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## Northeast Asia Regional Peacebuilding Institute

### Fall 2012 Newsletter

#### NARPI Summer Training August 2012

On August 25 at Hiroshima Railway Station, participants, facilitators, staff and steering committee members from the 2012 NARPI Summer Training exchanged hugs and goodbyes.

Over the two-week training, 37 participants – university students, NGO workers and teachers– had built relationships and studied together through peacebuilding courses, evening activities, and field trips. Most were from Northeast Asia – China, Japan, Korea, Mongolia and Taiwan – in addition to a few participants from Canada, Nepal and Pakistan.



Participants and facilitators of the Week 1 course, "Community-Based Restorative Justice for Schools."

The training was held in two different parts of Hiroshima:

Week 1, at the well-known Aster Plaza downtown, and Week 2, at the Hiroshima YMCA in Yuki, surrounded by beautiful mountains and rice fields.

In the six courses offered over the two-week training, participants and facilitators worked collaboratively to build understanding about the following themes: peace

and conflict, trauma healing, restorative justice, storytelling in peacebuilding, peace education, and peacebuilding skills. The courses offered participatory activities and practical skills. After joining the Week 1 course "Critical Understanding of Peace and Conflict Issues," participant Aijuan Huang reflected, "The facilitators combined different fun activities to help us think and process the knowledge. We learn and also have a lot of fun."



Participants and facilitators of the Week 2 course, "Theory and Practice of Peace Education."

Some participants shared about personal change resulting from their coursework. Hyeonsim Na wrote, "I can decide my way because of NARPI. The Trauma Healing class really helped to find the real me and to choose my future direction."

Participants also spent time outside of the classroom, visiting Hiroshima Peace Museum and Peace Park and Okunojima, the site of poison gas manufacturing by the Japanese Army during World War II.

At the Peace Museum, Sadae Kasaoka, a Hiroshima *Hibakusha* (survivor of the 1945 atomic bombing) shared

her painful story of the devastation of the A-bomb. Though it is difficult each time, she said that she tells her story in order to “personally and urgently appeal for a peaceful world without nuclear weapons.”



Sadae Kasaoka tells her painful memories of the Hiroshima atomic bombing.

NARPI participants presented a symbol of hope for peace in Northeast Asia at the Children’s Memorial– 1,000 paper cranes that they made during Week 1 – and also explored the Peace Museum, a moving and challenging time for many. All gathered in the evening for a debriefing session, time to share their reflections from the day.



NARPI’s 1,000 paper cranes hanging at Hiroshima Peace Park, Children’s Memorial.

Yamauchi Masayuki, a retired history teacher, led participants around the small island of Okunojima and told the history of Japan’s use of chemical weapons against civilians during World War II. He shared, too, about his personal efforts and experiences of inviting Chinese victims of the chemical weapons to Japan to share their stories. The evening debriefing session offered time to process the complexities of both suffering and

victimization.



Yamauchi Masayuki guides the NARPI group through Okunojima, the island where the Japanese military produced chemical weapons during World War II.

Evening activities were also an important part of the Summer Training in Hiroshima, a time when the participants became the facilitators and shared presentations and discussions with all who chose to join. In one evening session, Jungwon Ko showed the group a documentary of his story of forgiving the man who killed his mother, wife and son.

There was also one Cultural Night per week, where participants used song, dance, games and pictures to share their cultures with each other.



A traditional drum team from Yuki Minami High School opens the Week 2 Cultural Night.

On the final evaluation form, one participant reflected, “I could think about peace, as well as building peace in Northeast Asia, deeply. It was also great to experience the field trip and to make friends from Northeast Asia.” Others shared that the close and meaningful relationships made NARPI feel like “a big family.”



After an evening session by graduate students from Ritsumeikan University, on Article 9, the Peace Article, of the Japanese Constitution.

The NARPI Japan team, consisting of the five NARPI steering committee members from Japan, worked together for the local organizing. After the Training, the NARPI Japan coordinator, Kyoko Okumoto, shared: “Hosting NARPI is a huge task, but it is a worthwhile challenge. If all of us continue to connect for the future, and if we share our good learnings with more people in this big community, Northeast Asia will be a much more peaceful place to live. Let’s do that and overcome all the difficult conflicts in the region!”

Many thanks to both the Japan team and to NARPI’s local partner in Hiroshima, World Friendship Center, for wonderful hospitality and grace in the local organizing effort. Also, great thanks to all the donors who supported this year’s training.

The NARPI Training will be held again in Summer 2013 at a location in Northeast Asia not yet decided. Details will be announced on the NARPI website ([www.narpi.net](http://www.narpi.net)) as soon as it is finalized.

INTERESTED?

GET INVOLVED!

**NARPI Recruiting**—We are looking for people who are willing to help advertise NARPI Trainings in your communities, including translation work of NARPI advertising materials into your language.

**New Website**—In the next couple months, NARPI’s website will be redesigned and will include more information about the 2013 Summer Training, as well as photos, videos, and a new blog.

**NARPI on Facebook**—NARPI’s new Facebook page contains photos and recent updates:

<https://www.facebook.com/narpipeace>

If you are interested in being a part of any of these efforts, **email [admin@narpi.net](mailto:admin@narpi.net) for more information.**

