

Embassy of Japan Tonga

PRESS RELEASE

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Japanese Language - a symbol of sound friendship between Tonga and Japan

The Japanese Speech Contest 2018 was held on Friday, 25 May at the Tanoa International Dateline Hotel with outstanding students awarded prizes by His Excellency Mr. Tetsuya Ishii, Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of Japan to Tonga. Hon. Semisi Fakahau, Minister for Agriculture, Food, Forests and Fisheries and Acting Minister for Education and Training attended the contest along with Principals, Parents of the 26 contestants and the Japanese language teachers and students of participating colleges.

His Excellency in his address was pleased with the increasing popularity of the Japanese language among young students in the Kingdom. “I believe that the growth of the popularity of the Japanese language is a symbol of the sound friendship between us, which arises from greater mutual interest,” he said

“To learn a foreign language often leads to the understanding of an unfamiliar society and different culture which makes it possible to enlarge our own frontier and enhance our potential capability,” stated the Ambassador. He noted Saint Andrew’s High School which revived the Japanese language program last year and also acknowledged the participating schools in the Kingdom that teaches Japanese language. Japanese language was first introduced to Tongan students in 1986, and to-date there are eight high schools that offer Japanese language classes, including Tonga Institute of Education, TIOE.

Hon. Semisi Fakahau in his keynote address encouraged students that with perseverance and commitment they will meet success. He conveyed the heartfelt gratitude to the Government of Japan for the continuous generosity of the people and Government reaching far and wide, and in unique ways in the education sector.

Miss Fungalaau Mafi, a contestant from Tonga High School was awarded the prize of being Tonga’s nominee to participate in the Japanese Language Program for overseas students which will be held in this September in Osaka, Japan. In the speech contest winners were; Ariel Sanchez of Tonga High School won the speech for Open Category; Konifelenisi Fifita, from Vava’u High School won the Form 6 Category and Sione Tafo’ou of Tonga College won the Form 5 Category, while Petulisa Finau of Vava’u High School won Form 4. 26 Contestants competed this year, with contestants travelling from the outer island to represent Vava’u High School, ‘Eua High School and Tailulu College, Vava’u. Prizes were also awarded to best student in the Japanese Calligraphy Contest 2018.

Later in the evening, H.E Mr. Tetsuya Ishii hosted a reception at his residence to honor the successful collaboration and dedication from the Ministry of Education of Tonga, the JICA Tonga Office, and the Japanese Language Teacher's Association in teaching of the Japanese language in Tonga. Guests at the reception included Hon. Semisi Fakahau, Lady Si'atukimoana Vaea, Deputy Directors of the Ministry of Education, Japanese Language Teachers and winners of the Japanese Language Program since 2010.

END.

Photos

Photos:



Tonga High School students at the Japanese Speech Contest 2018 at Tanoa Hotel on Friday, 25 May.



H.E Mr. Tetsuya Ishii making his address at the Japanese Speech Contest on Friday, 25 May.



Hon. Semisi Fakahau making his keynote address at the Speech Contest.



Winners and contestants of the Japanese Speech Contest 2018.



Ambassador Ishii and the awarded students at the Japanese Speech Contest 2018.



H.E Mr. Tetsuya Ishii with Mrs. Ishii along with Hon. Semisi Fakahau, Lady Vaea and Deputy Directors of the Ministry of Education at the reception hosted in the evening of May 25.



Reception for Japanese Speech Contest 2018.