



January 12, 2009

OSU Extension

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## WINTER 2009 ~ OHIO 4-H INTERNATIONAL UPDATE

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***Dear Friends of Ohio 4-H International Programs – Host Families, Volunteers, Travelers, Exchangees, Donors, Foundation Board, and Extension Personnel:***

Hello! I hope 2009 has been good to you and your families so far. Here at Ohio 4-H International Programs, we are anticipating an exceptional year of cultural exchange and education, and hope you'll be able to join us in some capacity. The new 2009 International Programs Booklet is included with this mailing. Inside you'll find information and application forms for our exchange programs as well as other international education opportunities. Participating will allow you to take concrete action towards creating a better tomorrow for your own and the world's children and families through international exchange!

### 2009 Exchange Programs At-A-Glance

**Hosting** programs this year will include our traditional Japanese Labo Month, Year and Adult groups, as well as a very small number of youth from Costa Rica, Finland and Norway. **Traveling** opportunities for 2009 include our traditional Delegation to Japan, as well as our newer Overseas Homestay Programs to Australia, Costa Rica, and Finland. (Norway travel offered on "even" years only.) *The deadline for these out-bound programs is January 20 ~ please contact us immediately if interested, and visit our website for the application form.* Details on all of these exciting programs can be found within this newsletter and booklet.

### Ohio Host Families Needed!

Ohio 4-H is deeply appreciative of our many host families who open your homes and hearts each year to youth from around the world. We applaud your desire to help both your own children and those from around the world to work together toward the global community and economy of tomorrow. We recognize that it takes great generosity of spirit to host!

Whether or not you have been involved in the past, we hope you will consider this outstanding educational opportunity during 2009! For those of you who have never hosted, the experience is a unique way to **invite the world right into your living room!** And for **those of you who have children**, hosting teaches them in ways a book or the internet never could. Our programs vary in length of stay and exchangee age. Take a look at this newsletter and the enclosed booklet and see all we have to offer! Host family applications are found within the booklet and are due on **Feb. 28** for 1<sup>st</sup>-choice placements, with a final deadline of **May 15**, or until all exchangees are placed (usually mid-March for girls and May for boys).

## 2009 Exchange Program Dates

### 2009 HOSTING OPPORTUNITIES

Japanese Month-Long Youth:	July 23 - August 18
Japanese Older Teens & Adults:	July 23 - August 5 ... or August 5 -18 ... or 7/23-8/18
Japanese Year-Long Youth:	July 31, 2009 to mid-June, 2010
Finland* Month-Long Youth:	June 15 to July 13
Costa Rica* Month-Long Youth:	June 21 to July 18
Norway* Month-Long Youth:	July 8 to August 6

\* Very few youth from Finland, Costa Rica and Norway will visit the U.S. and matches will be made on the national level. You may wish to apply for the Japanese program as a 2<sup>nd</sup> choice in the event you are not matched with the countries above.

### 2009 TRAVELING OPPORTUNITIES

Delegation to Japan	July 8 – Aug. 6	(Travels “odd” years only)
Nihongo to Japan	June 11 – Aug. 6	(Travels “odd” years only)
Delegation to Finland	June 13 – July 14	(Travels every year)
Delegation to Australia	June 17 – July 16	(Travels every year)
Delegation to Costa Rica	June 20 – July 18	(Travels every year)

\*\* Delegation to Norway travels on “even” years only and will next travel June-July, 2010.

## 2009 Program Deadlines

- January 20**      **Ohio 4-H Youth Travel Applications Due**  
Notify us that you’re applying and visit our website for an application:  
[www.ohio4h.org/youth/international](http://www.ohio4h.org/youth/international)
- February 28**      **Host Family Applications Due** *(for first choice placements)*  
See enclosed booklet or visit: [www.ohio4h.org/youth/international](http://www.ohio4h.org/youth/international)  
Please submit at your earliest convenience. Applications will still be accepted after February 28! However, most of the Japanese month-long girls are usually placed by March, so don’t delay. ☺
- May 15**              **Final Host Family Application Deadline** *(or until last delegate placed)*

## Extending APPRECIATION to our Donors!

We thank **all** of our donors for their support of our Ohio 4-H International Program. Without you, we would not exist! *Special* thanks to the Ohio 4-H Foundation and our Endowment Supporters:

**Donald E. and Joan C. Herr Endowment Fund**  
**Cecil H. and R. Eloise Robinson Endowment Fund**  
**Ohio 4-H International Programs Endowment Fund ~ including many individual donors!**

## Overseas Travel with Ohio 4-H!

Ohio 4-H reaches the world! Our program offers a number of exciting opportunities for youth to live with host families overseas for one month, gaining valuable insight and skills that will last a lifetime. Youth participate in “regular life” and becoming full family and community members. Language fluency is not a prerequisite, but basic language study is required in advance of departure. Applicants need not be 4-H members to apply ... in fact, they become 4-H members through participation on this exchange! Partial scholarships are offered by Ohio 4-H (to all countries) and by Labo (to Japan). See next page for details.

**How to Apply / Required Selection Interviews** ~ Please notify us that you plan to apply (614-292-6941 or [thalheimer.1@osu.edu](mailto:thalheimer.1@osu.edu)) and visit [www.ohio4h.org/youth/international](http://www.ohio4h.org/youth/international) for an application packet. Application materials and payments are due **January 20, 2009** and required Selection Interviews (for youth and at least 1 parent) will be held in Columbus on **January 24** (scheduled day) and **25** (snow day). Hope you can join us!

### Japan ~

The land of the Rising Sun ... kimonos ... cherry blossoms ... Mt. Fujii ... rice fields ... mountains ... the sea ... and, most importantly, a Japanese host family waiting just for you! Ohio 4-H offers youth the cultural experience of a lifetime through its' one-month exchange program with the Labo Foundation in Japan, set for **July 8 to August 6**. (*This program travels “odd” years only.*)

Participants will live as regular members of Japanese families, take part in a 1-week Labo camp, and enjoy educational and family activities with host sisters and brothers. Ohio youth who have hosted a Japanese Labo youth in the past are particularly encouraged to apply (many 4-H'ers stay with the same Japanese youth who visited him or her in Ohio). Participants also have the option to attend an intensive Japanese language class (called “Nihongo”) in Tokyo for one month prior to the regular homestay (**June 11 to July 8**).

The cost for the regular program will be approximately **\$4,200**, and the Nihongo Program is an additional \$1,100. 4-H members and others aged 12 to 19 (but who will still be 18 on January 1, 2009), are invited to apply. (*Important Note: The upper age limit for this program is being lowered after 2009: future youth must still be age 18 at time of travel.*)

### Australia, Costa Rica, Finland and Norway ~

Exciting News! In addition to Japan, Ohio 4-H now offers overseas homestay programs in four other countries! Australia, Costa Rica, Finland and Norway\*\* host small groups of (15) older teen 4-H'ers from around the U.S. each summer. These programs resemble the former IFYE Ambassador Program, which operated from 1980 – 2005. \*\* Please note that the Norway exchange only travels on “even” years.

These programs are coordinated overseas by the 4-H organization in that country, or through schools and community groups. Each country's program has distinctive features. Those traveling to Costa Rica will enjoy a 4-day camp. The Finland program includes a day-trip to the neighboring country of Estonia. The Australia program is mainly rural and includes a day-trip to the capital of Sydney. Norway participants will experience a week-long camping experience near the fjords.

These programs mainly operate from mid-June to mid-July and approximate costs range from \$2,600 to \$5,500. Please see that attached booklet for details, including age requirements.

## New 2009 Ohio 4-H Scholarships for Youth Travelers!

Ohio 4-H is very pleased to announce that beginning in 2009, partial scholarships will be awarded to all Ohio 4-H youth selected to travel overseas on one of our homestay exchange programs ~ including Japan, Australia, Costa Rica, Finland and Norway. Selections will be based on the quality of the application form and essays, reference checks and Required Interviews on January 24 (Snow Date: January 25) in Columbus (each youth plus at least one parent must attend). For Non-Japan countries, each selected youth will receive a base scholarship of \$500, plus an additional \$100 for every 4-H exchangee hosted previously (up to a maximum of \$300). For those traveling to Japan, only the \$500 base scholarship will be offered, since Labo already offers scholarships based on previous hosting (\$300 - \$1,000 ~ please see next section). We offer our *sincere* thanks to the wonderful donors who made these Ohio 4-H Scholarships possible!

**Cecil H. and R. Eloise Robinson Endowment Fund  
Ohio 4-H International Programs Endowment Fund  
Individual Donors to the IFYE Support Fund**

## Labo Offers Generous “Hosting Scholarships” For Travel to Japan!

The Labo Foundation is again generously offering travel scholarships to Japan for Ohio families who host (or have hosted) Labo youth or adults. Host parents who wish to send their own children to Japan (held every “odd” summer) or who wish to themselves attend the Labo Adult Exchange to Japan (held every “odd” October) will receive the following reductions in trip prices: \$100 per Labo Month-long exchangee hosted (up to a maximum of \$300), and \$1,000 per Labo Year-long exchangee hosted. The maximum that can be used by any one Ohio traveler for any one trip is \$1,000. Our sincere thanks is offered to Labo for this tremendous gift!

## Labo Offers Paid Internships in Japan!

The Labo Foundation continues it’s generosity to the 4-H organization by offering paid one-year internships to 4-H’ers for working in it’s offices across Japan each year. Ohio 4-H is very proud of the 4-H Alumnus who have been selected to serve as Interns in the past: **Rylan Hamilton** (Hardin Co. ~ 2006), **Laura Corcoran** (Ross Co. ~ 2003), **Brienne Wyndham** (Hardin Co. ~ 2003), **Kim Krauser** (Warren Co. ~ 1996), **Scott Dye** (Holmes Co. ~ 1991), **Craig Perry** (Pickaway Co. ~ 1991) and **Susan Jones** (1990). During their year overseas, Interns work in a variety of capacities all over Japan, including preparing Japanese youth to come to America and assisting at local Labo Parties. Interns live with Japanese host families and most become fluent during their year abroad. We are grateful to Labo for providing this special opportunity to Ohio youth, which helps them in countless ways throughout their careers when they return to the U.S.

Any youth who is between 18-25 years old and will have a high school diploma prior to departure is eligible to apply for Labo’s internship. Strong preference is given to applicants who have previously traveled to Japan with the Ohio 4-H Delegation and who have at least a rudimentary knowledge of Japanese language. Please contact [thalheimer.1@osu.edu](mailto:thalheimer.1@osu.edu) for more information. Applications are due December 1<sup>st</sup> of each year, for departure the following September.

## 2009 ICC Volunteer Program

Ohio 4-H "International County Coordinators" (ICCs) are special master volunteers who lead and guide the international exchange programs in their counties, along with the assistance of the State 4-H Office and their County 4-H Educators. We are currently looking for volunteers for our 2009 positions. Please contact your County 4-H Educator if you are interested, or, I'd be happy to share more info and details about the position (Mary Lynn Thalheimer @ 614-292-6941 or [thalheimer.1@osu.edu](mailto:thalheimer.1@osu.edu)). This is a great way to meet new people, work closely with youth and families, and bring the world closer to those in your community! Our annual **ICC Training Conference** is always the **last Saturday** in **January** at OSU. This year's training is scheduled for **January 31, 2009**.

## A World of Thanks to our 2008 ICCs!

ADAMS:	Laura Cole	ALLEN:	Samantha Sturgeon
ASHLAND:	Annis Strine	CHAMPAIGN:	Connie Crocker
CARROLL:	Jill Sterling	CUYAHOGA:	Robin Stone
DELAWARE:	Walter Morton	DEFIANCE:	Bobie & Sophia Williams
DELAWARE:	Lisa Moore	FULTON:	Bobie & Sophia Williams
FAIRFIELD:	Sue Suttles	FRANKLIN:	Rachel Tayse Baillieul
GUERNSEY:	Stacey Curry	HARDIN:	Barb & George Wyndham
HAMILTON:	Marti & Doug Hudson	HENRY:	LeAnn Hall
HIGHLAND:	Cindy McCray	JACKSON:	Allyson Aldridge
JEFFERSON:	Kim Svoboda	LOGAN:	Barb & George Wyndham
LICKING:	Beth Gress	MAHONING:	Gary Reel
MEDINA:	Nancy Fortney	MERCER:	Cindy Lennartz
MARION:	Robin Miley	NOBLE:	Yvette Nau
PREBLE:	Ellen Taulbee	PAULDING:	Bobie & Sophia Williams
PICKAWAY:	Pat Perry	RICHLAND:	Annis Strine
ROSS:	Cindy McCray	ROSS:	Jill Beeler
SCIOTO:	Liz Pack	SHELBY:	Carla Meyer
STARK:	Jill Sterling	STARK:	Marlene Beggs
TRUMBULL:	Laura DePizzo	TUSCAWARUS:	Jill Sterling
WASHINGTON:	Alberta Wessel	WASHINGTON:	Peggy Byers
WOOD:	Adriane Weisert	WYANDOT:	Barb & George Wyndham
WILLIAMS:	Bobie & Sophia Williams	UNION:	Barb & George Wyndham

## 4-H/Japanese Adult Exchange to Japan?

It's not just Ohio 4-H youth who can enjoy the cross-cultural experience of living with a Japanese family! Every 3-6 years, adults also have the opportunity to visit the land of the Rising Sun. This unique 2-week program focuses on in-depth exposure to elements of Japanese culture and society. The visit centers around Japanese schools, government offices, famous sites and the Labo facilities, and is highlighted by a 6-day homestay with a Japanese family of your request. Cost is approximately \$1,300 plus round-trip airfare from your home city (you make your own arrangements) and medical insurance (usually about \$50). Please contact [thalheimer.1@osu.edu](mailto:thalheimer.1@osu.edu) if interested in this experience. Labo will schedule its next Adult Exchange based on the interest shown from potential participants. (The last tour traveled in 2005.)

## Labo Year-Long Exchange Offers Special Family Benefits

Our 5 current Labo Year-Long host families for 2008-2009 have been having active, interesting, fun and educational experiences sharing their lives with Japanese teenagers this year. Thanks to the following families ~ **Wilkerson** (Hardin Co.), **Lane** (Delaware Co.), **Hope** (Delaware Co.), **Sturgeon** (Allen Co.), and **Miller** (Morrow Co.). Their Japanese sons and daughters ~ **Mei, Shuhei, Yuhei, Ayusu, and Mami** ~ have been busy in the community, at school & at home being "regular family members."

**Might you be interested in this exciting opportunity during 2009 - 2010?** The youth attend your local high school and bring spending money for school fees/activities and personal expenses; Ohio 4-H provides comprehensive support and complete insurance coverage. You are responsible for room, board, inclusion in family activities, and love to share! Your new son or daughter would arrive at your home on July 31, 2009, and would depart from your home in mid-June, 2010.

If you are considering hosting with this program and would like to speak with current or former year-long host families about the experience, please contact me and I'll put you in touch with one of them. It can change the lives of you, your children and a teenager from half-way around the world! Added bonus ~ if you host a year-long youth, you will receive a **\$1,000 scholarship** toward sending your own child to Japan in the future. A Host Family application form is found in the enclosed booklet.

## Sincere Thanks to our 2007-2008 Labo Year-Long Host Families

Ohio's 2007 - 2008 Labo year-long students made a sad departure from the U.S. last June. They all reported an unforgettable year here in Ohio and we wish to **congratulate and thank** their wonderful families and ICCs, as well as the County Educators, who supported them!

<i>Triesler Family</i>	Ashland Co.	Educator Kathy Blackford	ICC Annis Strine
<i>Bicker Family</i>	Ashland Co.	Educator Kathy Blackford	ICC Annis Strine
<i>Trayter Family</i>	Ashland Co.	Educator Kathy Blackford	ICC Annis Strine
<i>Wagner Family</i>	Hardin Co.	Educator Ken LaFontaine	ICC Barb Wyndham
<i>Wyndham Family</i>	Hardin Co.	Educator Ken LaFontaine	ICC Sam Strugeon
<i>Dunson Family</i>	Williams Co.	Educator Jeff Dick	ICC Bobie Williams
<i>Hill Family</i>	Ross Co.	Educators Sara Kleon; Joy Sharp	ICCs J. Beeler; C. McCray

## Explore the World with Ohio 4-H Youth Study Tours!

Ohio 4-H Youth Study Tours are designed to provide participants with an intensive exposure to another country's life and culture, including the arts, architecture, the environment, family life, religion, major sites, food and customs. Led by an Ohio 4-H professional and volunteers, the 2-3 week programs combine travel and culture learning with a homestay experience. Pre-trip orientations and cultural reading materials assure that participants have a solid knowledge basis for what they will see and experience, creating the ultimate in "learning by doing." Language proficiency is not required, but language study is strongly encouraged.

Study Tours operate on some "even" years, with the **next experience tentatively scheduled for 2012** to Great Britain, New Zealand or Europe, at an approximate cost of \$4,500. A group of youth from the country we visit will then tentatively travel to Ohio the following year. See future booklets for the destination and other program details.

## **Director of OSU Extension a Long-time Host Father**

Dr. Keith Smith, Director of OSU Extension, has been an enthusiastic supporter of the Ohio 4-H International Program for many years. Keith and his family, including his wife, Kathleen, and their eight children, have hosted close to 10 Labo month-long youth! This summer, they will see the program from the other side when they send their youngest daughter to Japan with Labo. Keith has attended countless Welcome Ceremonies for our Labo youth and shown his commitment to international education in many other ways, as well. We are very grateful to have him as Director of OSU Extension!

## **New Ohio 4-H State Leader and Associate State Leader Support Ohio 4-H International Programs!**

We are pleased that Dr. Keith Smith announced two new Ohio 4-H appointments this past fall ~ Dr. Tom Archer as State 4-H Leader and Vicki Schwartz as Associate State 4-H Leader. Both Tom and Vicki have been great supporters of our International Program! Tom was a 4-H Educator in Shelby Co. for many years, and his family hosted an IFYE. Vicki was a 4-H Educator in Washington Co. for many years, and since joining the state staff several years ago, she has attended many of our international events and ceremonies. We are excited about our new state leadership team and thank them for the support they have shown thus far to our youth, families and volunteers!

## **Your Generosity Built The International Room & Raised the Flags!**

Your new *Nationwide and Ohio Farm Bureau 4-H Center* is up and running! And one of the most talked-about rooms in the building is the "International Room." Located on the 1<sup>st</sup> floor, it has a wall of windows which look out on a grove of old-growth trees. The view is stunning! We held our 2008 international events there, and were grateful each time for all those donors who made the room possible. Thank you sincerely! Additionally, the great hall of the building is colorful and interesting, as it is filled with flags from around the world sponsored by so many of you. We are terrifically proud of our "Ohio 4-H International Family" for so generously supporting these new endeavors which are benefitting so many. Please stop by to take a look when you can!

## **April Ribbon-Cutting and Labo Visit to Ohio**

April 4, 2008 brought the long-awaited formal opening of the *Nationwide and Ohio Farm Bureau 4-H Center*, highlighted by a grand Ribbon-Cutting Ceremony. We were honored that two Japanese representatives of Labo traveled all the way from Tokyo (Mr. Takio Yamada) and Seattle (Mr. Yusuke Majima) to attend. Takio and Yusuke presented Ohio 4-H with a beautiful piece of art-work for the International Room, and they enjoyed many meetings and events with Ohio 4-H leaders during their stay in Ohio. They were also introduced to Bea Cleveland, one of the major forces behind the establishment of the new 4-H Center. We are fortunate to have such loyal overseas partners!

## IFYE Update!

The International 4-H Youth Exchange (IFYE), founded in 1949 and the oldest 4-H exchange program, went on hiatus in 2003 so the program could be evaluated on the national level. The decision that emerged was that the program would no longer be sponsored and coordinated nationally since it does not serve youth of 4-H age. Ohio also no longer participates due to a lack of applicants for the program and a lack of resources to coordinate the program without national assistance. We cannot thank you enough for your support of the IFYE program these many years, and we appreciate our many donors who have shifted their financial support to our other important exchange opportunities for 4-H age youth. *Danke, Gracias, Merci and Tak to our IFYE donors!*

July 2008 brought a very special event to IFYE Alumnus ~ an Ohio IFYE Reunion Weekend here in Columbus, sponsored by Bea Cleveland, John Mount and Jim Marquand. Former IFYEs traveled from far and wide to celebrate the heritage and history of this grand exchange program which has produced so much promise and international good-will. We express our sincere appreciation to Bea, John and Jim for making this possible! Also, we thank Dr. Kathy Cox and the entire planning committee for the many hours of hard work that went into organizing this event.

IFYE Alums are known as a talented group of people ... and Michelle Thomas Houts (1988, Ohio to Denmark) is no exception! We invite you to check-out Michelle's soon-to-be-published 1<sup>st</sup> book, called "The Beef Princess of Practical County" (Random House). It's a middle-grade novel about a young girl, Libby, who begins showing steers at the county fair, gets roped into entering a Beef Princess pageant, and is forced to find ways to deal with her worst enemies, the dreaded Darling sisters. Luckily, Libby can count on support from her always-level-headed best friend to help her through. It's a book about growing up, letting go, and family tradition. Michelle's own 4-H experiences, as well as those of her three children, contributed greatly to story that the fictional Libby tells in "The Beef Princess of Practical County." For more info, visit [www.michellehouts.com](http://www.michellehouts.com). Congratulations, Michelle!

## Kimono Exhibit and Japanese Cultural Activities in Canton

Looking for some exciting and educational family activities? An exquisite exhibition of Japanese Kimonos will visit only two U.S. locations this year ~ San Diego, CA and Canton, OH! The Feb. 8 – April 26 exhibit will be complemented by a wide array of events celebrating Japanese culture. Our own Stark Co. ICC, Marlene Beggs, will be involved with several of the events. Congratulations, Marlene! Please visit [www.kimonoexhibit.com](http://www.kimonoexhibit.com) for additional information on this extraordinary exhibit.



In closing, thanks to each of YOU for your support of the Ohio 4-H International Program! We hope that you will be able to join us this year, either by hosting, traveling or volunteering. We look forward to a new year of working, living and learning together in peace.

Best Regards,

*Mary Lynn Thalheimer*

Mary Lynn Thalheimer  
Manager, Ohio 4-H International Program