

VOICES From THE NEW YORKERS

"The Big Root" Podcast Explores "Japaneseness"

by Susan McCormac

Pardon the shameless plug, but I'm taking this opportunity to announce that I'm co-hosting a new podcast!



"The Big Root" is the brainchild of Toshiki Nakashige, a scientist doing post-doc work at The Rockefeller University. He already has a podcast called "Scientist," but he wanted to focus on "Japaneseness," or how the experiences of Japanese Americans inform their individual takes on what it means to be Japanese.

Our first episode premiered on April 26, and featured an interview with Rona Tison of Japanese green tea



giant, Ito En. She discussed tea and how her Japanese American upbringing has influenced her career during a sake tasting at Brooklyn Kura, New York State's first sake brewery.

We're producing intriguing monthly episodes with Japanese or Japanese American guests, and will be highlighting some sort of Japanese or Japanese American activity. Find us on thebigrootpodcast.com, Apple Podcasts, Google Play, Stitcher and anywhere you can listen to podcasts!

THE JAPAN VOICE

COOL JAPAN from New Yorkers' Viewpoints



From left: Mr. Koji Sato, Mr. Koji Hirata and Mr. Kunihiko Oishi

Supporting Young Japanese Researchers The 5th Annual Life Science Forum Presentations by Medical Professionals

The Japanese Medical Society of America (JMSA) hosted its 5th Annual Life Science Forum on April 20 at New York University's Langone Medical Center Farkas Auditorium. This year's theme was "vision, fusion, translation."

Among the many presentations was a collaboration between a pediatric liver specialist, a transplant surgeon and a transplant pathologist who described the current forefront of the field of organ transplantation. Young researchers leading the modern field of science introduced recent findings in their respective fields of study, such as functions of the brain (using a mouse model), synthetic biology and molecular robotics.

by front-line experts as well.

The program began at 9 A.M. with opening remarks from JMSA Director Kunihiko Oishi, Icahn School of Medicine at Mount Sinai. This was followed by introductions from JMSA Chairman Robert Takahiro Yanagisawa, Icahn School of Medicine at Mount Sinai, Japan Society for the Promotion of Science (JSPS) Washington Office Director Koji Hirata and the Japanese American Society of New York Vice President Koji Sato, with each speaking about their respective group's activities, as well as their relations with the Life



Mr. Tomoya Yanagisawa



Ms. Reiko Toyama

Science Forum. Yui Asaki served as the forum moderator.

The first part of the program was a lecture entitled, "What I Learned In Order to Build a Career in Science," by Ms. Reiko Toyama, Program Director of the Eunice Kennedy Shriver National Institute of Child Health and Human Development (NICHD) at the National Institutes of Science (NIH).

The catalyst that led Ms. Toyama to pursue a career in medical research was a book that her high school teacher recommended to her: James D. Watson's "Double Helix." She also stated how almost 300 postdoctoral researchers are currently funded by the NIH to engage in a researcher-led, high-risk high-return research project. She concluded her speech by explaining an important factor in building a career in the United States: "America is a country that allows you to be greedy. I believe that greed, or a strong desire to do something, is crucial in building a strong career."

The Life Science Forum also had Ms. Kiyoko Oshima, Mr. Akihiro Asai, Mr. Junya Shounai, Ms. Yuki Betsushiro, Mr. Yuichi Shimada, Mr. Kimiaki Narita, Mr. Satoshi Ezoe, Mr. Tomoya Yanagisawa, Mr. Kei Terada, Mr. Hideki Nakamura and Mr. Hiroshi Sasaki each give a lecture on a certain topic. Interest in the Forum came from very diverse groups of people: in addition to people who work in the medical field, many general visitors attended the program as well.

(Written by Ryoichi Miura / Translated by Yudai Kaneda)



Japan Day 2019 Kai Band Coming to America May 12 at Central Park

Japan Day @ Central Park 2019 will take place on Mother's Day, May 12. Admission will be free of charge, and Kai Band from Japan will join the stage programming this year.

Japan Day consists of the Japan Run and a festival, all for the purpose of promoting the cultural interaction between Japanese and American citizens, showing appreciation to New York and facilitating connections in the Japanese community. The festival will include activity and food tents, as well as stage programming, where many different performances will be held. Charity activities and donations collected for Central Park's restoration and maintenance, winner announcements for art contests and award ceremonies will also be held.

JAPAN NIGHT TOO

There will also be two locations in Manhattan where popular artists will perform for Japan Day 2019 on the evening of the 12th. Performing artists include Japan's songstress MISIA, who celebrated the 20th anniversary of her debut last year and won the 60th Japan Record Awards, and Puffy AmiYumi, who are also popular in America. Lead L'Arc-en-Ciel vocalist HYDE, as well as Wagakki Band, who mixes Japanese wagakki with rock with calligrapher Shishu, will also perform.

(Written by Ryoichi Miura / Translated by Ai Omae)

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