



PRESS RELEASE: Former Student from Japan Proud of Ferris Earthquake/Tsunami Relief Efforts

Sandy C Gholston to: Archive

03/18/2011 04:54 PM

A former Ferris State University international student from Japan is proud of the relief efforts that Ferris State University has initiated following the devastating earthquake and tsunami that hit Japan earlier this month. Contained in this press release also is information regarding the specific efforts Ferris is involved in to raise funds to support those in need in Japan. The effort begins on Monday as Ferris' Hospitality Gala Management Team will ask people to donate some of their spare change on the campus Quad seal March 21 from 11 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. to contribute. Any questions regarding this press release can be directed to Sandy Gholston, interim assistant director of News Services.

For Immediate Release
March 18, 2011

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Former Student from Japan Proud of Ferris Earthquake/Tsunami Relief Efforts

BIG RAPIDS – In the aftermath of the Japanese earthquake and tsunami disaster, many in the Ferris State University community have inquired about Rie Yoshimoto, an international program student from Japan who returned home in the winter of 2010.

Yoshimoto was in Osaka, far away from the epicenter of the earthquake estimated at a magnitude of 9.0 on the Richter scale, and reports experiencing a “small shaking” of approximately 3.0 at her location.

When asked about the dignity and courage that people of her nation have shown throughout the crisis, she explained that many Japanese people follow each other's examples – that the images of the “brave figures” of fellow citizens coping with the disaster give them courage. She said that it is important to her not to be sad but to focus on how to help, even if they can only do so in small ways.

“I feel that it is a very ordinary thing, in the Japanese culture and character, for people to show the spirit of cooperation when they are in trouble,” Yoshimoto said. “As a Japanese person, I am proud of this response.”

Support for Japan tsunami victims has begun at Ferris where student organizations are asking for contributions to a recently-established Japan Relief Fund.

The Student Chapter of the Red Cross and the Hospitality GALA Management Team are asking

the local community to step up and help the victims of the natural tsunami disaster, which occurred March 11, through donations.

Ferris' division of Student Affairs and the American Red Cross are urging everyone to show their support by calling 1-800-Red-Cross or texting 90990.

More than 5,000 people have tragically perished as walls of water destroyed cities of Japan. There are more than 10,000 missing and sources such as the Herald Sun predict more than 25,000 people may have died.

"I am proud of the students for doing what they are doing. We teach students to think globally and act globally. Helping someone around the world has to do with the values that we try to teach at the university. It is another example of a student group making the community better," said Dan Burcham, Ferris' vice president for Student Affairs.

Ferris' Hospitality Gala Management Team will take action to collect student's spare change on the campus Quad seal March 21 from 11 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. A two-week permission for university fundraising was granted in one day, expressing the heightened need of aiding the disaster as soon as possible. All donations are accepted and go directly to the Red Cross Japan Relief Fund.

"An event like this would be a serious tragedy for us, much like it is for Japan. As a society or just as a school community, it is important for us to help people who are in need," said Chris Hagan, president of the FSU Student Chapter of the Red Cross.

Hagan wants students to put themselves "in their shoes." Both Hagan and Maggie Smith, Gala student project manager of the fundraiser, said that they would want support from others if something tragic occurred in the United States.

Smith, a resort management major said, "I feel that other students should support this, because we are very fortunate in attending school and attending our daily activities, when activities in another country have been halted in a minute. It is truly needed."

Hospitality professor and committee member of Gala Amy Dorey said, "They Gala students felt this was a pull for them to offer, in some small way, hope for the future of the devastated areas in Japan, in the same way they hope to offer a future for hospitality students with the Hospitality Program Gala Scholarship Endowment."

Checks can be made payable to the American Red Cross with designation for the Japan Relief Fund or they can be dropped off at the Office of the Vice President of Student Affairs' at CSS 313B. Donations also can be mailed or dropped off at the American Red Cross at 218 South Warren, Big Rapids, MI 49307.

Yoshimoto was pleased to hear of Ferris' efforts to raise funds for Japanese earthquake and tsunami relief. She recommends donating to well-known organizations such as the Japanese Red Cross (www.redcross.org) and expressed her appreciation and hope.

“Thank you for thinking about us,” she said. “Even though Japan is in trouble now, I know that we will be able to get back on our feet.”

For more information about contributing to Ferris’ Japan relief effort, contact Burcham’s office at (231) 591-3578 or Hagan at haganc@ferris.edu.

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