

NOVEMBER 15, 2021

J. LIVE TALK 2021

SUMMARY REPORT

THE GEORGE WASHINGTON



The final round of George Washington University's seventh annual J.LIVE Talk, a national presentation contest open to college-level Japanese learners and, for the second consecutive year, high-school learners of Japanese, was held on Saturday, November 13, via Zoom and live streamed to YouTube. The event featured presentations from nine exceptional finalists, who were selected from amongst 54 applicants hailing from 12 states (CA, FL, IN, KY, MD, MI, NC, OH, PA, RI, TX, VA) and the District of Columbia.

Though historically held on the George Washington University campus, continuing challenges presented by the Covid-19 pandemic again caused us to hold the event online. The finalists delivered their dynamic presentations to a distinguished panel of judges and an audience of several hundred viewers watching live on YouTube. The complex task of hosting such a large, fully online event in real time was handled skillfully by our Japanese faculty, with expert assistance from Mitsuyo Sato, the Japan Resource Center Librarian at George Washington University; Noriko Otsuka, Japanese instructor at Fox Mill Elementary and past Co-President of the Mid-Atlantic Association of Teachers of Japanese (MAATJ); Kyoko Vaughan, Japanese instructor at Hayfield Secondary School and current Vice President of MAATJ; and Professor Takuya Ito, lecturer in Japanese at the University of Virginia. Additional invaluable technical assistance was provided by Olivia Osborne.

The final-round judging panel consisted of Dr. Hiromi Ishizawa, Chair of the Department of Sociology at the George Washington University; Ms. Kumi Kobayashi, co-director of the Japanese Honor Society of the American Association of Teachers of Japanese and Japanese instructor at Los Gatos High School; Mr. Masashi Mizobuchi, Minister-Counsellor for Public Affairs and director of the Japan Information and Culture Center at the Embassy of Japan; Mr. Ikuo Nishimura, General Manager of the Washington Office of Tokyo Electric Power Company Holdings; and Mr. Koji Otani, Japanese instructor at Fairfax County Public Schools.

The final-round judges, as real-time participants, viewed the presentations and then evaluated each presenter's interpersonal skills through a short question-and-answer session in Japanese. Audience members watching on YouTube were also given the chance to ask the presenters questions in Japanese via YouTube's live chat; these questions were then read to the presenters by Professor Ito. These impromptu exchanges further tested the participants' abilities to articulate themselves effectively in Japanese.

In the preliminary round, scholars and professionals from around the country also gave generously of their time to serve as judges. In the high-school division, Professor Wakana Kikuchi of George Washington University, Dr. Kyoko Hillman Kobayashi of McGill University, and Dr. Shinji Sato of Princeton University served as preliminary-round judges. In the college division, Dr. Miho Fujiwara of Willamette University, Dr. Nobuaki Takahashi of Elizabethtown College, and Professor Keiko Yukawa of the University of California at Santa Cruz served as preliminary-round judges. The judges for the semi-final round were Dr. Sakae Fujita of the University of California at Santa Cruz, Professor Kyoko Hammond of the University of Tennessee at Martin, and Ms. Mitsuyo Sato, Japan Resource Center Librarian at George Washington University.

A distinguished committee of advisors also gave generously of their time. The advisory committee included Ms. Yoko Lawless of the Naganuma School in Tokyo; Ambassador John R. Malott; Dr. Yoshiko Mori of Georgetown University; Mr. Koji Otani of Fairfax County Public Schools, and Ms. Noriko Otsuka of Fox Mill Elementary School.

Finally, J.LIVE Talk has benefitted immensely from the interest and engagement of our Japanese language students here at George Washington University. This year, Mr. Pierre Dela Cruz, Ms. Hae Joo Yoon, Ms. Ellis Davis, and Mr. Nick De Valpine provided helpful assistance as student assistants and volunteers.

The following decisions were announced at the Awards Ceremony:

High School Division Winners *(And Their Academic Advisors)*

Gold Award Winner: **Shaina Adams**, Woodrow Wilson High School and George Washington University

(Advised by Tsujioka Takae Sensei)

Presentation Title: **星空：雄大な眺め** "The Night Sky: A Magnificent View"

Silver Award Winner: **Heejin Shyn**,

(Advised by Mori Mina Sensei)

Presentation Title: **花札** “Hanafuda”

Bronze Award Winner: **Julien Buentello**, South Lakes High School.

(Advised by Adam Podell Sensei)

Presentation Title: **私は私** “I Am Me”

College Division Category I

Gold Award Winner: **Ashton Reichard**, University of West Florida

(Advised by Taylor Takami Sensei)

Presentation Title: **世界への視野を広げる** “Broadening My View of the World”

Silver Award Winner: **Angela Liu**, Rice University

(Advised by Takayama Hiromi Sensei)

Presentation Title: **テクノロジーの一長一短** “The Duality of Technology”

Bronze Award Winner: **Ben Smith**, Baylor University

(Advised by Prefume Yukiko Sensei)

Presentation Title: **僕と浮世絵：快適ゾーンから未知への一歩** “Me and Ukiyo-e: A Step from the Comfort Zone to the Unknown”

College Division Category II

Gold Award Winner: **Asia Griffis**, Appalachian State University.

(Advised by Ito Kinji Sensei)

Presentation Title: **私の夢** “My Dream”

Silver Award Winner: **Navmi Sharma**, University of Pennsylvania

(Advised by Tamura Megumu Sensei)

Presentation Title: **スポーツと平和** "Sports and Peace"

Bronze Award Winner: **Matthew Ho**, Baylor University

(Advised by Prefume Yuko Sensei)

Presentation Title: **お腹で話しましょう** "Let's Speak with Our Stomachs"

Amazon gift cards of \$300, \$200 and \$100 were presented respectively to the Gold, Silver, and Bronze award winners of each category. In addition, college-level gold award winners also earned the opportunity to participate in an intensive Japanese language program in the summer of 2022, with the tuition, airfare, and living expenses covered by J.LIVE Talk.

Congratulations to all!