

Building the Future Today – A Report from SWY24 –



Duran Moy (New Zealand)

The SWY experience is a life-defining one. That much goes without saying. For the 300 participants of onboard the Fuji Maru for SWY24 it was no exception. This year delegates from Bahrain, Brazil, Canada, Egypt, Japan, India, New Zealand, Peru, Russia, Spain, Sri Lanka, Turkey, and Venezuela headed west from the Nippon towards sub-continental Asia. We travelled via Singapore through the bustling shipping lanes of the Malacca Straits and into the warm Bay of Bengal waters. We were bound for Chennai, India and Colombo, Sri Lanka.

This year's theme was 'Youth Contribution to Society.' We pursued this theme from the very outset. Before long the Fuji Maru was teeming with committees, seminar groups, National Presentations, port-of-call preparations, meetings, morning runs and late night fun. We embraced the spirit of goodwill and cooperation with vigour and earnestness. We spent long days deliberating delicate issues from climate change to animal welfare. We patiently teased out consensus on cultural identity and leadership.

Our onboard Course Discussion modules grounded the whole experience in an experiential learning environment. We were led by expert advisors in creating new knowledge to tackle old problems. If nothing more, these sessions developed our decision-making skills and our problem-solving abilities. These are the very skills which will underpin the multilateral approach to global issues such as development, environment and poverty to name a few.

A defining feature of any SWY voyage is the sense of community which inevitably develops between all participants – PYs and administrative staff alike. We all individually contribute to an onboard identity. During our time at sea we evolve our own custom, ground rules and mutual understandings. We develop a SWY24 banner that galvanises us, particularly when we disembark on the ground at our Port-of-Call destinations. These moments rallied us together towards common goals. We may have had differing views on how to reach specific goals, but we shared the vision as a single batch of PYs to achieve them nonetheless.



For example, all PYs generously supported the Sri Lankan SWY Alumni Association's 'One More Child Goes To School' fundraising event. The purpose of the event was to raise enough funds to purchase two new computers for a rural school in Sri Lanka that we would visit as part of our port of call activities. An itinerary of PY performances was arranged. All delegations learned and then performed pieces as part of the itinerary. The attending audience gave generously to support the cause. Enough funds were successfully received from PY donations to allow the Sri Lankan delegation to purchase the new computers. These were gifted on the day of our visit to the school.

This is but to name a few of the examples of an environment rich in the exchange of ideas and not found wanting for lack of practical outcomes achieved as a result. Every delegation onboard was able to successfully complete a project which started merely as scraps of loose paper, even within our short time together. Japan created an art exhibition to build awareness around the recovery from the Great East Japan Earthquake. Canada and India organised gifts from around the

world for Indian villages outside Chennai which we had the privilege of visiting. Egypt and Spain collaborated to organise a summer youth exchange program abroad, and the list goes on. To this end, SWY24 was outcome focused. It was driven by a challenge to turn ideas into reality, to turn plans into progress.

To facilitate this progress was the inaugural Leadership Seminar Series, led by Advisor Haruko Ishii. The three seminars represented an opportunity to implement and trial the new method of concluding the official on-board program. This consisted of creating a space for PYs to reflect back on what their 46 day program meant for them on a personal level, and to evaluate the skills they had developed on-board; and to create a space for PYs to plan forward post-program activities and goals to continue the SWY24 theme. The end result was a series of action plans for life after SWY24. These concentrated on lighting



the spark from our SWY journey to the powder keg of SWY-themed ideas which we develop in our live as global citizens after disembarking Fuji Maru.

On a personal level my challenge has been in translating the SWY experience from the boat to life back in New Zealand. Onboard we are brimming with ideals and lofty ambitions for a more prosperous global society. But how do we achieve this in our own backyards miles apart from our SWY friends? This is a question which we all face, and one which we all seek to answer through our Alumni Associations. I have every confidence that ex-PYs do find answers to this challenge. We can see them in the pages of SWY News and in the incredible work that our SWY alumni achieve the world over.

My most enjoyable moment has been in learning more about my own New Zealand cultural identity through the increased understanding of other PYs' cultures. Their cultural stories help us tell our own. The combined effect of this feedback loop is empowering. It produces a level of tolerance and harmony that some dare to suggest is not possible. SWY shows that they are wrong.

As a global community of ex-PYs we should hope and act to continue the SWY program; to build on the progress of generations who have gone before us; and to ensure that the Cabinet Office's world leading youth outreach program continues into the future.





Post-Program Initiatives

Post-Program Activities Session onboard SWY24

Three representatives of the International Youth Exchange Organization of Japan (IYEO), Masaharu Koge (SWY3), Naoko Nakamura (SWY18), and Maiko Tsutsui (SWY22) joined the SWY24 program from February 19 to 23, 2012, to conduct the Post-Program Activities Promotion Sessions.

Objectives:

Two Post-Program Activities Promotion Sessions were implemented onboard with the following goals in mind:

- ✦ To enable the PY have deeper understanding of the International youth exchange program implemented by the Cabinet Office, IYEO and SWYAA.
- ✦ To introduce examples of post-program activities by ex-PYs as National Delegation Leader of each countries, administration and advisor in order to PY can understand how to take action for the post-program activities through IYEO or SWYAA after the disembarkation
- ✦ To tell the importance of utilization and cooperation with the SWYAA network and organizations which ex-PY belong to so that PYs can enrich the post-program activities.
- ✦ To understand there are many different ways how to get involve and how to take action for the post-program activities, so that PY can think post-program activities is not so difficult.
- ✦ To enable PY have an image what they want to do after the disembarkation through listening to the ex-PY's story.
- ✦ To exchange an idea for the post-program activities and to provide PY with an advice for the onboard activities.

Particularly, the post-program activity sessions of this time were designed to make the PYs have an image of the post-program activities and motivate the PYs so that they can take a first step for the post-program activities. During the two sessions, PYs experienced discussions, workshops and presentation by ex-PYs that enable them to deepen about the post-program activities.

Monday, February 20 (Session 1)

14:15 – 15:35	Introduction of the Post-Program Activities Sessions - Ice breaking (Quiz on SWY/ SWYAA) - Introduction of SWYAA and activities in each country - Introduction of ex-PYs on board SWY24 Presentation of personal post-program activities
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15:50 – 17:00	Small group sessions - Presentations on post-program activities by ex-PYs
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Wednesday, February 22 (Session 2)

9:35 – 10:55	Wrap up of the Session 1 Presentation of activities by SWYAA
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11:00 – 12:20	Small group session - Discussion by country or by region Summary of the session
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Post-Program Activities and Reunion by the Past Batches

SWY4 Reunion in Madrid, after 20 years!

On the occasion of the 20th Anniversary of the program, we, SWY4 (1992), had reunion in Madrid, Spain, from April 27 to May 1, 2012. About 40 ex-PYs, from ten different countries plus friends and families participated, and a total of more than 50 people met in Madrid. When we left the ship "Nippon Maru" 20 years ago there was no internet or Facebook, and many of us tried to keep contact by writing letters. The last two years we started using Facebook, and created our own "SWY4-group." Now we have found about 200 ex-PY from our program, much thanks to Eme Cuervo Pinto from Spain, now living in Germany.

Eme Cuervo Pinto and Mercedes Carreño Vicente from the Spanish delegation had prepared a wonderful program for us. We visited the Royal Palace, Prado museum and the Monastery of El Escorial. We also made a full day excursion to Toledo, where we were received by the Mayor Emiliano García-Page at the City Hall. His speech to us, comparing the city of Toledo with our Ship for World Youth program was very touched and we learnt that Toledo and Nara (Japan) are twin cities since 1972. The city of Toledo arranged a tour through the city including places which are not regularly visited and it was a real mix of all cultures in one. In the evenings we went to eat traditional Spanish food and to see Flamenco dancing. There was not much time for sleep - just like old good SWY times!

To meet all these friends after 20 year was a very special feeling. It



took just a short time and then all of us become twenty year younger talking memories laughing and made new memories for next time, because there will definitely be a next time. This success made us start planning for the 21 anniversary. This reunion really proves that the SWY program had change our life and made us more open minded for the world. It also proves that the program gave us lifelong friendships that we are now sharing with our children and families.

Until next time, take care out there and keep up the good work you're doing in the spirit of SWY!



SWY22 Tupendane Project

Tupendane was founded as one of the post-SWY activities of SWY22. This Swahili word “Tupendane” stands for “Let’s Share Our Love” which was the slogan for SWY22. Tupendane was sparked by the friendship between Kenyan and Japanese youth. Before joining SWY22, David Jonathan Okwiri, one of the Kenyan youths, established Eve’s Day Junior School in Dandra slum, Nairobi. Some Japanese youths who were inspired by Okwiri’s experience decided to support his school after the SWY program.

Tupendane never stop walking to the future

Facing a serious chronic financial problem, we have been struggling to overcome a tough situation. However, by investing a donation from an ex-JPY from SWY22, we finally solved the problem. A M-Pesa agency, as a new means of income generation, generates finance for hiring four teachers and monthly rent of the school building, which is

unavoidable expenditure of running the school. This cash plant allows us to proceed to and work on Tupendane future plans by providing stable monthly bread. In addition, this project contributes to the community in a way that it hires four mothers of children at the school. They were chosen through interviews, and they work at the agency seven days in a month with a responsibility to pay small monthly contribution to the school. We believe this makes them aware of responsibility to education, which would consequently lead to a virtuous cycle within the community.

Tupendane are now ready to go on to the next steps that are; finding a financial source for lunch monthly provided at the school; establishing foster parents system which allow the best performance students to a boarding school; building up “Tupendane Academy” For achieving those goals, we are willing to share our loves.

SWY23 Microfinance

Since disembarking from SWY23, a small but growing group of ex-PYs have been helping promote economic development and job creation in developing countries through microfinance. The group is based on the microfinance platform Kiva, and enables members to lend small amounts of money to individuals and groups so that they can for example buy more animals for milk, eggs or meat, invest in irrigation or go to university. Once the loan is repaid by the borrower, we are able to relend that same money to another group. So far the 25 members of the group have lent just over US\$13,000. Loans can be as

small as \$25 and we have made over 400 loans in total. Anyone can get involved, although we find that most ex-PYs don’t really understand the concept, if you are interested please look more closely at it and if you have any questions please ask on the group board. http://www.kiva.org/team/ship_for_world_youth

Dan Ednie (Australia), Frances Hennessy (Australia), Sam Taylor (*****), James Reade (*****), Yosuke Furuya (Japan), Ryosuke Kusano (Japan), Mary Aruga (Advisor).



Great East Japan Earthquake Relief Efforts – continued Donation Message from SWY Canada

The news on our SWY community has been difficult in the last few days. The great people at the IYEO have worked incredibly hard to make the ministry understand the importance of this fabulous program and its abilities at building bridges between nationalities all over the world. For all of us who have participated, it’s a bond that is easily understood, it is obviously not as easy for government officials to understand.

But today I want to write to you about some good news. After the horrific Tsunami happened last year in Northern Japan, we as a SWY Canada family, decided to donate money to the IYEO organized relief fund. As we were planning our donation we were aware that initially, after large disasters, people are quick to help, and the media keeps reminding people of what has happened. However when the media turns its attention to other things, and attention from the general public fades, the need for help continues. It was with this thinking that a promise was made to give another donation in approximately a year. With that plan in mind I want to announce to all of you, and to all those Japanese people affected, that Canada’s SWY alumni has donated another \$6,500 to the IYEO Tsunami Relief fund. We know that it will help tremendously and we know that the local SWY chapters will do their best to help many people. If it weren’t for this amazing SWY program, we would not have this money, so it only seemed natural to give back to the people who made it all possible.

I wish you all the best, sending you Love and positive energy from Montreal, Canada.

Louis P. Beauregard
SWY Canada Alumni president



IYEO Iwate:
picture from “Shakunage Matsuri” – IYEO volunteers lending out national costumes for the event.



IYEO Miyagi:
picture from “Onsen tour” to Yonezawa, invited by the IYEO Yamagata members.

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