

**Ganbaro, Iwate!**  
**Let's stick together, Iwate!**

三陸復興

Volume 102

March 15, 2016

We are deeply grateful for the heartwarming encouragement and support received from both within and outside of Japan in the aftermath of the Great East Japan Earthquake and Tsunami, which struck on March 11, 2011. The precious bonds created during this time will always be cherished.

It's been five years since the disaster. This is the last year of our dedicated reconstruction efforts, and towns are developing up and down the coast.

We will now bring you the news from Iwate's reconstruction.

## Five Years Since the Great East Japan Earthquake and Tsunami Iwate and Ofunato Conduct a Joint Memorial Service

Ofunato



The altar at the memorial service.



Governor Tasso makes a speech.



Children singing a requiem.

Friday, March 11th, 2016 marked 5 years since the Great East Japan Earthquake and Tsunami. Around 730 people attended a memorial service held jointly by Iwate Prefecture and Ofunato City at the Rias Hall in the Ofunato Civic Center. A ceremony held by the national government was broadcast live during the ceremony.

At 2:46pm, the moment the disaster occurred, the attendees observed a minute's silence.

Governor Tasso gave a speech. "We, as residents of Iwate Prefecture, must remember all those who lost their lives during the Great East Japan Earthquake and Tsunami, and how they loved their hometowns. We must work hard to pass the experiences and lessons we learned on to future generations, while walking the path towards reconstruction. The hearts of everyone in Iwate will come together to complete the reconstruction, protect life, and

to make Sanriku a home where the sea and the land can coexist."

There was also a speech from Mr. Shinji Seo (Tokyo), a representative of the bereaved. His daughter, Kanae, who was studying Marine Biology at Kitasato University, is still missing. "I want to treasure the bonds my daughter made, and live as positively as I can in her place. It seems like the reconstruction will take some time. Meanwhile, my family's job is to keep talking about the disaster so its memories don't fade."



Mourners paying their respects.

Next was a speech by the children's representative, Kotomi Yoshida, a 6th year student at Akasaki Elementary School, Ofunato. "At the time of the disaster we were very young, so there were many things we couldn't understand or accept. But now we realize all the things everyone has done to ensure we've had such a good life. We've decided that, from now on, we want to repay the kindness of everyone that supported us," she said. Students from Akasaki and Takanoura Elementary Schools then sang two songs, "Tabidachi No Hi Ni" and "Hana Wa Saku," as a requiem for the people who lost their lives.

5,131 precious lives were lost in the Great East Japan Earthquake and Tsunami (4,672 direct deaths and 459 related deaths). 1,124 people are still missing.

(as of February 29th, 2016)

## The Iwate Study Fund of Hope wins the Hometown Tax Future Prize

On February 11th, 2016 (Thu), the Furusato likoto Fair (Good Things from our Hometowns Fair) was held by the Furusato Chiji Network (Hometown Governors Network). The Iwate Study Fund of Hope was chosen as the initiative that made best use of the Hometown Tax system, and was awarded the Hometown Tax Future Prize. The Iwate Study Fund of Hope receives donations from all over the country via the Hometown Tax system, and uses it to support children in disaster-hit areas.

\*The Hometown Tax (Furusato Nozei): a system where taxpayers can contribute to rural areas in exchange for a credit in their income tax and residence tax



The Director General of Iwate's Department of General Affairs receives the prize.

## The First Graduation Ceremony in Takata High School's New Building

Rikuzentakata

Takata High School in Rikuzentakata held its graduation ceremony on March 1st, 2016 (Tue). This was the first ceremony to be held in the new school building on raised land after the original was completely destroyed in the Great East Japan Earthquake and Tsunami.

There were 161 graduates, 146 in the general curriculum, and 15 in the marine system curriculum. For their first two years, they had to commute 20km to the "Kayanaka" temporary school building at Ofunato East High School.

The representative of the graduates, Ms. Mayu Isogai, made a pledge, "I'd like to take this opportunity to sincerely thank all the people, from both inside and outside of Japan, who supported us. I want to dedicate myself to becoming the sort of person who can contribute to the region, and to society."

These students have overcome the disaster to graduate high school and this is another step towards fulfilling their dreams.



The students receiving their diplomas.  
(Photo: Takata High School)

## A Heart-Warming Message For New Graduates At Kuji Station, Sanriku Railway

Kuji

The Sanriku Railway North Rias Line displayed a message board at Kuji Station for all the high school students graduating this year.

The Deputy Station Master, Mr. Kenji Komaki, used the board to thank all of this year's high school graduates for using the Sanriku Line. He also wrote words of encouragement.

His heart-warming message struck a chord with the students, and with everyone who saw the message online.



The message board

Congratulations on your graduation  
~5 years on from the tsunami~  
I don't want to look at those images of the sea rising up and washing away all the cars.  
I'd rather look at the blue sea I saw when I was in elementary school, during the summer with my family.  
I could be saying to everyone that we should look forward and live life positively, but it's so difficult to do that when we're starting from such a sad place.  
Many of you may have these kinds of thoughts, and we worry about your hearts and minds.  
I want any negativity to be replaced with lots and lots of good things.  
I want you to go out and help people, without getting swallowed by the waves of the world.  
I hope that your experiences commuting North Sanriku Station famous in Ama-chan (a popular drama) will be a source of encouragement to you in your life from here on. I think you're all absolutely wonderful. We want to thank you from the bottom of our hearts for using the Sanriku Railway.  
Congratulations on your graduation! Good luck!  
Kuji Station, Sanriku Railway

Many young people are diligently helping the affected area of Sanriku move toward a full reconstruction. The section "People for Sanriku's Future" introduces these young people and their powerful feelings. Part 53 introduces Mr. Yuta Kanno's efforts.

### PROFILE

Originally from Yokohama in Kanagawa Prefecture. After graduating from university, he started working at a recruitment agency. In September 2011 he helped plan the launch of Otsuchi Ringakusha Collabo School, which helps with the education and care of children in disaster-hit areas. It was established in December 2011. Mr. Kanno currently works as its head.

### A collaborative study space for kids

Collabo School aims to motivate children to study by creating a safe space for them to do so. It opened in Onagawa, Miyagi, in July 2011.

Otsuchi had a relatively high rate of children living in temporary housing, which is too cramped to separate into living and study spaces, so there was a high demand for this type of school. Ringakusha Collabo School, an after-school program, opened in December 2011. It currently has



Head of the Otsuchi Ringakusha Collabo School (NPO Katariba)  
Yuta Kanno



"Children embody the hope of reconstruction. Please support us!"

around 200 registered elementary, middle and high school students, with around 100 attending each day.

"We're not the same as a normal private study school. As it says in our name, we collaborate with schools and boards of education by sharing information, and using Otsuchi City's educational aims as a base," Mr. Kanno said.

### Coming up with their own solutions

Besides their own studies, Collabo School's high school students also develop their own projects to engage with local issues that they are interested in.

Mr. Kanno sees the effect this has. "Children here, compared with children in big cities, really want to study hard and change things. Their projects engage with issues close at hand, and they think very seriously about how these problems can be solved. Local problems are also their problems, and they have the power to solve them."

The school's future plans include a supplemental study program with IT facilities.

### Casualties & Damage in Iwate As of Feb. 29, 2016

- ▶ Human casualties/deaths: 4,672; Missing: 1,124
- ▶ Buildings destroyed (residences only, total/partial): 26,168

To make a donation to aid in Iwate's reconstruction:  
[www.pref.iwate.jp/fukkounougoki/dayori/news/011100.html](http://www.pref.iwate.jp/fukkounougoki/dayori/news/011100.html)

### Thank you for all your support!

As of Feb. 29, 2016

**Donations for survivors:** Around ¥18.44871 billion (92,852 donations)

**Donations for reconstruction projects:** Around ¥19.73202 billion (7,653 donations)

**Iwate Learning Hope Fund donations:** Around ¥7.96499 billion (17,318 donations)

※ This fund is to assist in the study and daily life of affected children by encouraging sport and study activities.

News from Iwate's Reconstruction, Volume 102. March 15, 2016.

Published by the General Affairs Division, Bureau of Reconstruction, Iwate Prefecture. TEL: 019-629-6925  
For the News from Iwate's Reconstruction archives: <http://www.pref.iwate.jp/fukkounougoki/dayori/news/>

Editing & Printing: SYNAPSE

News from Iwate's Reconstruction Volume 103 will be published on April 15th.