oshaberi Salon was conducted online, focusing more on speaking Nihongo and being more accessible to other Nihongo learners. The first session

since the 2020 pandemic was done last September 22. This session's topic focused on the recent hobbies (最近の趣味) of basic level Nihongo learners. Most of the participants were JLPT N4 level and bonded easily with the topics relating to manga and anime. The same topic was used by intermediate to advanced level Nihongo learners with an emphasis on the participants' day to day routine.

For more information on the latest topics and registration dates, please visit the JFM website and Facebook page.

おしゃべりサロン JAPAN FOUNDATION

### OSHABERI SALON (ONLINE)

TOPIC: RECENT HOBBIES (最近の趣味)  
"OSHABERI SALON" IS AN EVENT WHERE JAPANESE LANGUAGE LEARNERS CAN PRACTICE THEIR CONVERSATIONAL SKILLS WITH OTHER PARTICIPANTS WHO ARE INTERESTED IN A CERTAIN TOPIC.

REQUIREMENTS:  
1. PARTICIPANTS MUST BE AT LEAST A HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT  
2. PARTICIPANTS MUST HAVE NihONGO EXPERIENCE

**22 SEPTEMBER 2022**  
6:00 PM TO 7:00 PM

REGISTER AT [BIT.LY/OSHABERISALON0922](http://bit.ly/OSHABERISALON0922) | FIRST 30 PARTICIPANTS ONLY

おしゃべりサロン JAPAN FOUNDATION

### OSHABERI SALON (ONLINE)

## Halloween

"OSHABERI SALON" IS AN EVENT WHERE JAPANESE LANGUAGE LEARNERS CAN PRACTICE THEIR CONVERSATIONAL SKILLS WITH OTHER PARTICIPANTS WHO ARE INTERESTED IN A CERTAIN TOPIC.

REQUIREMENTS:  
1. PARTICIPANTS MUST BE AT LEAST A HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT  
2. PARTICIPANTS MUST HAVE INTERMEDIATE TO ADVANCE NihONGO EXPERIENCE

**3 NOVEMBER 2022**  
6:00 PM TO 7:00 PM

Register at [bit.ly/OshaberiSalon1103](http://bit.ly/OshaberiSalon1103)

おしゃべりサロン JAPAN FOUNDATION

### OSHABERI SALON (ONLINE)

## KANJI OF THE YEAR (今年の漢字)

"OSHABERI SALON" IS AN EVENT WHERE JAPANESE LANGUAGE LEARNERS CAN PRACTICE THEIR CONVERSATIONAL SKILLS WITH OTHER PARTICIPANTS WHO ARE INTERESTED IN A CERTAIN TOPIC.

REQUIREMENTS:  
1. PARTICIPANTS MUST BE AT LEAST A HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT  
2. PARTICIPANTS MUST HAVE INTERMEDIATE TO ADVANCE NihONGO EXPERIENCE

**15 DECEMBER 2022**  
6:00 PM TO 7:15 PM

Register at [tinyurl.com/OshaberiSalon1215](http://tinyurl.com/OshaberiSalon1215)

## LEARN WITH MARUGOTO

Through the NS Team, JFM provides an online-course for the general learners (beginner level) using the JF e-Learning Site Minato and “MARUGOTO: Japanese Language and Culture.” Marugoto is a course book developed by The Japan Foundation; it focuses on communication, understanding, and respecting other cultures. JFM’s Marugoto classes usually have two parts: Katsudoo and Rikai. Katsudoo is focused on practical communication skills, while Rikai is focused on the sentence structure of the Japanese language. The new batch is going to start in January 2023.



Scan the QR Code to learn more about MARUGOTO and take the course on-line!



JAPAN FOUNDATION

にほんごフィエスタ

# NIHONGO FIESTA 2023

50th Nihongo  
Speech Contest

+

Special  
Performance

25 FEBRUARY 2023, SATURDAY  
SHANGRI-LA PLAZA



Scan the QR Code  
to visit the  
NIHONGO  
FIESTA  
event page on  
Facebook!

## NIHONGO FIESTA 2023

The JFM is delighted to hold a face-to-face Nihongo Fiesta at Shangri-La Plaza Mall, Mandaluyong City on February 25, 2023! This event offers the general public an opportunity to experience different activities relating to Japanese language, arts, and culture. It will feature the videos for the fourth Nihongo Video Contest (NiViCon)

created by Filipino high school student finalists, a powerful Taiko performance, as well as the main event: the Nihongo Speech Contest. This year marks the 50th anniversary of the Speech Contest in the Philippines. For more details, visit our event page on our Facebook!



# NIHONGOJIN STORIES

Young or old, just a budding student or already a seasoned professional, Nihongojins come from all walks of life. Despite a variety of differences, they are all united by one goal—that is, to expand their world through learning Japanese. This is what Nihongojin Stories are all about: depicting the struggles and successes of those who faced the challenge head on. This edition of Nihongojin Connect! features three stories of Nihongojin from all three regions of the Philippines - Luzon, Visayas, and Mindanao- with one story that features learning Nihongo in the midst of the pandemic. May our fellow Nihongojins be inspired through their stories, and know that they are not alone in this journey.



## FROM A DISTANCE, I AM LEARNING JAPANESE

BY NEL JADE

NIHONGO LEARNER OF 6 YEARS FROM BOTOLAN, ZAMBALES



My name is Nel and I am a Japanese language learner. I live in Botolan, a small town in the province of Zambales, right along the West Sea coast. I first took an interest in studying Japanese in 2012 while I was living in the Middle East. It was my big dream to be able to speak a third language. After dipping my toes in the beginner level Kanji, I realized that I just cannot casually study a language if I want to be proficient in it. There is no shortcut to memorizing words or grammar. I have to live and breathe Japanese if I want to reach my goal. So when I eventually returned to the Philippines in 2013, I was so glad to find The Japan Foundation in Makati. They even have a library.

As part of my immersion, I keep traveling back and forth from Botolan to Makati to immerse myself in various

activities the Japan Foundation thoughtfully set up for learners. In my first Oshaberi Salon, I had a taste of Japan's culture while discussing with other learners of Japanese language about anime. This event is where I first learned how to properly do the 挨拶 (Aisatsu: greeting) and 自己紹介 (Jikoshoukai: self-introduction).

I love eating at a ラーメン屋 (Ramen-ya: ramen shop), not just to appreciate the flavors but also to admire the beautifully designed 暖簾 (Noren: curtain) hanging in front of the shops. Inspired by the Japanese movie, Flying Colors, I put up a lot of post-its around my house to help familiarize myself with the Japanese words that say, for instance, about time or the days of the week. Another great way where I immersed myself in the language is by watching Japanese movies at the Trinoma cinemas for the Asean-Japan TV Festival 2017. But the best is yet to come! I was one of the lucky people to get tickets to the ANA-Yose Rakugo (Japanese sit-down comedy) in English. It was an experience that I could not forget because the monologues are very relatable and extremely funny. It made me realize that comedy knows no cultural barrier. Human experiences are universal. Moreover, what made it very memorable is my short meeting and photo opportunity with the fine Rakugo artists backstage.

Finally, even though my hometown's internet is spotty, I was so glad to stumble upon the Minato Online Learning website when it was in its early years. I was very fortunate to enroll myself for A1-1 level with a Japanese tutor support in August 2016. The highlight of my days, back then as a distance learner, is whenever I meet my kind and generous Minato teachers who are in Japan via Zoom. My teachers made the Friday online class fun and engaging. It was a beautiful experience! I keep trying to this day to enjoy the process of learning a language that I grew to love. To be multilingual is a beautiful thing.



## JAPANESE LANGUAGE: WINDOWS TO THE JAPANESE KALEIDOSCOPE WORLD

BY HIRAYA MANAWARI

NIHONGO LEARNER OF 6 YEARS FROM ROMBLON AND QUEZON CITY, NCR

*“Peek into another world through your eyes, immerse through its language.”*

My brother and I grew up learning three different languages: Filipino (our mother tongue), English (used in academics), and Bisaya (a language native to one of our provinces). Learning them was intrinsic – it did not take any effort at all thanks to my still developing young brain. As we get older, learning a new language becomes much harder; it requires much effort, time and persistence. The question then, will not be “How”, but “Why”.

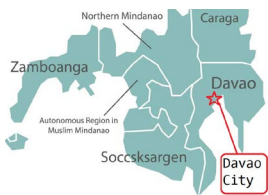
This “Why” for us began with watching Japanese anime. We wanted to watch anime without reading the subtitles, so we started to learn simple expressions. We would often find ourselves code-switching between these two languages in daily interactions. “Can you make ichigo shake?” “Hai!”

Learning Nihongo was both interesting and challenging. In the process of learning how to write in Nihongo, we were transported back to our kindergarten days when we were repeatedly practicing strokes and writing

each letter as accurately and neatly as possible. There were a lot of eraser crumbs and pencil shavings – but the rigorous practice was all worth it. The writing practice helped us remember the words but also the history behind the calligraphy and the development of the system. It was like a mirror of a thousand-year history – within his fingertips.

Learning the spoken Nihongo was one of the most interesting journeys as Nihongo is commonly used in Anime. My brother progressed further in studying Nihongo. From listening to simple dialogues in Anime, he carried on listening to songs, short movie clips and TV talk shows. He became familiar with understanding the lines, and reading between these lines. He even understood jokes, and made them himself. And when that happened, this journey opened the door to a whole new world.

Through learning the language, we came to learn about the uniqueness of Japan and its people, and everything in between. Learning the language allows us to visit Japan and come back swiftly, anytime as we pleased. And we continue to understand Japan better and completely immerse ourselves in it.



## A CERTAIN COLLEGE FRESHMAN’S JAPANESE LANGUAGE PROFICIENCY STORY

BY LEIGH GABRIELLE A. ROQUE

NIHONGO LEARNER OF 10 YEARS FROM DAVAO CITY, MINDANAO

I made my first contact with Nihongo through-yes, as you would expect–Japanese Anime. I started with local dubs, but once I found the Japanese-dubbed versions, there was no going back. I entered a severe otaku phase during grade school. It got worse in my junior high years as I became interested in every otaku’s worst nightmare: un-subbed content–visual novels and niche cooking shows! Unlike most people that would simply find subbed content to consume, I decided to power through.

I took my first JLPT (N5) in December 2017. To my delight I passed it so I continued to challenge myself until I hit the wall with N2 in July 2019. Between my N5 and N4 tests, I visited Japan. I was already out of my otaku phase, so I was there as a tourist with pure admiration for the places I

was able to visit. It was spring and the cherry blossoms had just finished blooming. The cool spring wind and bright scenery really felt like a breath of fresh air.

As they say, where there’s a will, there’s a way. Although I have not studied Nihongo much over the past three years, I plan to retake JLPT N2 in 2023. Learning is a lifelong process. I will enjoy the process and hopefully everyone who will be reading will do the same.





# LEARNING NIHONGO IN THE MIDST OF PANDEMIC

BY MIGS

NIHONGO LEARNER OF 3.5 YEARS FROM PASIG, METRO MANILA

Sushi, samurai, anime, punctuality, discipline...they are some of the most common answers people give when asked to think about Japanese culture. For me, the first thing that pops up is the Nihongo.

I grew up watching Japanese anime, such as Voltes V, Naruto, and Kamen Rider, to name a few.

While these shows were dubbed in English or Filipino, you can still hear Nihongo in the opening and ending songs, or when they say phrases like henshin (変身:Transformation) and kage bunshin (影分身:shadow clone). I tried studying Hiragana and Katakana but it was difficult without proper guidance. In my last year at college (2019), my classmates and I found a free Japanese language course and decided to jump at the opportunity. As the course progressed, some of the students dropped out but we stayed and completed the course. That same year, I took the JLPT N5 and passed it.

I continued my study through the pandemic. Around the middle of 2021, I mustered up the courage and decided to find online conversation groups to practice my spoken Japanese. I browsed through Reddit and Twitter until I finally found the Sakura Community founded by Mari-san who lives in Tokyo. The most memorable experience from being part of the community was when I was invited to share my Japanese learning journey on Sakura Tips YouTube channel. While my speaking ability was far from perfect, it helped me get out of my comfort zone.

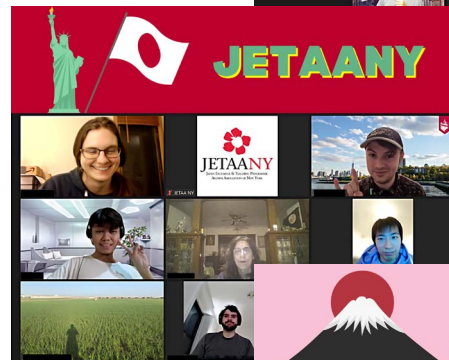
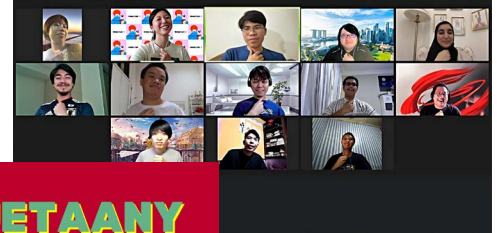
With the courage and the network of people gained from there, I was able to discover other communities, such as Saya's Global Café, the JET Alumni Association of New York (JETAANY) community, and Nihongo Salon Irori. Through these platforms, I was able to attend very interesting events such as eikaiwa (英会話:English conversation) sessions with Japanese high school students from Tokyo and Hiroshima and talk with them about how they spend their days. I also learned about unique local specialties from Shizuoka, such as famous cherry beans potatoes and Abe river fireworks, fun places to go in Hokkaido, and what it is like to work as an Assistant Language Teacher (ALT) in Japan.

Learning Nihongo opened a gate to expand my horizons through international and cultural exchange while staying in the Philippines. Despite the pandemic, I saw how people can truly connect with, understand, and support each other if they wish to, no matter where they are on the globe. It helped me appreciate the importance of embracing our

own set of unique qualities and differences. It helped me see the world in a better light.



GLOBAL  
CAFE



## ABOUT CJH TEAM

The Course on Japan for High School (CJH) Program was created by The Japan Foundation, Manila in response to the Department of Education's Bureau of Secondary Education Memorandum No. 560, s. 2008, or the Implementation of the Special Program in Foreign Language (SPFL), with Nihongo as one of the languages offered in the program.

The CJH Program has two distinct features, including various training for high school Nihongo teachers and the creation of enTree Halina Be a Nihongojin, a set of teaching materials exclusively designed for Filipino high school students. When the program began, only 13 schools were part of it. In 2022, three new schools joined the CJH community, bringing the total number of Philippines high schools currently offering Nihongo classes to 59.



## CJH BATCH 5 GOES TO JAPAN!

After a long time of waiting, 21 teachers from the fifth batch of CJH trainees finally attended the Immersion program in Japan from August 15-26, 2022. This program is the last stage of the two-year CJH training, where the teachers are required to apply what they have learned from the training that they have participated so far. The purpose of the Immersion Program includes the following: to deepen knowledge about Japanese society and culture, and to collect materials and information for creating supplementary teaching materials to be used at their respective Japanese language classes back in the Philippines.

The teachers went on fieldwork in Kyoto and Tokyo with Japanese university students, experienced 生け花 (ikebana: flower arrangement) and 茶道 (sadou: tea ceremony), visited host families' homes, as well as a

Japanese secondary school. In addition to these, the teachers also roamed around in Kita-urawa near the Nihongo Kokusai Center, where they gathered materials for their presentations about "The Japan that I Discovered." and, indeed, they have found and realized many things in Japan. It was the first time they used the language they had studied and taught for so long in a real, authentic setting. While the teachers struggled to understand and use it, they challenged themselves and became more confident because of their experiences.

Upon their return from the Immersion Program, most of the trainees said that they will go back to visit Japan again someday. It is our hope that the teachers were able to learn a lot during their stay and they will share what they learned with their students.





### NEW INSTRUCTORS FOR CJH

On April 30 and May 14, the CJH Team conducted training for instructor candidates for Batch 6. Ten candidates - five from Luzon and five from Visayas - underwent the hybrid training. On the first day of the training, which was held online, they reviewed the enTree module and deepened their understanding of the materials. The second day of the training was conducted in a face-to-face setting at two locations NCR and Cebu. The training covered essential know-how required by CJH instructors, such as how to

create a video, summarize enTree, and facilitate a demo lecture.

Before the training, the candidates were trainees from Batches 4 and 5. Initially, some of them expressed nervousness and lack of confidence in becoming instructors. With the successful completion of the training, they are now equipped to take on the responsibility of sharing their knowledge and skills to the new Batch 6 trainees. We believe in you!

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### SUMMER INTENSIVE TRAINING (BATCH 6)

On August 22, 2022, 49 Filipino teachers started the school year as new Japanese language teachers at their public high schools. They are the sixth batch of CJH Teachers and are the latest additions to the 110-strong roster of Japanese language high school teachers in CJH schools. With this new batch, the number of total CJH schools in the country has increased to 59.

The teachers are completers of the Summer Intensive Training, a five-week training program for high school Japanese language teachers, held from July 4 to August 5. Majority of the training was held online, with only the Opening and Closing Ceremonies held face-to-face. The training had a demanding schedule, taking place 6 hours a day, Monday through Friday.

It was divided into two parts: first was to develop the Japanese language proficiency required to be a Japanese language teacher by using The Japan Foundation's textbook Marugoto, and Minato, an online self-study course. Second, was to focus on concept, usage, and teaching methods for the enTree: Halina Be a Nihongojin!, the module used



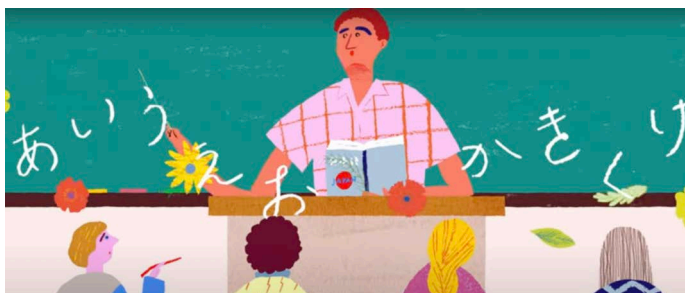
## ひろがれ! CJH: COURSE ON JAPAN FOR HIGH SCHOOL

as a Japanese language textbook for high schools in the Philippines.

Some of the instructors were also past CJH trainees from the previous batches. Under the warm guidance of their senpai, and with the encouragement of their peers, the trainees quickly mastered the contents of the training and were able to confidently teach a new language inside their classrooms.

The training is far from over yet though, as the trainees still have to face the Follow-Through Training from September 2022 to May 2023, followed by the second Summer Intensive Training, and the second follow-through training the year after that.

Batch 6 先生たち、がんばりましょう!



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# VOICE OF AN URAWA TRAINING PARTICIPANT

BY CHARRY S. SARMIENTO

PITOGO HIGH SCHOOL, CJH BATCH 4

COURSE: JAPANESE-LANGUAGE PROGRAM (DISPATCH PERIOD: JULY 4-AUGUST 17, 2022)



I went to Japan to attend the Japanese-Language Program and met wonderful Japanese teachers and thirty-nine other participants from around the world. Despite our diverse backgrounds, we came together, bound by one language. Over the six weeks of our stay in Urawa, the language center became our home and we became each other's family.

Aside from language classes, we learned Japanese culture through cultural workshops like (e.g., wadaiko, kamigiri, and furoshiki), and field trips where we took part in tea ceremony and hand-painted our very own traditional *Kaga Hachiman Okiagari* (colorful doll). What really left a big impression was our project work, in which we were tasked to discover the *mieru bunka* (visible cultural markers) and the *mienai bunka* (invisible cultural markers) of Japan. Through the project, I have come to know Japan, the Japanese people, and its culture even more.

I was amazed by how Japan is not just the progressive country like how the world sees it, but it is a country just like the Philippines that continues to strive. Majority may think that Japan and the Philippines are in the

extreme opposite, but during my six weeks stay, I have come to see how similar these two countries are. For example, Japanese and Filipinos are both very hospitable and both have warm hearts especially for strangers in need. There is more to Japan than meets the eye.

As they say, experience is the best teacher. I want to believe that I became better, more confident in my Nihongo. I now know new methods and strategies on how to teach the language. My overall understanding about Japan becomes clearer, which will benefit me as a history teacher. Lastly, I can say that my experience is nothing but happy memories. I was able to visit new place like Kanazawa and Nikko, discover new things that I can only experience in Japan (like the different *matsuri* [festivals] in Tokyo and Saitama), book shopping with my former CJH teachers, and eat mouth-watering Japanese sweets, the famous wagyu, and my new favorite raw shirasu-don. I cannot remember a day that I did not smile or laugh. It was indeed a beautiful hot summer in Japan. I came home with tans and sunburns and a few pounds added to my weight, but I also brought home with me the warm feeling in my heart.

## TEACHER TRAINING IN URAWA, JAPAN

The Japan Foundation Japanese-Language Institute, Urawa offers training opportunities in Japan to Filipino Nihongo teachers. The available on-site courses for Filipino Nihongo teachers are:

- 1) Basic Training Program (six-month program)
- 2) Japanese-Language Program (six-week program)
- 3) Comprehensive Japanese Teaching Method Program
- 4) Japanese Teaching Methods Program for Teachers of Specified Skilled Worker Candidates (one-month program)



## ABOUT NIHONGO PARTNERS PROGRAM

After a two-year hiatus due to the pandemic, the Nihongo Partners (NP) Program in the Philippines has resumed with the arrival of 14 NPs on September 30. This program dispatches Japanese citizens mainly to secondary schools in order to support the educational activities of the local Japanese-Language teachers and to spread the charms of the Japanese language and cultures through their learning

support and cultural activities in and outside the classroom. After a week-long orientation in Manila, nine NPs were dispatched to different parts of Metro Manila and five NPs were dispatched to Cebu. They will work in assigned public schools for six months until March 2023. We wish our NIHONGO Partners all the best!



# MEET OUR NIHONGO PARTNERS!

**Name: Renon Nonoue**

**Assigned School: Captain Albert Aguilar National High School in Las Piñas, Metro Manila.**

In Japan, I am a university student majoring in Filipino in the School of Foreign Studies. My career aspiration is to teach social studies in high school. In my sophomore year in university, I met children who have roots outside of Japan. The encounter inspired me to experience various education settings and become a compassionate and broad-minded teacher who is conscious that each student has his/her own unique background and upbringing. This is why I applied to this program.

As a NIHONGO partner, I would like to provide meaningful support for the futures of students and teachers I will be working with. In my effort to promote mutual respect for each other's culture, I hope to serve as a bridge between Japan and the Philippines. In the next six months, I will work hard every day so that people I meet will find Japan interesting and will want NIHONGO partners to come to their schools and communities again.



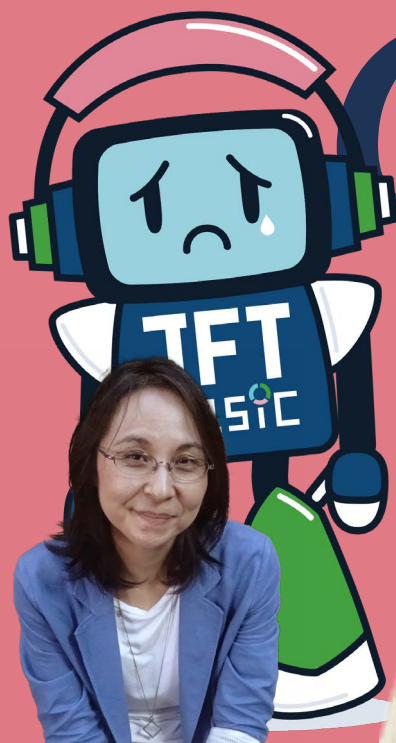
**Name: Hiromu Mitabe**

**Assigned Schools: Compostela National High School and Compostela Science and Technology High School in Cebu**

I applied to the NIHONGO Partners Program as I have always been interested in education programs for children who have roots outside of Japan and in international cultural exchange. In the Philippines, I look forward to meeting many people and making as many friends as possible. Through the interactions with the new people I meet, I hope to deepen my understanding of their cultures and languages, and I hope they can also learn from me. Upon my return to Japan, I would like to work in the education sector where I can give back what I have learned here. I envision my role here is to be a bridge that connects Japan and the Philippines by sharing valuable experiences I will have in the next six months as a NIHONGO partner.







# Goodbye! Goodbye!



**IMAMURA Michiko**

JFMで日本語の仕事をして、たくさんの人に出会うことができました。みなさんとの出会いに感謝の気持ちでいっぱいです。ありがとうございました!また、お会いしましょう。



**MUTA Aya**

3年間お世話になりました。みなさんと新しいことにチャレンジできて、とても楽しかったです。みなさんのやさしい笑顔、わすれません!またいつかフィリピンに帰ってきたいです。ありがとうございました。どうぞお元気です!! Maraming salamat sa inyong lahat!



**NAMIKI Kanami**

3年半、大変お世話になりました! 私は、マニラ日本文化センターでの文化芸術事業を担当してきましたが、いろいろな経験をさせてもらい、とても楽しかったです。これまで日本映画祭に参加しサポートしてくださった皆さん、ありがとうございました。またどこかでお会いしましょう!



**MATSUSHITA Kayo**

皆様、2年半の間大変お世話になりました。フィリピンの方々の優しさと明るさにもいつも助けられてきました。Hinahangad ko ang tagumpay ninyong lahat. 皆様のご幸運を祈っております。ありがとうございました。Maraming salamat po!



**KAWAMURA Masashi**

赴任から早くも3年間が過ぎ去ってしまいました。コロナの影響で一時帰国したり、働き方が大きく変わったりと、いろいろなことがありましたが、こうやって乗り越えられたのも皆さんのおかげです。また戻ってくると思うので、その際はまたお会いしましょう! Maraming salamat at hanggang sa muli!



**IDE Gohei**

3年間たいへんお世話になりました。2年目からは、コロナの影響ですべてオンラインになってしまい、みなさんと会う機会がなかったのがとても残念です。いつも、みなさんの明るさとエネルギーに元気をもらっていました。みなさんとまた会える日を楽しみにしています。ありがとうございました



WOW!  
25 YEARS!



**Cecilia Aquino**

Mrs. Aquino had been with JFM since its establishment in 1996. For over 25 years, she looked after newcomers to JFM with motherly affection. Her role in successful implementation of many projects, especially the Japan Language Proficiency Test (JLPT), cannot be understated. Mrs. Aquino, thank you for your long years of service.



## ABOUT EPA TEAM



“シンリソウ” is a slogan for EPA Japanese language lecturers this year. It is coined from the thematic concept, “新しい理解と総合日本語強化の授業 (New Angles to Comprehension and Comprehensive Strengthening of Nihongo Skills).” The EPA team is working tirelessly to prepare nurse and care worker candidates for their upcoming journeys in Japan

The Japan Foundation, Manila implements a six-month special intensive Japanese language course for nurse and care worker candidates who will work in Japan and aim to pass national examinations there as professionals under the Japan-Philippines Economic Partnership Agreement (JPEPA). The training program is designed to equip the learners with Japanese language skills that they can use at their workplaces, such as hospitals and care giving facilities in Japan, as well as the knowhow to adapt to a new culture and society which is different from their own.

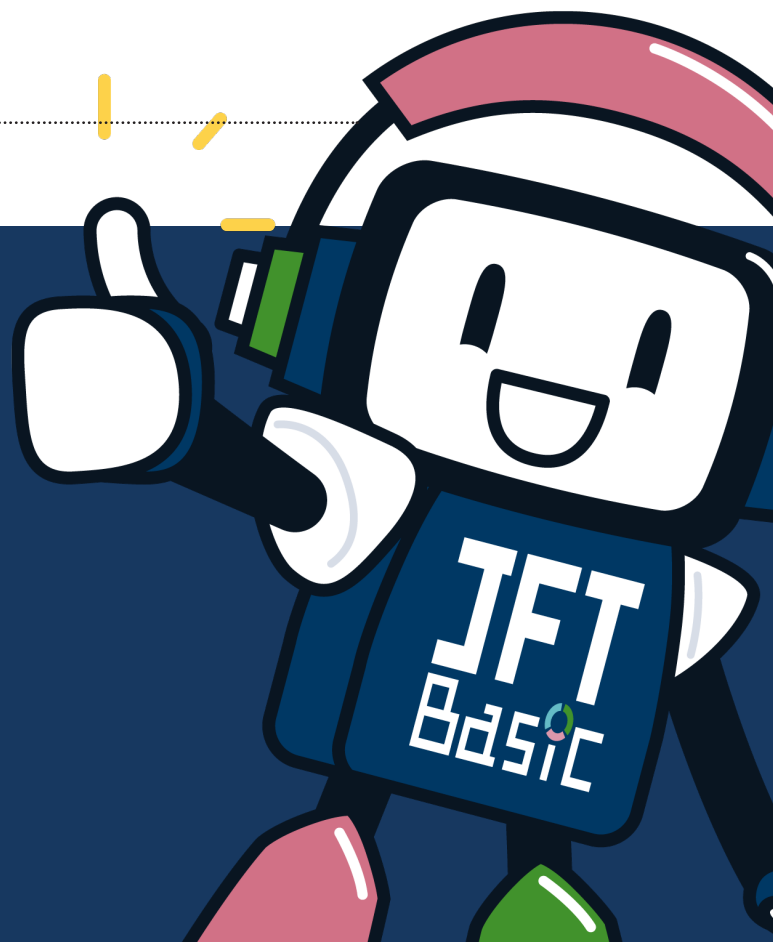
The EPA Team is tasked to teach and support candidates. This year, approximately 50 staff members,

comprised of Japanese language advisors, Japanese lecturers, Filipino lecturers, and coordinators, are involved in the training process.

To prepare for Batch 15, JPEPA course lecturers frequently got together on-line and off-line in September and October and studied effective ways of teaching and managing the course. Batch 15 started on November 16, 2022. The candidates are learning Japanese enthusiastically and are improving their Japanese skills day by day to prepare themselves for their upcoming new and exciting chapter in life.

Thanks for reading  
Nihongojin Connect!  
ありがとうございます!

See you soon!  
またね!



## MESSAGE FROM THE DIRECTOR



This is the first edition of Nihongojin Connect! since the start of the current Administration of the Philippine government. After two long years of home-based learning, in-person learning has finally been resumed in schools across the country.

Face-to-face Nihongo learning outside formal school settings have also slowly started to come back. The Japan Foundation has resumed the Nihongo Partners Program, dispatching 14 Nihongo Partners (9th Batch) to the designated high schools at the end of September 2022. Lastly, the tests for all JLPT levels (NI-N5) was finally conducted in December 2022 for the first time in three years! Despite the challenges brought by the pandemic, so many have stayed with their Nihongo learning journeys. In the “New-Normal” era, the Japan Foundation, Manila will continue to stand with all Nihongojin to get through the pandemic-related challenges and respond to the new learning needs.

**SUZUKI Ben**

Director  
The Japan Foundation, Manila



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