

7月 Important Dates:

- 6日 Biwa Boat Ball
- 15日 Marine Day
- 20日 Farewell BBQ
- 22日 Survival Orientation (SO) Materials Due

# The Shiga Situation

Mother of all Newsletters

## Out With the Old...

## In With the New!

8月 Important Dates:

- 2日 SO Group A Job Orientation Materials Due
- 5-6日 Michigan Seminar
- 6日 Nags Fireworks
- 8日 Otsu Fireworks
- 9日 SO Group B
- 12-15日 Mountain Day and O-bon
- 17日 Welcome BBQ
- 19-20日 Job Orientation



# A Few Words From the New PA



Hi there Shiga JETs,

Summer is a time of change on the JET Programme. This year, one big change is that Nick, our friendly neighborhood P.A. is finishing his tenure on the Programme. As you may have heard, I've been selected to take the reins following his departure in August and I'm excited to meet the challenges of this new role.

We'll have many new faces to greet once we've said our farewells. Preparations are already well underway for the summer orientations that the new JETs will attend. Several dedicated ALTs are working on presentations to ensure that our new JETs are able to hit the ground running. Let's all do our best to make the new ALTs feel welcome.

Lastly, planning has also begun for this year's Skills Development Conference. With the help of the motivated ALT's who will be selected to present at this year's SDC, I'm certain we can continue to deliver conferences of the high-standard that we've all come to expect. It's my hope that in my role as a P.A. I can offer you any support you may need in your role as an ALT. I look forward to working together with all of you to improve English education for our students.

Sincerely,  
Kevin Lavigne

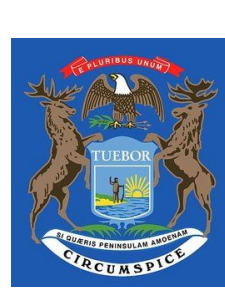
## A Message From Your New Shiga AJET Leader



## Summer Orientations!

Survival and Job orientations as well as the Michigan Exchange seminar will be this August! Presenters, make sure to get your materials to Nick and Kevin by the due date and to be at your presentation date on time (meaning early!).

- |                                                                  |                                                                  |
|------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Survival Orientation Materials</b>                            | <b>Job Orientation Materials</b>                                 |
| --Due: Monday, July 22nd                                         | --Due: Friday, August 2nd                                        |
| --To: <a href="mailto:kenchopa@gmail.com">kenchopa@gmail.com</a> | --To: <a href="mailto:kenchopa@gmail.com">kenchopa@gmail.com</a> |
| <b>Group A SO</b>                                                | <b>Job Orientation Day 2</b>                                     |
| --Date: Friday, August 2nd                                       | --Date: Tuesday, August 20th                                     |
| --Location: <a href="#">Gocho</a>                                | --Location: <a href="#">Gocho</a>                                |
| <b>Group B SO</b>                                                |                                                                  |
| --Date: Friday, August 9th                                       |                                                                  |
| --Location: <a href="#">Kencho Higashikan 7F</a>                 |                                                                  |



- Michigan Materials**
- Due: Monday, July 22nd
  - To: [kenchopa@gmail.com](mailto:kenchopa@gmail.com)
- Michigan Seminar**
- Date: Monday-Tuesday, August 5-6th
  - Location: JCMU (Hikone Station)

Hello Shiga, my name's Sam and I'll be your new Shiga AJET leader for the 2019-2020 JET year. I would like to introduce the new [Shiga Team](#): Sam Kim (Chair), Alexa Parker (Treasurer), Christian Fusco (Website Admin) Sophia Francesca Freckmann (Secretary), Kendall Moraski, Tyrone Perez, and Derek A. Spence. As Shiga AJET, we have been meeting and planning to bring more than the annual events already in place in Shiga. One of our biggest goals this year is to help get more JETs involved and connected to their local communities. Just as a sneak peek to some new events, we are currently looking into the possibility of a Japanese style Bonenkai for the end of the year or an Enkai to welcome in 2020 after the majority is back from vacation. Sneak peaks and ideas aside, we have quite a bit coming up the next few months from mid-July all the way to the end of September. Check your calendars, here's what we've got in store for you.

- July 20th: [Farewell BBQ](#) @ Omi-Maiko Beach and fireworks in the evening.
- August 5th: Nagahama Fireworks and BBQ.
- August 8th: [Otsu Fireworks](#) AJET will be getting a nice spot early in the morning for everyone's perfect viewing.
- August 17th: Welcome BBQ @ Omi-Maiko Beach for all the new Shiga JETs
- September 6th: [Omi Tetsudo Beer Train](#)
- September 14th-15th: [Annual Lake Biwa Bike Trip](#) (We'll be taking a wonderful two days to cycle and take in the great nature around our very own Mother Lake.)

## (More Than) A Few Words From the Other PA

Hey Shiga,

I will admit that I'm at a loss as to how to begin this... It seems like only yesterday I was riding the shinkansen from Tokyo, struggling to stay awake after my first all-nighter and wondering if I'd get to see Mt. Fuji for the first time. I'm sure all of you remember your ride from Tokyo to Shiga. For me, some standouts were talking with Az, who I had only met an hour or so earlier, and meeting Paku, who I will never forgive for snagging one of my [sushi rolls](#). As the train entered Shizuoka, Bob turned around and announced we might be able to see Mt. Fuji soon. I felt an anxiety that has only resurfaced in these final months of my ALT life.

I was worried that the shinkansen time, the only time I would see Mt. Fuji before I finished my JET tenure. At the time, I had no idea how long I would stay in Japan. I had been thinking that one or two years would be enough. My calculations were severely off, but I am glad that they were. The limited timeline gave me the impetus to attack my life in Japan with a selfish desire to pursue only what I truly wanted to do, and not waste it on other things.

Thus, within two weeks of arriving, I found myself playing slap the bag with some Nagahama crazies and my willing Japanese partners at a [techno festival](#) in Niigata. The following morning I was awoken at 6 am, after an arduous odyssey back to my tent just two hours earlier, to go climb Mt. Naeba, a 2,145-meter behemoth--and an excellent hangover cure. This experience taught me two things:

- 1.) 山 is life
- 2.) [Say "yes"](#) to opportunities

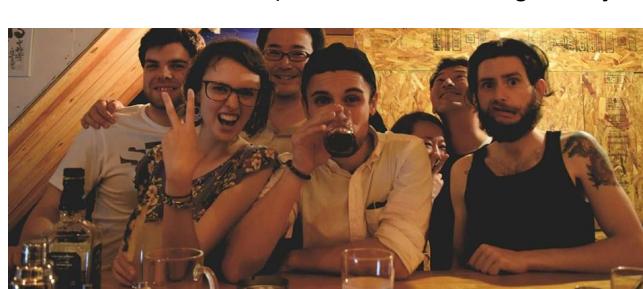
These have guided me well in Japan. I've made some of the closest friends I've ever had and experienced the best of Japan thanks to climbing. I've gained valuable life and work experience as a block leader, AJET leader, National AJET Director, and as your PA, all because I saw an opportunity and said, "yes." In fact, the only time I said "no", almost cost me the [love of my life](#) when I didn't accept an invitation to an onsen after my first welcome BBQ (buy me a drink and you might hear the story).

Approaching life as a series of opportunities (as opposed to obligations) has been a great boon to my mental health in this country. Instead of despairing about SDC presentations, I saw them as opportunities for personal growth in public speaking, as well as a good impetus to learn more about my given topic. Instead of accepting my role as a tape recorder in class, I took the opportunity to get creative and initiate English journaling and international penpal projects at my schools. And as my programs caught on, my JTEs began to realize they could rely on me in class for more than just my angelic voice! I know that ESID, so I won't preach to do as I did, but I have found that seizing opportunities--no matter how small--will help bring a sense of accomplishment and satisfaction that many people lack in their work-life.

I didn't "find myself" or "discover who I am" because of the JET program. But something I did come to realize is that we are nothing more than a wet canvas. While there is always a discernable image of who we are that has been painted since childhood, it has never dried; it is constantly in flux with every new stroke of the brush or color of paint that is added throughout our life. As long as it is wet, we can never simply cover our previous painting. I may seem to be nothing like who I was in university (a quick look at any pictures from my first year here will tell you that), but the tertiary colors of my life have only been created from the blending of primary and secondary colors of my past. [Our paint never dries.](#)

The anxiety I felt on the shinkansen 5 years ago has resurfaced as I approach the end of JET. It seems that everything has happened in a fleeting moment and I am fearful of missing a final opportunity. But this time I am reassured, knowing that my canvas is infinitely brighter than before, and it will continue to shine through whatever paints may be thrown on it--we do not simply move on and leave the past to [passive memory](#).

So my message to anyone that has made it this far is to never settle into a fixed idea of who you are or of what defines you. Attack every obstacle, fear, and challenge as an opportunity to add a dash of color to your canvas. If you do, I think you will find your time on JET (no matter how long it may be) has not been wasted.



See you around, Shiga!  
Nicholas Colaccino



# Otsu Hikiyama Festival!

This year's Otsu Festival will be on Sunday, October 13th. As always, the Shiga JETs are guaranteed a spot on the ropes of the lead float! Traditionally, hikiyama could only be pulled by men, but they have recently allowed women to also participate. We do not know how many women they will allow this year, but we will do our best to get them to allow all of the female JETs who volunteer!



Photo by Preston Mitchum 2017

If you are interested, please fill out this application!  
[大津市曳山祭り申込](#)



# Uminoko English Camp!



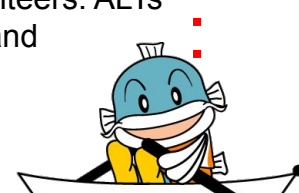
## Shiga English Camp 2019!

Preparations for the Uminoko English Camp are moving along. Applications will be sent to schools soon. If you have the opportunity, please encourage your students to participate!

For ALT volunteers, official requests to your schools and BoEs will be sent this month.

Unfortunately, there will be no planning meeting for this camp. As it is the first of its kind, the government office has decided to design the curriculum and take pressure off of the volunteers. ALTs will just be expected to come with a good attitude and a willingness to help the students and participate in the English activities.

Date: August 23-24  
Place: Hamaotsu Port



Whether you're leaving, sticking around, spiraling into a pit of despair over the thrashing you just received from the JLPT, or just arriving in Japan, life can be tough. If you are ever having trouble with work or just getting by in Japan, you can always contact the PAs through email (Nick: [kenchopa@gmail.com](mailto:kenchopa@gmail.com)) (Emilie: [shigapa@gmail.com](mailto:shigapa@gmail.com)) or Facebook. If you want professional help or anonymous counseling, please take a look at the resources below:

- [JET Counseling Service](#) Login: spufa2019
- AJET Peer Support Group 050-5534-5566
- Skype: AJETPSG
- [TELL Counseling Services](#)
- [International Mental Health Professionals Japan](#)

# Calling All Writers!

The Shiga Situation is looking for content writers!

Articles about Shiga events and places, Japanese culture, ALT life and the JET program, and more!

If you or your block/area has upcoming events, [get the word out here!](#)

All interested writers can ask questions or send pitches to

[kenchopa@gmail.com](mailto:kenchopa@gmail.com)

## Job Opportunity!

Calling all ALTs who will leave the JET program this fall! Torahime High School is looking for a full-time (non-JET) English teacher to begin work in April 2020. It is a 1-year contract renewable as long as both the ALT and Torahime are in agreement. There will be no limit to the number of years it can be renewed. The BoE is specifically looking for teachers who are planning to stay for the long term. That means, if you are a capable and motivated teacher, you could stay [until your retirement](#).

A teaching degree is not required for this position. There will be no public posting for the application. If you are interested, please send your resume (English and Japanese if possible) to Nick/Kevin at [kenchopa@gmail.com](mailto:kenchopa@gmail.com).