



# JSPS SAN FRANCISCO NEWSLETTER

VOL. 58 MARCH 2023



## INSIDE THIS ISSUE

- 01 Successful Shift from Online to In-person Events - Post-Pandemic Life in 2023
- 08 Recent Activities
- 12 JSPS Fellow in America
- 14 Office Member Greeting
- 16 Education in DeSantis' New Florida

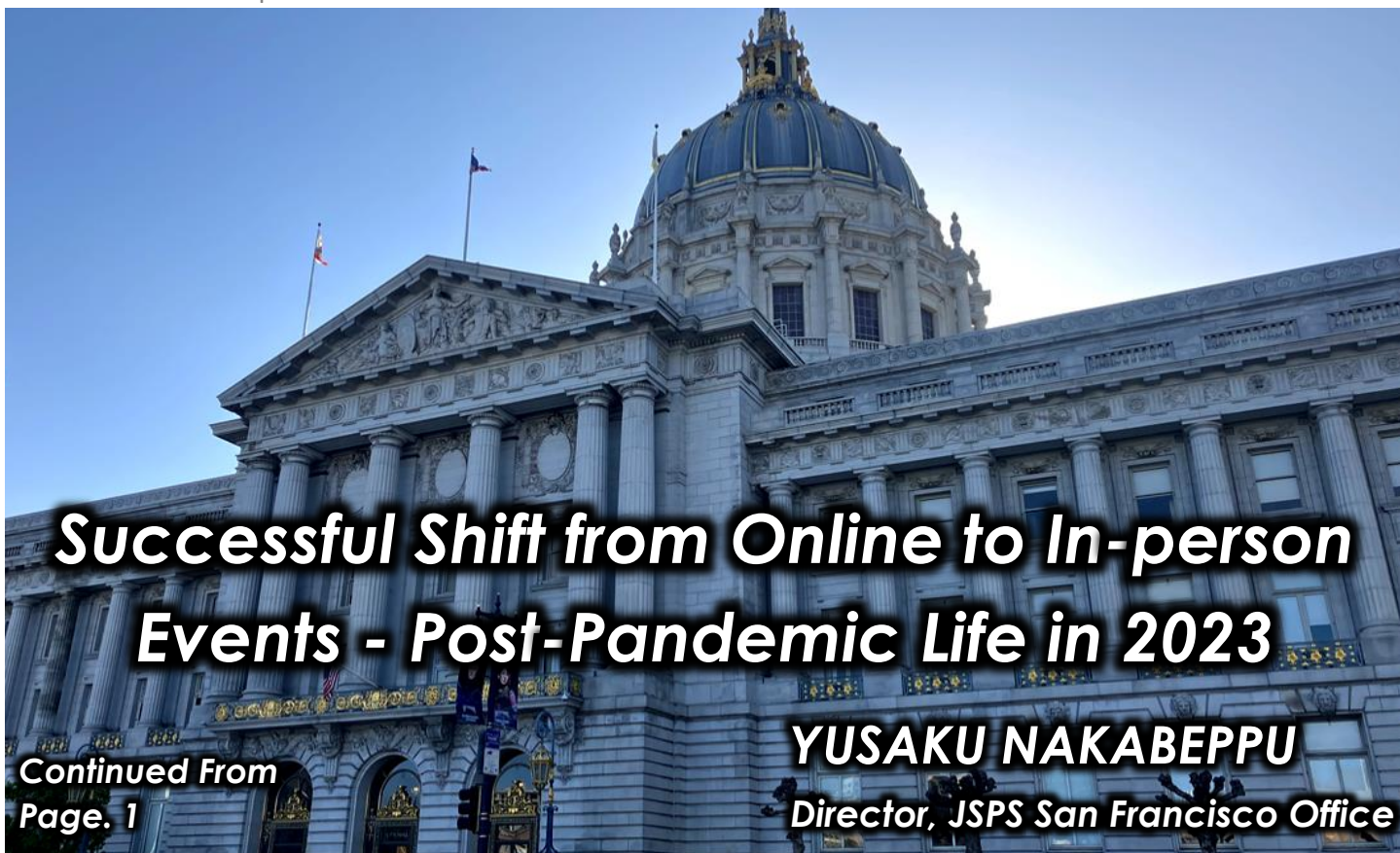


## Successful Shift from Online to In-person Events - Post-Pandemic Life in 2023

### *Social Events*

As we enter the year 2023, the pandemic seems to be finally coming to an end, and in-person meetings are becoming the norm in the Bay Area. The Consul General of Japan in San Francisco hosted a New Year's party for the first time in three years on January 18th.

[Read More on Page. 2](#)



# Successful Shift from Online to In-person Events - Post-Pandemic Life in 2023

Continued From  
Page. 1

**YUSAKU NAKABEPPU**  
Director, JSPS San Francisco Office

**T**his event was attended by nearly 150 guests including the director and deputy director of JSPS San Francisco Office (JSPS SFO), all of whom were happy to see each other again after a long absence. On February 23rd, a flag-raising ceremony was held at San Francisco City Hall on the occasion of the 63rd birthday of His Majesty the Emperor. Consul General Yasushi Noguchi gave an address, hoisted the Japanese flag, and received a proclamation from the Mayor of San Francisco. The ceremony was attended by the San Francisco Municipal Director of Ceremonies Ms. Maryam Muduroglu, representatives of the government of San Francisco, and the Japanese and Nikkei communities in the Bay Area including the JSPS SFO.

On January 20th, the Center for Japanese

Studies, at the University of California (UC), Berkeley, the longtime partner of JSPS SFO, welcomed internationally renowned composer Toshio Hosokawa to the campus as the recipient of the 6th Berkeley Japan Prize. At the award ceremony, Mr. Hosokawa gave an acceptance speech, followed by a performance of his *koto* music "Koto Uta" by Ms. Kyoko Kawamura. All of the members of our office were invited to the ceremony to enjoy his talk and the performance and we enjoyed pleasant conversation with Mr. Hosokawa at the reception. Detailed information about Mr. Hosokawa is available at the CJS website: <https://ieas.berkeley.edu/news/announcing-2023-berkeley-japan-prize-recipient>

*JUNBA Seminar*

Meanwhile, in the Bay Area, the abnormal weather since the end of last year has continued into the new year, with heavy rains and snowfall, flooding, gusty winds, power outages, and road disruptions having a major impact on daily life. In California, even in San Diego, the southern part of the state, chilly days are still continuing even in March. Snow is falling not only in mountainous areas but also in areas near the Pacific Ocean, a situation that occurs only once every 50 to 100 years. Japan has also been in the news for its heavy rains and snowfall, and I feel that the effects of climate change are becoming more and more pronounced around the world. With such climate events heavy on our minds, JSPS SFO held the 2nd JUNBA Seminar "Building University Commitment and Action Towards the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs): A Case Study of UC Davis" on January 26th. Two lecturers from UC Davis, a university that conducted the Voluntary University Review "University Self-Assessment for SDGs Realization" in the U.S., were invited to present their cutting-edge SDG efforts at U.S. universities via Zoom. More than fifty staff and faculty members from universities in Japan participated in the seminar and a lively exchange of opinions took place, indicating the high level of interest in the SDGs among Japanese university officials.

The details of the JUNBA Seminar can be found in the article of "The 2nd JUNBA Seminar FY2022" in "Recent Activities."

#### *JSPS-Supported Events*

On January 28th, the United Japanese

researchers Around the world (UJA) hosted the 3rd liaison meeting of Japanese researcher communities online. Information on UJA can be found here: <https://www.uja-info.org/> The meeting was attended by representatives and members of nearly 20 researcher communities from across the United States, who shared information on their activities and problems during and after the pandemic, and engaged in an energetic discussion of ideas and opinions. The meeting was supported by the Embassy of Japan in the United States and JSPS SFO, with the cooperation of the Japan Science and Technology (JST) Washington, D.C. Office; each agency also introduced its related activities from the standpoint of supporting the researcher communities. All of the researcher communities were facing difficulties in maintaining their own communities, as many members had returned to Japan and few Japanese researchers studied abroad during the pandemic. However, there were a few communities that continued to hold online seminars and social events even during the pandemic. All of the communities are currently working on rebuilding their connections with new members, organizing hybrid seminars and social events, and taking various other measures to restore the communities to pre-pandemic levels. In addition to the hardships of the pandemic, many of the participants also commented that the high cost of living in the U.S. and the sharp depreciation of the yen have made it difficult to sustain their daily lives.

On February 1st, the FY2022 International Headquarters Meeting/

Overseas Liaison Office Directors' Meeting of JSPS was held face-to-face in Tokyo, bringing together all the Overseas Liaison Office Directors and Advisors for the first time in three years. The meeting was very significant and fruitful, as I had only exchanged words with some members of Headquarters and directors online before I arrived in San Francisco last April. "Presence and Network," which the President mentioned as keywords at the end of the meeting, will be the first mission that each overseas liaison office should tackle as the pandemic ends.

On February 4th, JSPS SFO held the Winter Japanese Researcher Gathering in Berkeley as a hybrid event using Zoom webinar. The Bridge Award ceremony was also held that day and the two awardees introduced their researches.

The Bridge Award is a joint project of the JSPS Washington and San Francisco Offices, conceived and established in 2016 by the directors of both offices. The idea was born out of a desire to work together with Japanese researchers active in the U.S. amid calls for the internationalization of academic research and the fusion of disciplines, as well as to convey the experience of overseas research from the U.S. to young researchers in Japan, given the inward-focused orientation of the Japanese people. We, therefore, decided to provide financial support for Japanese researchers who are active PI at universities and research institutions in the U.S. and who plan to return to Japan temporarily, thereby helping to promote joint research between Japan and the U.S. as well as to foster young

researchers in Japan. Since the start of this program, an award ceremony has been held every year at the beginning of the Winter Japanese Researcher Gathering hosted by JSPS SFO.

Following the Bridge Award ceremony, Dr. Kiyoteru Tsutsui, Professor, Department of Sociology, Stanford University, introduced his career in U.S. academia over the past quarter-century and his own research, as the keynote lecture.

The details of the Winter Gathering of this year can be found in the article "Winter Japanese Researcher Gathering/ Bridge Award Ceremony" in "Recent Activities."



*Presentation by Dr. Kiyoteru Tsutsui*

On the afternoon of February 28th, three staff members from our office including myself joined the 1st Joint Symposium of Kyoto University's North American On-Site Labs held at UC San Diego, as JSPS SFO had been asked to support the symposium. We had the opportunity to listen to many excellent research presentations from Kyoto University's three North American On-site Labs. The symposium, entitled "Transformative Innovations in Medical and Life Sciences," began with the opening keynote by Professor Shinya Yamanaka, who presented the possibility of

rejuvenation at the individual level using iPS cell reprogramming technology, and Professor Mitinori Saito concluded by giving the closing keynote. He discussed the programming technology of iPS cells to obtain sperms and oocytes which provides an opportunity for next-generation reproductive medicine. Professors Yamanaka and Saito had been awarded the JSPS Prize in recognition and support of excellent young researchers in 2006 and 2013, respectively. Their works have been developed enormously since then and have contributed greatly to the Transformative Innovations at Kyoto University.



*1st Joint Symposium of Kyoto University's North American On-site Labs*

We also had a chance to attend the 4th Kyoto University LifeScience Showcase@San Diego 2023 on February 27th. We enjoyed their novel technologies and seeds in the life science fields including immunology and infectious diseases, medical devices, small molecule therapeutics and regenerative medicine.

On the morning of February 28th, we had an opportunity to meet with Dr. Mary Walshok, the former Dean of UC San Diego, Extended Studies, at UC San Diego Park &

Market. She had given a talk at the 1st JUNBA Seminar on September 27th, 2022, and we were able to hear about the collaboration between UC San Diego and the community. On March 1st, we met with Dr. Miwako Waga, Director, International Outreach, at UC San Diego, and considered the possibility of co-hosting symposia with UC San Diego. Later on, we visited Dr. Carlos Jensen, Associate Vice Chancellor, Educational Innovation, and Ms. Courtney Giordano, Director of Global Education, at UC San Diego, who are responsible for the international exchange of academic researchers. They have twenty-two active agreements between UC San Diego and Japanese universities. We presented JSPS fellowship programs and discussed how we can promote the exchange of academic researchers between UC San Diego and Japanese universities.

On March 3rd and 4th, our office co-hosted a symposium with the Center for Japanese Studies (CJS) at UC Berkeley, entitled "Sacred Secrets: Networks of Secret Knowledge in Japanese Religions."

The symposium was very successful and fruitful, and the participants felt that it provided a good opportunity to reevaluate a number of important points that would not have occurred to them if they had discussed them only with Japanese researchers. This is especially true at the basic and conceptual level of the topic, such as what esotericism is, secret transmission, and the terminology of "secrecy" and "esotericism." The participants also commented that it is difficult to hold such a conference on Japanese religions in Japan due to various

restrictions, but that holding it overseas provided an extremely valuable opportunity to objectively discuss issues that they have avoided discussing in Japan. In addition, the two-day exchange that brought together researchers from the UC system and other prominent Japanese studies scholars from the West Coast seemed to have provided many ideas for further exchange in the near future.



*Presentation by Prof. Satoshi Ito*

The details of the CJS-JSPS joint symposium can be found in the article of "CJS-JSPS Symposium "Sacred Secrets: Networks of Secret Knowledge in Japanese Religions" " in "Recent Activities."

### *JSPS SFO Visits*

During the past three months, many Japanese university officials have visited our office. When the JST adopted the Startup Ecosystem Formation Support Program for University Ecosystem Promotion in August 2022, the Platform for All Regions of Kyushu & Okinawa for Startup ecosystem (PARKS) was established by 15 universities in Kyushu and Okinawa and Fukuoka Financial Group (FFG) Venture Business Partners (FVP). On January 10th, Dr. Yukiko Kamijo, Professor and Director of the FFG

Entrepreneurship Center, Nagasaki University Research and Development Organization, Dr. Yoshihisa Nakafuji, Vice President of Kyushu Institute of Technology, and Mr. Yasuhisa Yamaguchi, Vice President of FVP, visited our office, and asked for information on what kind of efforts are being made at the UC System, and Stanford University, as startup incubators in the U.S. We provided information on the status and system of support for university-launched startups in the Bay area, and then exchanged opinions.

On January 25th, Dr. Hideto Fukudome, a professor of the Graduate School of Education at the University of Tokyo visited our office with 16 graduate students. The students major in University Management and Policy supervised by Professor Fukudome, and many of them are current university staff members or employees of the Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology (MEXT). Professor Fukudome had been giving intensive lectures on "Undergraduate Education and Student Support" at Stanford University and UC Berkeley to establish strategic partnerships, with UC Berkeley in particular. In addition, he said that he is bringing students with him so that they could have an opportunity to get a fresh mindset away from their daily work and research by talking directly with American university staff working as professionals. Dr. Fukudome introduced himself to us, followed by his talk on "Toward the Formation of a Japanese-Style Research University Model; The University of Tokyo's Challenges." We also introduced our

activities and then discussed opinions with his students.



Prof. Fukudome (The second from the right in the front) and his students

On February 17th and 20th, Dr. Kazuya Masu, the president of Tokyo Institute of Technology and seven of his faculty members, visited our office where Tokyo Tech ANNEX Berkeley is located. Mr. Hiroo Ueda, Director of Tokyo Tech ANNEX Berkeley, explained in detail about the three functions of Tokyo Tech ANNEX Berkeley: education, research/academic-industry collaboration, and information, as well as the planned integration with Tokyo Medical and Dental University. We reviewed the JUNBA activities that happened over the

past fiscal year with them as well.

On February 22nd, Dr. Katsuo Tokushuku, Administrative Director of the High Energy Accelerator Research Organization (KEK), International Center for Quantum Field Measurement Systems, and four other staff members visited our office. They gave us an overview of the Alliance for Inter-University Research and Education, in which KEK participates, and the international collaborative platform under the Alliance. After that, we considered the possibility of jointly hosting a symposium with KEK. Since the Alliance is a group of corporations covering all fields from natural sciences to humanities, we exchanged opinions on the promotion of cross-disciplinary cooperation and fusion of humanities and sciences in the United States.

In the next fiscal year, we intend to further enhance the Presence and Network of JSPS by holding the fellowship program information sessions, researcher gatherings, and symposiums, taking advantage of online and in-person meetings, while also considering hybrid meetings.

## Upcoming Events Information (\*Details to be announced)

July 2023

Summer Japanese Researcher Gathering in the U.S.  
(日本人研究者交流会・夏)

September 2023

The 1st JUNBA Seminar FY2023

Joint Symposia

Fellowships Information Sessions

# Recent Activities

## The 2nd JUNBA Seminar FY2022



**T**he Japanese University Network in the Bay Area (JUNBA), held its second online seminar on January 26th, 2023 themed around “Building University Commitment and Action Towards the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs): A Case Study of University of California, Davis (UC Davis).” Two speakers from the University of California, Davis which conducted “Voluntary University Review on the UN Sustainable Development Goals” were invited to provide the audience with an understanding of the most advanced SDGs initiatives at U.S. universities. A total of 58 people participated, many of whom were staff and faculty at universities throughout Japan.

The speakers, Jolynn Shoemaker, Director of Global Engagements, Global Affairs, University of California, Davis, and Camille Kirk, Director of Sustainability and Campus Sustainability Planner, University of California, Davis first introduced UC Davis briefly and explained why the SDGs are important for UC Davis. They continued by discussing its strategies and approaches toward the SDGs including information on the voluntary university review that they led for the university, and emerging opportunities and challenges in integrating the SDGs into university activities. They concluded

this portion by expressing that for universities, moving beyond ad hoc or single projects that include SDGs to a campus-wide approach is not always easy, but they would continue efforts like by collecting data and tracking activities and progress on the SDGs and exploring partnerships to reach additional communities on campus in their surrounding area, region, and globally. They said that they knew they could find technological solutions to the problems but the solutions would not be adopted or endure if they did not have engaged people actively and inclusively working in consensus to create change.

After their presentations, they answered questions from participants in detail. Surveys showed that the participants found the event useful and a majority of respondents commented that they were able to learn about the situation of higher education in the U.S., information which is not readily available in Japan.

In the coming FY2023, JUNBA will continue to carry out activities such as this seminar to promote the development of education and research in Japan and the US.

The video of this seminar are now available from the following link. <https://youtu.be/U22ofzEXoVU>



*Presentation by Jolynn Shoemaker*



## Winter Japanese Researcher Gathering in the U.S. / Bridge Award Ceremony

**O**n February 4th, 2023, JSPS San Francisco Office held its 2022 winter researcher gathering hybrid event at the David Brower Center in Berkeley.

This gathering was combined with the JSPS Bridge Award Ceremony and was attended by researchers (both resident and visiting), representatives from research institutes and U.S.-based companies, and JSPS research fellows. The JSPS Bridge Award was established by the JSPS San Francisco and Washington DC offices to support US-based Japanese researchers financially and to help them create a better international research environment. The award nominees for this time were Dr. Nobuhiko Kobayashi, Professor, Baskin School of Engineering, Electrical and Computer, University of California Santa Cruz, and Dr. Takamitsu Kato, Associate Professor, Department of Environmental & Radiological Health Sciences, Colorado State University. Dr. Kobayashi and Dr. Kato were awarded for their excellent research here in the U.S. At the ceremony, they gave presentations about their research and their activities during their stay in Japan with this award. After the ceremony, the main talk of this year's winter gathering was given by Dr. Kiyoteru Tsutsui, Professor, Department of Sociology, Stanford University. His talk was titled "My Professional Journey as an Academic for a Quarter-century in the U.S." He talked about his career path for the past quarter-century in the U.S. and briefly about his research content. After the lecture, a lively Q&A session followed, bringing the event to a successful conclusion. Participants had positive responses: "I am currently a post-



doc, so I was glad to hear about career path as a researcher," and "His research contents are interesting even for those who do not specialize in them."

At the reception, participants enjoyed chatting in this relaxed setting, meeting new people and reconnecting with old colleagues. We were glad to have this event in person for the first time in three years and pleased to see this event serve as a venue for researchers to expand their networks and make new connections. The next Researcher Gathering will be held in the summer of 2023.



(From the left) Dr. Takamitsu Kato, Dr. Yusaku Nakabeppu (JSPS Director), Dr. Nobuhiko Kobayashi

## CJS-JSPS Symposium "Sacred Secrets: Networks of Secret Knowledge in Japanese Religions"

**T**he Center for Japanese Studies (CJS) at the University of California, Berkeley held a two-day symposium co-sponsored by JSPS San Francisco on March 3rd and 4th, 2023 both at the David Brower Center and online. The symposium brought together researchers for a series of conversations on a wide range of topics in the context of Japanese religions to discuss secrecy from different perspectives and methodologies. We invited 5 researchers from Japan and 12 researchers from the U.S. and Belgium.

The first day started at 9:30 am, with opening remarks by Yusaku Nakabeppu, JSPS director, and Prof. Junko Habu, CJS Chair, and an introduction by Dr. Marta Sanvido, the organizer of this symposium. It included seven sessions, a keynote address, and a general discussion. Two to three speakers and one moderator joined each of the sessions. After the speakers' presentations, they answered the audience's questions and discussed the topic.



*Opening remarks by Yusaku Nakabeppu, JSPS Director*

The conversations mainly explored the definition and origins of "secrecy" in Japanese religion and its role in society from various perspectives ranging from religious practices and rituals to waka poetry and gagaku (old Japanese court music). After all the sessions, all speakers and moderators participated in the general discussion. It was very lively and continued well past the scheduled time.

JSPS San Francisco will continue to support

events like this symposium that strengthen global academic exchange.

Speakers: Abe Yasurō, (Ryūkoku University); Anna Andreeva, (Ghent University, Belgium); Heather Blair, (Indiana University Bloomington); Mark L. Blum, (University of California, Berkeley); William M. Bodiford, (University of California, Los Angeles); Clark Van Doren Chilson, (University of Pittsburgh); Paul Groner, (University of Virginia); Itō Satoshi, (Ibaraki University); Kikuchi Hiroki, (The University Tōkyō); D. Max Moerman, (Barnard College); Michaela Mross, (Stanford University); Fabio Rambelli, (University of California, Santa Barbara); Marta Sanvido, (University of California, Berkeley); Unno Keisuke, (National Institute of Japanese Literature); Yoneda Mariko, (Tottori University) Moderator: Robert H. Sharf, University of California, Berkeley



*Session by Prof. Anna Andreeva, Prof. Unno Keisuke and Dr. Marta Sanvido*



# Fellowship Information Sessions

- January 25th,  
University of British Columbia
- February 1st, Stanford University
- February 14th, University of Alberta
- February 22nd, Rice University
- February 28th,  
University of Colorado Boulder
- March 4th, CJS-JSPS Symposium
- March 16th, University of California , Davis



*Stanford University*

For more information about upcoming info sessions, please visit our website or contact us directly

(<https://www.jspsusa-sf.org/>).

## Helpful Links

-JSPS International Fellowships for Research in Japan  
(<https://www.jsps.go.jp/english/e-fellow/index.html>)

-JSPS Fellows Plaza  
(<https://www.jsps.go.jp/english/e-plaza/index.html>)

-US and Canada JSPS Alumni Association  
(<http://www.jspsusa-alumni.org/>)

-FAQ  
(<https://www.jsps.go.jp/english/e-fellow/faq.html> )



*CJS-JSPS Symposium*



*UC Davis*



*Rice University*

# JSPS Fellow in America



## Hirokazu Yoshie

**H**irokazu Yoshie is a historian of modern Japan, specializing in the Japanese monarchy. Born and raised in the City of Chiba, he received a B.A. in Liberal Arts at Sophia University, Tokyo, in 2010, and a PhD in History and East Asian Languages at Harvard University in 2017. Since 2019, Yoshie has been teaching the history of East Asia as a Lecturer at Soka University, Tokyo. For this US academic year, he is a JSPS Fellow and a Visiting Scholar at the Weatherhead East Asian Institute at Columbia University, where he is exploring the role of the monarchy in the development and eventual collapse of imperial Japan.

*Hirokazu Yoshie, Manhattan, New York City*

**Q1: Why did you decide to research in the U.S.?**

The first reason was sources. I'm interested in examining the influence of the United States on the formation of policies and practices surrounding modern Japan's emperor. There are many historical documents that are accessible only in the US.

Also, I wanted to come back to what I consider to be my intellectual home. I was trained as a historian in the US and wrote my doctoral dissertation on the topic of the monarchy here. Now I wish to develop it into a book manuscript worth publishing at a US-based university press. To do this, I needed to come back to the US, where I can develop my argument and its significance in the scholarly context of this country.

**Q2: What is your impression of the research environment in the U.S.?**

It's great! Columbia University provides everything I need as a historian: a serene campus, well-staffed libraries, vigorous and supportive scholarly communities, and, above all, precious time. I feel lucky to be in a place where I can focus on my own reading and writing but can also find fellow historians to bounce my ideas off of when I am stuck or have questions. I don't think that in Japan I would ever enjoy as much intellectual luxury as I do here at Columbia.

At the same time, I think it is becoming increasingly difficult in this country to not consider the ethical meaning of historical inquiry, as the intellectual paradise coexists with the stark reality of inequality. Just walking outside the beautiful Columbia campus in Manhattan, New York City, reminds you of how divisive the county has been, both economically and racially. There is a growing perception, both within and outside US academia, that elite universities have been successful because they have historically benefited from, and sometimes even intensified, the systemic inequality of the nation. Here, I see many of my historian colleagues and graduate students discuss ways

to promote equality and fairness in their daily teaching and pursuit of knowledge of the past. That's the dynamic I don't really see back in Japan. I cannot think of a major issue drawing comparable attention in the historical community in Japan, and I am still struggling to make sense of what this difference tells us about the academic cultures of the two countries.

**Q3: How do you take advantage of your experiences in the U.S. and apply them to your research or career?**

I think I am gaining the skills to situate a research topic in the broad context of the discipline of history and beyond in society. As I see it, historical scholarship in Japan is generally committed to empirical analysis far more so than in the US. That sometimes can lead to the compartmentalization of the discipline into narrow sub-fields with little regard for what really matters. I am hoping to use the skills I learn here to intervene in this trend in Japanese history in Japan and generate conversations on the significance of the historical discipline among historians across different subfields. My status as a former JSPS fellow will probably be helpful, as I imagine it would carry considerable weight in Japanese academia.



*Discussion of my work-in-progress at Columbia University*



*Presentation at the Weatherhead East Asia Institute, Columbia University*

# Office Member Greeting

## ASUKA TACHIBANA

*(International Program Associate, April, 2022 - March, 2023)*

**I** have met many people throughout this academic year. I met people (pre/postdocs, faculty, and staff) working in universities, companies, and institutions not only from the U.S. but also from Japan. It was a pleasure for me to talk with them. Every person I met here has a passion for their job and works or researches hard. It was very stimulating for me to talk and collaborate with such people. Although I had to wait three years to come to the U.S. due to the pandemic, I am glad I came this year because I was able to experience having both online and hybrid events with the development of online communications. In one of the online events, I was glad to see not only Bay Area researchers but also Japanese and U.S. researchers interacting with each other. Speaking of the hybrid event, we held a Japanese Researchers' Gathering event for the first time in three years, I was impressed to hear participants' delighted responses like "I got acquainted with many researchers in different fields and began to correspond with them



afterward," and, "I was motivated in my research after attending this event."

I enjoyed working together with my wonderful co-workers at JSPS San Francisco. I would like to express my deepest gratitude to all the people whom I met here including JSPS office members. This April, I will go back to Hokkaido University and work as an administrative staff. I look forward to collaborating with you all again someday in a different capacity. Berkeley is my second hometown. Thank you very much!



---

## Chino Endo

*(International Program Associate, April, 2022 - March, 2023)*

At the outset, I would like to thank all the members of JSPS SF and all of those whom I met during my stay in the U.S. for their kindness and support. I did not expect that my stay would be full of encounters with new people and experiences when I first landed at San Francisco International Airport last April.

Although we had some restrictions on in-person activities because of Covid-19, we had

many opportunities to visit universities and research institutions in the U.S. and to have visitors to our office from both the U.S. and Japan. We also held many face-to-face events, where we had new encounters with researchers, students, and people interested in our activities. It is a little regrettable that I have to leave the U.S. at a time when I began to think that we



would be able to make more connections and bring more awareness of our office, but I am looking forward to the next year and beyond when I am sure that the other members will make the San Francisco Office even more powerful.

Sometimes I had a hard time adapting to life in the U.S., however, I was able to get through the year thanks to the people around me. Once again, thank you to everyone who helped me during my stay in the U.S. I hope to see you again someday.

**Yuki Ando** (*International Program Associate, April, 2022 - March, 2023*)

**W**orking at JSPS SFO from April 1, 2022, until today was truly an unforgettable experience. My work at JUNBA allowed me to establish numerous connections with Japanese university officers who work for overseas branches, and I was fortunate to be able to participate in a range of informative and engaging zoom seminars and meetings. Additionally, I was able to cultivate relationships with faculty and administrators at the esteemed University of California system.



*Picture with Dr. Shinya Yamanaka (middlemost in the back)*

I plan to utilize these valuable connections and experiences throughout my career. While living in the United States, I came to appreciate the sense of community and how people come together to support one another. I feel fortunate to have developed good friendships and working relationships during my time in the Bay Area.

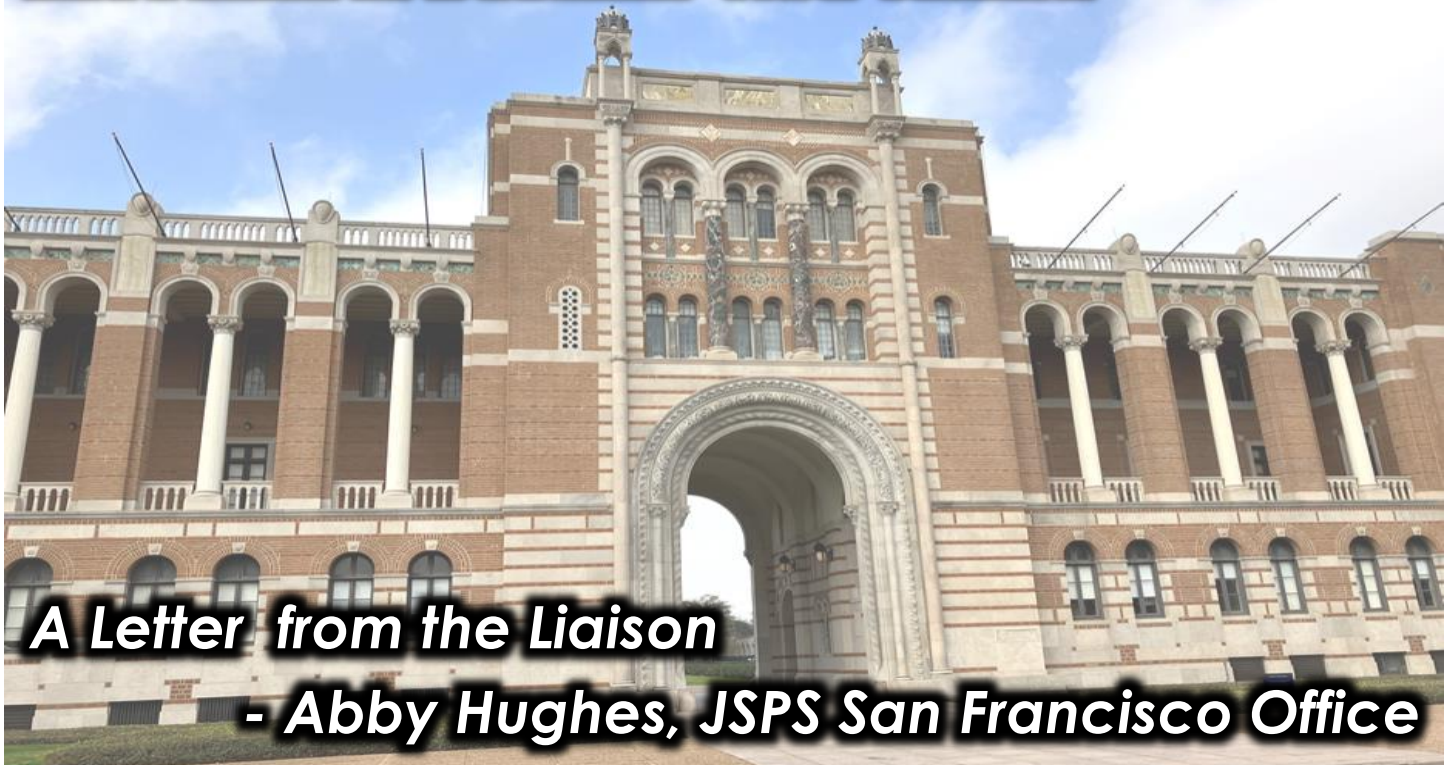
Through this experience, I gained a deep appreciation for the importance of networking. I learned that having the right connections can lead to good opportunities in the Bay Area and beyond.

I would like to express my heartfelt gratitude for this opportunity to live and work in the USA. It has been a lifelong dream of mine since my high school trip to the west coast, and I am grateful to have been given this chance to work in another country. Lastly, I hope that JSPS SFO and JUNBA continue to thrive and work together towards achieving their goals.



*Picture with Dr. Mary Walshok (rightmost) at UCSD*

# Education in DeSantis' New Florida



## A Letter from the Liaison - Abby Hughes, JSPS San Francisco Office

**R**on DeSantis is the Republican governor of Florida since his election in 2019. Recently, his name has been all over the news, especially in the sphere of higher education. He is a champion of Anti-CRT legislation and has grown famous for his controversial policies in the past few years. This is current so the information is constantly changing and the policies enacted are progressing as this article is published.

Critical Race Theory (CRT) is the idea and study that racism is embedded in western, ie. American society. It helps bring awareness to and hopefully change the systematic racist practices that are found in the everyday lives of minorities, specifically African Americans. It is the idea that the way that America was formed and is currently structured serves white people more than it does any other race.

As the United States grows more aware of the injustices that occur against minorities day

by day, it is crucial that CRT be studied. After the murder of George Floyd in 2020, the Black Lives Matter Movement began in earnest, as people were tired of seeing black people robbed of their lives, generally by white police officers, because of the color of their skin. This was the beginning of a surge of interest in Diversity, Equity and Inclusion in all areas of society, but specifically in colleges, majors, and other areas in higher education and subsequently, the backlash of conservatives against such change. The following definition as written by the NAACP (National Association for the Advancement of Colored People) Legal Defense Fund does a great job of indicating what might not be popular about CRT.

Critical Race Theory, or CRT, is an academic and legal framework that denotes that systemic racism is part of American society – from education and housing to employment and healthcare. Critical Race



Theory recognizes that racism is more than the result of individual bias and prejudice. It is embedded in laws, policies and institutions that uphold and reproduce racial inequalities. According to CRT, societal issues like Black Americans' higher mortality rate, outsized exposure to police violence, the school-to-prison pipeline, denial of affordable housing, and the rates of the death of Black women in childbirth are *not* unrelated anomalies.<sup>1</sup>

DeSantis began his overt journey against CRT in 2021 with his passing of the "Stop WOKE Act" which stands for "Stop the Wrongs to our Kids and our Employees." In the words of the legislation, it is to give these groups of people the tools to fight against "woke indoctrination."<sup>2</sup> Woke, a term that has its roots in African-American Vernacular English (AAVE), has come to mean being aware of social issues, specifically racial issues. Woke comes from the idea that you are *awake* to the problems that are present in society. There is now essentially a ban on what teachers can and cannot teach about systematic racism in the classroom. On the employee side, it is so that employees "do not have to endure" CRT training from their employers. The fear that the conservatives have with CRT is that white people would be

harassed or put down because of their skin color. They argue that CRT is not helping, but creating further racism, against white people, which is not the focus of CRT in the slightest. This act is posed as a template for other states to be able to copy and introduce into their own legislation.

In November of 2022, soon after his reelection, DeSantis declared Florida a state where "woke" would come to die. According to the New York Times, DeSantis recently rejected the pilot version of a new Advanced Placement (AP) course in African American studies. AP is the manner in which high school students can get some college credit for their high school courses. His office said that the course is not historically accurate and lacking in educational value. Furthermore, the Florida Department of Education said that the course would indoctrinate its students to a political agenda. The creators of the AP course have stated that CRT will not be present in the course, much to the chagrin of many.<sup>3 4 5</sup>

In December of 2022, DeSantis had his office ask Florida's colleges to provide a breakdown of the money they have spent on diversity, inclusion, and of course, CRT, in their schools. Many colleges provided this information, leaving many of Floridian college staff and professors feeling exposed and open

<sup>1</sup> Critical race theory FAQ. Legal Defense Fund. (2023, February 9). Retrieved February 28, 2023, from <https://www.naacpldf.org/critical-race-theory-faq/>

<sup>2</sup> Governor DeSantis announces legislative proposal to stop W.O.K.E. activism and critical race theory in schools and corporations. Florida Governor Ron DeSantis. (n.d.). Retrieved March 6, 2023, from <https://www.flgov.com/2021/12/15/governor-desantis-announces-legislative-proposal-to-stop-w-o-k-e-activism-and-critical-race-theory-in-schools-and-corporations/>

<sup>3</sup> Kim, J. (2023, January 22). Florida says AP class teaches critical race theory. here's what's really in the course. NPR. Retrieved February 28, 2023, from <https://www.npr.org/2023/01/22/1150259944/florida-rejects-ap-class-african-american-studies>

<sup>4</sup> Mazzei, P., & Hartocollis, A. (2023, January 19). Florida rejects A.P. African American Studies class. The New York Times. Retrieved February 28, 2023, from <https://www.nytimes.com/2023/01/19/us/desantis-florida-ap-african-american-studies.html>

<sup>5</sup> Atterbury, A. (2023, February 15). Black leaders rally in Tallahassee against Florida's denial of Race Studies course. POLITICO. Retrieved March 6, 2023, from <https://www.politico.com/news/2023/02/15/black-leaders-rally-florida-race-studies-00083084>

to criticism and censure, not to mention wondering what might happen next.

He has appointed men who are like-minded to college trustee boards in order to start changing the “woke indoctrination” that he was noticing. Specifically, he has targeted New College of Florida as a school that needs to be refocused.

After the new slate of trustees was announced, Manny Díaz Jr., Florida’s education commissioner, said it was the administration’s hope that New College would become a “classical college more along the lines of a Hillsdale of the South.” That was a reference to the private Christian college in Michigan known for maintaining strong ties to the White House during the Trump administration.<sup>6</sup>

New College of Florida is a university that is generally more left-leaning, which has attracted certain students because of its wonderful charm. However, in a tweet, Chris Rufo, a senior fellow at the Manhattan Institute known for his conservative views who was added on the New College of Florida’s trustee board, stated, “We will be shutting down low-performing, ideologically-captured academic

departments and hiring new faculty. The student body will be recomposed over time: some current students will self-select out, others will graduate; we’ll recruit new students who are mission-aligned.”<sup>7</sup> Most recently, the diversity exclusion and inclusion division of the college was shut down.

It is not my place to comment on the policies of a governor of another state; that would be inappropriate and generalist, especially for a small newsletter article. However, as an educated young black woman, I worry that education is going to be changed in Florida for a version that aligns with DeSantis’ and likeminded men’s desires. Other states are similarly following suit and creating policies against critical race theory.<sup>8</sup> Diversity, equity, and understanding how racism affects our society are important matters. It is concerning to see that in Florida and other states, due to the policies of conservative politicians who take an interest, higher education especially is starting to be stifled and increasingly narrow-minded in its views. Please read the articles below for a more in-depth delve into the changes in higher education occurring in Florida.

---

<sup>6</sup> Bartlett, T. (2023, January 27). Is new college of Florida headed for a hostile takeover? The Chronicle of Higher Education. Retrieved March 6, 2023, from <https://www.chronicle.com/article/is-new-college-of-florida-headed-for-a-hostile-takeover>

<sup>7</sup> Rufo, C. F. (2023, February 28). We will be shutting down low-performing, ideologically-captured academic departments... Twitter. Retrieved March 6, 2023, from <https://twitter.com/realchrisrufo/status/1630604192539881473>

<sup>8</sup> UCLA law CRT forward tracking project. UCLA School of Law. (n.d.). Retrieved March 6, 2023, from <https://law.ucla.edu/academics/centers/critical-race-studies/ucla-law-crt-forward-tracking-project>

---

## Works Referenced.

Atterbury, A. (2023, February 15). *Black leaders rally in Tallahassee against Florida's denial of Race Studies course.* POLITICO. Retrieved March 6, 2023, from <https://www.politico.com/news/2023/02/15/black-leaders-rally-florida-race-studies-00083084>

Bauer-Wolf, J. (2023, February 24). *A new Florida bill would reshape public higher ed to Ron DeSantis' vision. what does that look like?* Higher Ed Dive. Retrieved March 6, 2023, from <https://www.highereddive.com/news/a-new-florida-bill-would-reshape-public-higher-ed-to-ron-desantis-vision/643570/>

- Clay, S., & Ellis, N. T. (2023, March 1). *New College of Florida Trustees vote to abolish DEI programs, even as students protest against conservative overhaul of School*. CNN. Retrieved March 6, 2023, from <https://www.cnn.com/2023/02/28/us/new-college-florida-board-meeting-reaj/index.html>
- Contorno, S. (2023, February 25). *Florida bill would ban gender studies and give gov. Ron DeSantis more power over State universities*. ABC7 Chicago. Retrieved March 6, 2023, from <https://abc7chicago.com/ron-desantis-gender-studies-florida-higher-education-bill/12878373/>
- Contorno, S. (2023, February 25). *Florida bill would give desantis more power over state universities and ban gender studies | CNN politics*. CNN. Retrieved March 6, 2023, from <https://www.cnn.com/2023/02/24/politics/ron-desantis-florida-universities-gender-studies/index.html>
- Contreras, J. (2023, February 5). *DeSantis ramps up 'war on woke' with new attacks on Florida higher education*. The Guardian. Retrieved March 6, 2023, from <https://www.theguardian.com/us-news/2023/feb/05/ron-desantis-war-on-woke-florida-higher-education-new-college>
- Diep, F. (2022, October 4). *It's not clear whether public-college professors have First Amendment rights when they're teaching*. The Chronicle of Higher Education. Retrieved March 6, 2023, from <https://www.chronicle.com/article/its-not-clear-whether-public-college-professors-have-first-amendment-rights-when-theyre-teaching>
- Diep, F., & Pettit, E. (2023, January 31). *What is happening in Florida?* The Chronicle of Higher Education. Retrieved March 6, 2023, from [https://www.chronicle.com/article/what-is-happening-in-florida?cid=gen\\_sign\\_in](https://www.chronicle.com/article/what-is-happening-in-florida?cid=gen_sign_in)
- Ferguson, R. A. (2023, January 30). *Opinion: Fear of a black-studies planet*. The Chronicle of Higher Education. Retrieved March 6, 2023, from <https://www.chronicle.com/article/fear-of-a-black-studies-planet>
- Gutkin, L. (2023, February 6). *Ron DeSantis's Culture War*. The Chronicle of Higher Education. Retrieved March 6, 2023, from <https://www.chronicle.com/newsletter/the-review/2023-02-06>
- Horowitch, R. (2023, February 24). *Florida Bill would target diversity studies at State Universities*. NBCNews.com. Retrieved March 6, 2023, from <https://www.nbcnews.com/politics/politics-news/florida-bill-target-diversity-programs-state-universities-rcna72242>
- Kolluri, S. (2023, February 2). *New Advanced Placement African American Studies course is a watered down version of itself*. The Conversation. Retrieved March 6, 2023, from <https://theconversation.com/new-advanced-placement-african-american-studies-course-is-a-watered-down-version-of-itself-198473>
- Myskow, W. (2022, June 9). *Legislation to limit critical race theory at colleges has reached fever pitch*. The Chronicle of Higher Education. Retrieved March 6, 2023, from <https://www.chronicle.com/article/legislation-to-limit-critical-race-theory-at-colleges-has-reached-fever-pitch>
- Pettit, E. (2021, May 20). *The academic concept conservative lawmakers love to hate*. The Chronicle of Higher Education. Retrieved March 6, 2023, from <https://www.chronicle.com/article/the-academic-concept-conservative-lawmakers-love-to-hate>
- Quilantan, B., & Atterbury, A. (2023, February 12). *The College Board Slams DeSantis Administration comments on African American Studies*. POLITICO. Retrieved March 6, 2023, from <https://www.politico.com/news/2023/02/12/college-board-desantis-african-american-studies-00082447>
- Whittington, K. E. (2023, February 27). *Opinion: Desantis's terrifying plot against higher ed*. The Chronicle of Higher Education. Retrieved March 6, 2023, from <https://www.chronicle.com/article/desantiss-terrifying-plot-against-higher-ed>
- Wolf, Z. B. (2023, January 25). *A new partisan era of American education | CNN politics*. CNN. Retrieved March 6, 2023, from <https://www.cnn.com/2023/01/25/politics/desantis-florida-education-what-matters/index.html>