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Students perform well at Japanese Speech Contest

April 8, 2020

The 2020 Annual Japanese Speech Contest was held on March 7 at Mercer University Atlanta Campus. This event was co-organized by the Georgia Association of Teachers of Japanese, the Japanese Chamber of Commerce of Georgia, the Japan-America Society of Georgia, and the Consulate General of Japan in Atlanta.

Two GS students, Kyle Lewis and Mykaera Brown, participated in the contest. Evy Shen, who is a student at Statesboro High School but taking JAPN 1002 at GSU through dual enrollment, also participated in the contest. Kyle Lewis received the 3rd prize of Category 2 (N4-5 proficiency level) and Evy Shen received the 1st prize of Category 1 (High school students). Kyle Lewis's speech title is "My favorite sport"; Mykaera Brown's is "My school life"; and Evy Shen's is "*Nattō* (Japanese fermented soybeans) and me."



Kyle said, "Overall I thought the speech contest went well. I enjoyed being able to see how the Japanese of other students around my age was, as well as seeing how much of their speech I could understand. After the speech contest, I thought to myself about what parts of Japanese that I want to focus on more, and I realized that I need to work on my grammar skills. My speech had rather simple grammar, compared to my peers, and I was impressed by how well other speeches flowed."

Mykaera said, "It was a nice experience for me. I learned a lot about Georgia-Japan relations, so I definitely want to be more involved in activities someday. To get a better feel for the Japanese language and culture, I have to get involved, whether it is Japanese club, speech contest, Japan Fest, or studying abroad. If I could redo my minor, I would definitely ask more questions in class."



Evy said, "Giving a speech in a different tongue was definitely more fun than nerve-wracking as I absorbed the reactions of the judges and contestants. Hearing them laugh and understand a speech created with my half-year's worth of Japanese learning was infinitely more satisfying than any reaction from anything I could have ever expressed in English. I am very grateful for first

place but even more grateful for what I have learned. Japanese is my third language, and learning it has been an irreplicable eye-opening experience. I learned so much about Japan through the topics delivered by the

participants, and it was definitely the next best thing to going to Japan. I am so thankful for this opportunity; for the GS language department allowing me to dual enroll as a high school student; for my parents, who advocate for this global type of education and always drive me; and, of course, for my Japanese professor 毛利先生 (Dr. Mori-Kolbe) and 青葉先生 (Ms. Aoba) for their excellent instruction and support.”

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