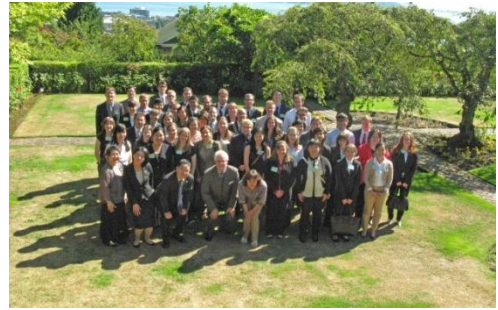


## New JET Program Participants Depart to Japan

This year 52 JET Program Participants (JETs), including 48 Assistant Language Teachers and 4 Coordinators for International Relations, departed to Japan from Seattle.

On June 21 and 22, the Consulate, in cooperation with the Pacific Northwest JET Program Alumni Association (PNWJETAA), held a two-day training session for the new JETs. TEFL (Teaching English as a Foreign Language) and “Teaching in the Target Language” workshops were presented by Dr. Suzan Kobashigawa of Northwest University and gave the new



JETs an opportunity to gain hands-on teaching practice. Other training topics included life in Japan, Japanese culture as it relates to school and office settings, community involvement, and how to maximize one's experience as a JET.



On July 26, a Pre-Departure Orientation for the new JETs was held at the Official Residence of the Consul General of Japan. The key note speech was delivered by Mr. Sam Shepherd, Chair of the Japan-America Society of the State of Washington. He emphasized the importance of developing Japanese language skills as a tool for inter-cultural communication and gaining the ability to adapt to new experiences.

Then-Acting Consul General Tomoko Dodo hosted a Sendoff Reception, which immediately followed the Orientation. Representatives from local Japan-related groups, prefectural clubs, and PNWJETAA attended to wish the new JETs “Bon Voyage”. In her opening remarks, Acting

Consul General Dodo expressed her high hopes for the new JETs to go to Japan as cultural ambassadors for the US and to return as cultural ambassadors for Japan. It was stressed that the JET Program plays an important role in contributing to quality English language education in Japanese schools and in strengthening international relations at the local government level. The new JETs were reminded that the Japanese Government continues the JET Program despite

facing financial challenges and it has extremely high expectations for the new JETs to accomplish the goals of the program.

The new JETs gave brief self-introductions and one participant gave a speech on behalf of the group. Greetings were then delivered by special guests of the event.

