

# International Education Matters

Summer 2003

## A Forum for Issues Pertaining to Intensive English Programs

### "Language in Motion"

Michiru Matsumoto came to the Intensive English program at Juniata College with the goal completing her undergraduate degree at this small liberal arts college in central Pennsylvania. In our minds, Michiru will always be famous for her incredible dedication to a unique outreach program called "Language in Motion" -- she has set the "Language in Motion" record for the most presentations done by a single student in one academic year. "Language in Motion" is an innovative way for international students and study-abroad returnees to enrich the high school language curriculum of the local public schools.

Michiru participated in two ways. First, she, as do many other international students, went into language classes to do introductory presentations on Japanese language and culture, including creative games and activities to involve the students. She also helped students learn basic Japanese phrases and to count to ten (always a hit with the younger set). She taught an Asian Studies class about Japanese history and culture using a Jeopardy game. She taught French students about kimonos and geography. She twice taught students in a senior Humanities class how to prepare Japanese food. She taught high school English students



about shopping in Japan and one student discovered, with adult permission, a Japanese headache remedy that helped her more than anything she had tried previously. Michiru kindly brought her more when she returned from Japan the next semester!

Michiru's second way of contributing to Language in Motion's effects on area students was by her taking on the task of teaching a continuing series of Japanese classes for an eighth grade gifted support language arts class. She went once every six school days in the fall semester and frequently in the spring to teach them speaking, writing and culture. The students produced an year-long calendar in Japanese and could carry on simple conversations. Some of them chose to do their individual class projects for the regular teacher about Japan because of the interest Michiru generated. The students were so appreciative, they threw her a surprise birthday party, bringing in a second Japanese student to teach them the appropriate things to do at such a party in Japan.

Michiru's dedication to doing her presentations thoroughly and her good humor and friendly demeanor have had a tremendous impact on the young people of our rural area, students who rarely have contact with people from other American ethnicities or other countries. Their world has significantly expanded because of her involvement, and we all thank her for that.