

Snapshot of February and March

*Thailand (for STINT Mid-year Conference)

*Ski and Snowboard Camp in Fukushima

*USC Vision Trip in Tokyo for one week

*Spring Retreat/Training for students in preparation for *Shinkan* (Japan's "welcome weeks" on their universities)

*Shinkan planning with Japanese staff for month of March

*Plus we had many visitors visiting our team this past month

***NOTE: The campus ministry of Japan Campus Crusade for Christ changed their name to Student Impact because "JCCC" was confusing for Japanese students.**

"All over the world this gospel is bearing fruit and growing, just as it has been doing among you since the day you first heard it and understood God's grace in all its truth." Colossians 1:6



Sawatdee Kaa! No, that's not Japanese. It's Thai for "hello!" Our team had the privilege of going to Thailand for the STINT Mid-year Conference during the first few weeks of February. This conference was an opportunity for STINTers from Thailand, East Asia and Japan to come together for a time of encouragement and renewal. God blessed our team by sending Tom and Karen Virtue to coach us throughout the week, which was especially helpful for Joe and me in learning how to better lead our team. Though our team is diverse in almost every way possible, God's showing us what His love *truly* means through our relationships with each other.

Before going to Chiang Mai, where the conference was held, our team went to Koh Hai, a small island in southern Thailand. One of my favorite parts of going to Koh Hai was playing soccer every day with the Thai workers (*see picture above*). We became good friends and I was really sad to leave. When our STINT team got to Chiang Mai, I made a photo album for my new friends and sent it to them along with a Thai Bible and Thai Christian books that were recommended to me by a Muslim-turned Christian Thai girl from this same region. I've been praying that God will help my Thai friends to understand what it means to have a relationship with Him. I'm not even sure if they can read in Thai because some of them didn't get good education, but I'm praying that somehow God will reach them and maybe I'll get to visit them next year at next year's STINT conference . . . (continued on other side)



Back in Japan . . .

Yes, it's official. I decided to re-STINT next year. Though I fell in love with Thailand and felt a huge burden for the Thai people to know Jesus, my time away from Japan confirmed my call to Japan. Coming back to Tokyo felt like returning home. I can really see myself in Japan long-term and not knowing Japanese or getting to really learn it this year has been a frustration. If I committed to Japan this upcoming year, I'd be able to learn Japanese full-time before doing ministry. So I spent a lot of time asking the Lord to show me what He would have me do – another year of STINT? Or was I ready to make the commitment for long term? I asked some of you for specific prayer too and really, it was only after you prayed that I finally had a peace about my decision to re-STINT for next year. Thank you so much for praying if you prayed! Thinking about what to do next year has been heavy on my mind since November and it's such a relief to have peace about the next step.



Almost immediately after returning to Japan, our team went to Fukushima for Student Impact's snow retreat. Yuko, a girl I had met at our Halloween party (she was in my October newsletter) came to the retreat only because I invited her the week before and you (my financial supporters) helped pay for her to go. She really needed to come to experience Christian community, but I didn't know how much she needed to come until after it was over and she told me about some hard things she was going through. Since going to the ski camp, we've been able to meet up a couple times and she also came to our spring retreat which was a huge praise because she really bonded with other Japanese Christian students. I can't go into too much detail, but please remember Yuko in your prayers. She's a recent believer who needs to understand what it means to be loved.

As you can see from the pictures and "snapshot of Feb/March", a lot happened that I don't have room to update you on in this newsletter. If you want a more complete picture of what went on since my last update please go to www.xanga.com/jessica_tekawa. Arigatoo! God bless!

Love, Jessica Joy

Prayer Requests:

- * At times this past month I've felt overwhelmed and helpless in talking with some of the Japanese students about their depression and circumstances. I'm encouraged to see some taking steps to recover by being open and asking for help, but I think it's going to be a long road even though they do know Jesus. Pray for the Japanese believers to be healed of wounds from their past and from the culture.
- * Japanese universities begin school the first week of April, which also is the beginning of the shinkan period, the six week period in which clubs recruit freshmen to join their club. Our STINT team will be broken up onto different Student Impact staff teams to go to multiple universities. Pray that we Americans will work well with the Japanese staff despite language barriers.
- * Pray for humility and wisdom for Joe and me as we lead our team. Pray for our team too that we may continue to love the Lord, love our team and love others well. This has been a hugely refining year for our team individually and corporately, which has been a testament to God's mighty power at work!