

*The 45th Annual All Japan Intercollegiate English
Oratorical Contest for the*

Fukuzawa Trophy

Keio English Speaking Society

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期間 2021年11月1日(月) ~ 12月31日(金)

＼ 新規団体登録で /

現金 **1,000円** プレゼント!!



キャンペーン対象条件

これまでにガクセイ協賛に登録をしたことがない団体

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TIMETABLE

- 10:45 DOORS OPEN
- 11:00 OPENING CEREMONY
- 11:25 IMPROMPTU SPEECH SESSION (1ST~10TH SPEAKER)
- 12:35 NOON RECESS
- 13:30 PREPARED SPEECH 1ST SESSION (1ST~5TH SPEAKER)
- 14:50 INTERMISSION
- 15:05 PREPARED SPEECH 2ND SESSION (6TH~10TH SPEAKER)
- 16:25 JUDGING TIME
- 17:25 CLOSING CEREMONY
- 18:30 REFLECTION
- 19:45 ALL OVER
- 

CONCEPT

Snowdrop

~ Seek Your 'Eternal Spring' ~

Snowdrop blooms in early spring after withstanding the long and harsh winter; it has been known as a symbol of hope for many generations.

The spread of COVID-19 has affected and dismantled people's everyday lives; Speech sections are no exceptions. Everybody that takes part in speech are facing dire situations as face-to-face contests and lectures are unavailable. Even in such peril, I ask the speakers to seek unexplored values, beliefs, and passion, and deliver them through heartfelt speeches. I also ask the judges, audience, and organizers to turn this contest into an opportunity to take in the speakers' message and to grasp fragments of hope that surely exists no matter how difficult it may be to see them. With such a wish, I have chosen the Concept and the Sub-concept.

GREETINGS



Kohei Itoh (prof.)

President of Keio University

Congratulations on hosting the 45th Annual All Japan Intercollegiate English Oratorical Contest for the Fukuzawa Trophy.

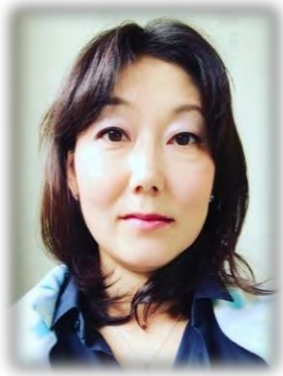
This speech contest has at its roots the words *"The essence of learning lies in its practical application"* and encourages us to do more than just read books. It is also a competition that reflects the spirit of Fukuzawa who emphasized the importance of public speaking as a way of exchanging and enriching knowledge.

Hosted every year by the members of the Keio English Speaking Society, 10 students selected from English Speaking Societies all over Japan take part in this competition. Approximately 100 people are involved in organizing this event, and with around 150 spectators in attendance on the day, it is one of the best English speech contests put together by university students.

Although the contest will be held face-to-face on campus, this year, due to the COVID-19 pandemic, no audience members will be present. However, the competition can be followed on YouTube. The participants have put in a lot of work to take part in this speech contest, and this, I am sure, has led them to grow in leaps and bounds. I have no doubt that they not only made great efforts in refining their skills to deliver perfect speeches, but also gave much deliberation into the content of their talks. It is my hope that their words, passionately spoken on the day, will be heard by many people, and through this, I trust that new discussions will be fostered and opportunities to deepen learning will be born.

Lastly, I would also like to express my sincere gratitude to all those involved in organizing this event for their unwavering support and cooperation.

GREETINGS



Hisayo Ogushi, Ph.D.

Professor of Faculty of Letters, Keio University

President of K.E.S.S.

“The Power of Eloquence”

John Quincy Adams, the sixth president of the United States, gave an address in June 1806 at Harvard University as Boylston Professor of Rhetoric [*sic*] and Oratory. Adams, who is considered as one of the most influential diplomats in the history of the United States, was clearly aware of the importance of oratory: “In the flourishing periods of Athens and Rome, eloquence was POWER. It was at once the instrument and the spur to ambition. The talent of public speaking was the key to the highest dignities;” Successively appointed to minister to Netherland, Prussia, Russia, and the Court of St. James’s, Adams appropriately understood the power of eloquence in diplomacy.

Rhetoric and Oratory has been a significant subject in education through the Western history. Sandra M. Gustafson discusses in *Eloquence is Power: Oratory and Performance in Early America* (U of North Carolina P, 2000) that the multi-racial and multi-lingual situation in the early America especially put importance on speaking because Europeans, Africans, and Native Americans needed to understand mutually mainly through vocal communications.

Thomas Jefferson, the third president of the United States as well as the person who drafted The Declaration of Independence, also knew the power of eloquence. Jay Fliegelman, showing the original draft copy of the Declaration with a series of accent marks, explains that Jefferson “thought deeply about how it should be read and heard” (*Declaring Independence: Jefferson, Natural Language and the Culture of Performance*. Stanford UP, 1993).

It is well-known that Yukichi Fukuzawa was the one who translated “speech” into Japanese “*enzetsu*.” He himself was very much aware of the importance of public speaking as follows: “My point is that the essence of learning lies in the activity of one’s mind, not in the mere reading of the books. . . . Observation, reasoning, and reading are the means through which knowledge is gathered; conversation the means of its exchange; reading and public speaking the means of the diffusion of learning” (Section 12 in *An*

The 45th Fukuzawa Trophy

Encouragement of Learning. Trans. David A Diliworth. Keio UP, 2012). Merely sitting and reading books does not promote our real intelligence: speech is one of the indispensable activities for our mind. Fukuzawa also acknowledges that speech is not a one-way communication from the speaker to the audience; rather, he believes that public speaking makes a common meeting ground for exchanging for ideas as Kin'ichi Matsuzaki points out (*Katarite toshite no Fukuzawa Yukichi*.Keio UP. 2005).

Now let us remember that Fukazawa produced the first Japanese translation of The Declaration of Independence in *Condition in the West*. His translation, it seems to me, inherits the power of eloquence, which Adams as well as Jefferson highly evaluated. Since oratory is instrumental, a skillful orator can be good at negotiating, persuading and probably even good at manipulating others. It is my hope that all the participants in the 45th Annual All Japan Intercollegiate English Oratorical Contest for the Fukazawa Trophy will recognize the power of eloquence in Fukuzawa's context. Public speaking is for promoting your intelligence, and for mutual understanding.

Last, but not least, I would like to show my sincere gratitude to K.E.S.S. executive committee members who worked so hard for organizing the contest in this challenging during coronavirus pandemic. May this year's contest for Fukuzawa Trophy be a memorable experience for all the contestants.

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Idisayo Gushi". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style with a large initial 'I'.

GREETINGS



Riu Sasaki

Chairperson of K.E.S.S. in 2021

It is my great pleasure and honor to give the greeting on behalf of Keio English Speaking Society. First of all, I would like to show my deepest gratitude to all of you. Without you, we could not hold this contest. Thank you.

This year, unlike last year, we were able to realize Fukuzawa Trophy in person. Although there will be no spectators, we hope that the speakers will take this precious opportunity to show the fruits of their preparation to the fullest. If you are a spectator, please enjoy the wonderful speeches through Youtube Live.

Sasaki

GREETINGS



Yumiko Minegishi

*Executive Chairperson of
the 45th Fukuzawa Trophy*

It is my great pleasure and honor to welcome you to the 45th Annual All Japan Intercollegiate English Oratorical Contest for the Fukuzawa Trophy. I would like to express my deepest gratitude to all of you here. Thank you very much for coming today and taking part in this contest.

I clearly remember the day I went to see the K.E.S.S. Elimination for the 43rd Fukuzawa Trophy two years ago. I was moved to tears when the speakers' strong messages struck a chord in my heart.

The concept of this year's Contest is "Snowdrop ~Seek Your "Eternal Spring"~". After withstanding harsh winter, snowdrop blooms in early spring and symbolizes "hope". In this contest, the outstanding speakers stand in the spotlight and share their own values hoping to change our world into better place. Their message will provide a new perspective to judges, audience, and organizers, ripening their minds as they take it in. We wish to make the contest an opportunity for all people to seek new ways and find hope to change our lives for the better, much like how plants start to sprout in "Eternal Spring".

Today, 10 wonderful speakers will be delivering their speeches in this contest. They will be sharing the values they have acquired through their lives and delivering fragment of hope to our world. In spite of the serious situation these days, they have spent such a long time and put in great effort to prepare their speeches. I strongly believe it is our responsibility to listen intently to them and seek hope to make the world better.

Once again, I appreciate all of those who have supported us to make this contest possible, including sponsors, judges, speakers, organizers, and the audience members. Thank you so much for your cooperation to make this contest fulfill with hope.

Yumiko Minegishi

RULES

Rules for the Contest

In this contest, each speaker is going to deliver two types of speeches.

- 1 . Impromptu Speech
- 2 . Prepared Speech

The rules of these speeches are the following.

【About Impromptu Speech】

- 1 . Each speaker will be given 3 topics.
- 2 . Each speaker will be given 4 minutes to prepare his or her speech, and will present it within 3 minutes.
- 3 . If the speaker continues the speech for more than 3 minutes, he or she will be asked to stop presenting the speech.

【About Prepared Speech】

- 1 . Speakers have 8 minutes to present his or her speech on topic of their own choice.
- 2 . If the speaker continues the speech for more than 8 minutes, he or she will be asked to stop presenting the speech. And he or she will be penalized by one rank.
- 3 . After the speaker finishes his or her presentation, there is a question and answer period. The questioner asks questions for 3 minutes.

INTRODUCTION OF FINAL JUDGES



Mr. Matthew Miller

He is from the United States and is currently an English language instructor at Tokyo University of Foreign Studies. The focus of his research is foreign language education and he also works as an editor and writer for school textbooks. He has been a judge at various speech contests over the years and is honored to be given the chance to come to the Fukuzawa Trophy once again.

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Matthew Miller".



Ms. Asako Kakuta

She belonged to the International Society in Hitotsubashi University. She won the First Prize in Nitobe Cup in 2006, She won the First Prize in Mikami Cup, East Japan Cup and J. U. E. L. Cup in 2007. She won the Third Prize in Waseda trophy in 2007. And won the First Prize in Okuma Trophy in 2008. Currently, she is working at Sumitomo Corporation as a senior associate and is also a mother of a 3 years old girl.

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "A. Kakuta".



Mr. Yuya Kubota

He was a member of Waseda University E.S.A. (2012~2014), and KUEL Speech Instructor (2015). In 2014, he won the 1st prize at Waseda Trophy, Suekawa Trophy, Momiji Cup and many others. Also, in 2014, he won the 2nd prize at Ikeda Cup and Hosei Univ. President's Cup, and won the 3rd prize at Ohki Cup, Amano Trophy, Potato Cup and the President's Cup of the Univ. of the Sacred Heart. Six-time finalist of Todai Trophy (2015~2020), and won the 3rd prize in 2016, 2017 and 2020, the 2nd prize and the audience prize in 2019. Besides working at a real estate developer, he enjoys serving as a judge in various speech contests.

Yuya Kubota



Mr. Naoki Tamura

Earned an MBA degree in University of San Francisco, California, in 2005. Four-time All Japan English Speech Champion at Toastmasters in Japan. Competed at the World Championship of Public Speaking Semifinal three times in 2011, 2013, and 2015 in the United States.

Won 2nd place at a Semifinal of the World Championship of Public Speaking held in Las Vegas, becoming one of the Top 20 public speakers in the world in 2015.

The Champion of Inter Cultural English Exchange in 2010, 2015, 2019 and 2020.

A certified instructor for EIKEN, Test in Practical English Proficiency. Coaching business professionals for making effective presentations to global audiences.

Currently working for Institute for Strategic Leadership, managing & coordinating leadership programs for corporate executives in Tokyo.

Naoki Tamura

INTRODUCTION OF ELIMINATION JUDGES



Ms. Yuki Hirayama

She graduated from Waseda University.

She was the contest manager of Okuma Trophy and was also the finalist of the Amano Cup and Takasaki Mayor's Trophy in 2010.

She was also keen on Drama activity. She participated in The Four-University English Theatricals as an actor 2 years in a row.

Currently, she is a writer, also a YouTuber, and owns an English learning community on DMM. She has been spreading how English learning can be free and more enjoyable.

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Yuki Hirayama".



Ms. Yasuna Watanabe

At her request, details of her profile information will be omitted.

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Yasuna Watanabe".



Mr. Peter J. Collins

He graduated with a BA in literature from Gettysburg College and an MAT in TESL from the School for International Training. He lived and taught in Kenya, Taiwan, and Mexico before coming to Japan in 1995. He is now working at Tokai University's Language Education Center (LEC). In addition to communication classes, he teaches a course in academic research and presentation and another in the theory and practice of English education. He has also coached students for the LEC's annual speech contest and served as an elimination judge or final judge for several high school and university speech contests.

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Peter J. Collins".

INTRODUCTION OF K.E.S.S. ELIMINATION JUDGES



Mr. Rippei Yoshinaga

He graduated from Faculty of Economics, Keio University in 2019. As a member of Keio English Speaking Society (K.E.S.S.) and as a chief of its respective Speech Section, he mainly participated in public speaking events. Having immense passion for public speaking, Mr. Yoshinaga was fortunate enough to be a speaker at many national English oratorical contests at the intercollegiate level, winning prizes at Amano Trophy, Fukuzawa Trophy, Okuma Trophy, and more. Currently, he works at Deloitte Consulting LLC as a management consultant. He has mainly engaged in HR projects such as global Personnel System Design, global rollout of Talent Management System, People Analytics, and Digital Transformation of the Workforce.

Rippeii Yoshinaga



Mr. Ryoichiro Kobayashi

He is an Assistant Professor, Tokyo University of Agriculture. M.A. in Linguistics. Chief of the Speech Section, Sophia University E.S.S. 2012. 1st prize: Ogawa Cup 2011, Mikami Cup, Nitobe Cup, and the Williams Cup 2012. 2nd prize: Sophia Cup, Mikami Cup 2011, EAST JAPAN Cup, Ohki Trophy 2012, and the Todai Trophy 2013. 3rd prize: Golden Cup 2010, Waseda Trophy, J.U.E.L. Cup, Nitobe Cup 2011, Waseda Trophy and Suekawa Cup 2012 among others. He has judged speech contests including Golden Cup, J.U.E.L. Cup, Nitobe Cup, Amano Trophy, etc.

Ryoichiro Kobayashi

JUDGING SHEET FOR THE ELIMINATION

Elements	Poor←→Good	Comment	Subtotal
Contents	Choice of Topic	1 · 2 · 3 · 4 · 5	
	Title	1 · 2 · 3 · 4 · 5	
	Originality	1 · 2 · 4 · 6 · 8 · 10	
	Analysis	1 · 3 · 6 · 9 · 12 · 15	
	Organization	1 · 3 · 6 · 9 · 12 · 15	
	Significance	1 · 5 · 10 · 15	
			/65
Delivery	Verbal	1 · 3 · 6 · 9 · 12 · 15	
			/15
English	Written	1 · 2 · 4 · 6 · 8 · 10	
	Oral	1 · 2 · 4 · 6 · 8 · 10	
			/20
Judge Comment	Judge's Signature ;		/100

JUDGING CRITERIA FOR THE ELIMINATION

Contents	Choice of Topic	Whether he/she has a clear message that changes audience's feelings and actions. Whether he/she has a clear ideal situation of his/her speech.
	Title	Whether the title of his/her speech is appropriate. Ex) Title Manner • Length • Correct English • Memorable etc...
	Originality	Whether his/her speech is unique.
	Analysis	Whether his/her opinion is constructive and original.
	Organization	Whether his/her opinion is constructed logically through his/her speech.
	Significance	Whether his/her speech show its significance in the content.
Delivery	Verbal	Whether he/she delivers his/her opinion efficiently and effectively by using his/her own voice. Ex) Volume • Stress • Speed • Pause etc...
English	Written	Whether he/she writes English correctly and naturally. Ex) Grammar • Choice of Words etc...
	Oral	Whether he/she speaks English correctly and naturally. Ex) Pronunciation • Accent • Intonation

JUDGING SHEET FOR THE IMPROMPTU SPEECH

Elements		Poor←→Good	Comment	Subtotal
Direction		1 · 5 · 10 · 15		/15
Contents	Introduction	Attention Getting	1 · 2 · 3 · 4 · 5	
		Preview	1 · 2 · 3 · 4 · 5	
	Body	Analysis	1 · 2 · 4 · 6 · 8 · 10	
		Organization	1 · 2 · 4 · 6 · 8 · 10	
	Ending	Review	1 · 2 · 3 · 4 · 5	
		Memorable Statement	1 · 2 · 3 · 4 · 5	
English		1 · 2 · 4 · 6 · 8 · 10		/10
Delivery	Verbal		1 · 2 · 4 · 6 · 8 · 10	
	Non-Verbal		1 · 2 · 4 · 6 · 8 · 10	
Judge's Signature ;				/85

JUDGING CRITERIA FOR THE IMPROMPTU SPEECH

Direction		Whether the topic and the contents he/she told are connected, and his/her claim is clear.	
Contents	Introduction	Attention Getting	Whether he/she gives the audience the motivation to listen to his/her speech.
		Preview	Whether he/she expresses his/her claim effectively in the introduction.
	Body	Analysis	Whether his/her opinion is constructive and original.
		Organization	Whether his/her opinion is constructed logically through the speech.
	Ending	Review	Whether he/she expresses his/her claim effectively in the ending.
		Memorable Statement	Whether he/she gives the audience the motivation to sympathize with his/her opinion.
English		Whether he/she uses correct English in the writing and speaking. Ex) Pronunciation • Accent • Intonation • Grammar etc...	
Delivery	Verbal	Whether he/she delivers his/her speech efficiently and effectively by using his/her own voice. Ex) Volume • Stress • Speed • Pause etc...	
	Non-Verbal	Whether he/she delivers his/her opinion efficiently and effectively by appealing to other's eyesight. Ex) Posture • Gesture • Facial Expression • Eye Contact etc...	

JUDGING SHEET FOR THE PREPARED SPEECH

Elements		Poor←→Good	Comment	Subtotal
Contents	Choice of Topic	1 · 2 · 3 · 4 · 5		
	Title	1 · 2 · 3 · 4 · 5		
	Originality	1 · 2 · 4 · 6 · 8 · 10		
	Analysis	1 · 2 · 4 · 6 · 8 · 10		
	Organization	1 · 2 · 4 · 6 · 8 · 10		
	Significance	1 · 2 · 4 · 6 · 8 · 10		
Delivery	Verbal	1 · 3 · 6 · 9 · 12 · 15		
	Non-verbal	1 · 2 · 4 · 6 · 8 · 10		
English	Written	1 · 2 · 4 · 6 · 8 · 10		
	Oral	1 · 2 · 4 · 6 · 8 · 10		
Question and Answer	Efficiency	1 · 2 · 4 · 6 · 8 · 10		
	Effectiveness	1 · 2 · 4 · 6 · 8 · 10		
Judge Comment	Judge's Signature ;			/115

JUDGING CRITERIA FOR THE PREPARED SPEECH

Contents	Choice of Topic	Whether he/she has a clear message that changes audience's feelings and actions. Whether he/her has a clear ideal situation of his speech.
	Title	Whether the title of his/her speech is appropriate. Ex) Title Manner • Length • Correct English • Memorable etc...
	Originality	Whether his/her speech is unique.
	Analysis	Whether his/her opinion is constructive and original.
	Organization	Whether his/her opinion is constructed logically through his/her speech.
	Significance	Whether his/her speech show its significance in the content.
Delivery	Verbal	Whether he/she delivers his/her opinion efficiently and effectively by using his/her own voice. Ex) Volume • Stress • Speed • Pause etc...
	Non-verbal	Whether he/she delivers his/her opinion efficiently and effectively by appealing to other's eyesight. Ex) Posture • Gesture • Facial Expression • Eye Contact etc...
English	Written	Whether he/she writes English correctly and naturally. Ex) Grammar • Choice of Words etc...
	Oral	Whether he/she speaks English correctly and naturally. Ex) Pronunciation • Accent • Intonation
Question and Answer	Efficiency	Whether he/she supports his/her opinion efficiently based on the questions.
	Effectiveness	Whether he/she supports his/her opinion effectively based on the questions.

INTRODUCTION OF PARTICIPANTS



1st Speaker

Mr. Shoki Yoshikawa (Doshisha University)
“From Your Children to You”

将来、誰もが子どもを持ち、良い家庭を築きたいと一回は思い描くと思いません。

しかし、そこには、多くの障害があります。そこで、私のスピーチが、将来、皆様が良い家庭を築く手助けになることを願います。



2nd Speaker

Ms. Mitsuha Maeda (Hosei University)
“Destination of Gift”

あなたはギフテッドという言葉をしっていますか。彼らは一つ何かは抜け出て出来ることを持っていますが、90%のギフテッドが生きにくいと感じています。私たちは何をすべきでそれをするとな何のメリットがあるのでしょうか。



3rd Speaker

Ms. Rin Oshima (Aoyama Gakuin University)
“One Sentence of The Day”

日記の習慣についてのスピーチです。

3年前、留学をしていた際に、様々な経験を記憶に残したい、英語のライティング力を上げたい、という思いから書き始めた日記が、結果的に想像以上のメリットをもたらしました。



4th Speaker

Ms. Rimi Watanabe (Tsuda University)
“Carry It Out Not to Pop Out”

第三者に無断で自分のセクシュアリティを公開されてしまう「アウトティング」という行為を防ぐためには、その人が自分の性的志向や性自認をどのような制限を設けて公開しているかを確認することが有効です。



5th Speaker

Ms. Kaori Fujiwara (University of the Sacred Heart)
“Which is strange?”

突然ですが、私の顔って非常識ですか？マナー違反ですか？実は私、こういうこと、日常的に間接的に言われているんです。「すっぴんだから」という理由だけで…。なんで生まれ持った顔をこんなにも否定されなきゃいけないんでしょう？化粧に対する考えが変わったら幸いです。



6th Speaker

Ms. Urara Matsumura (St. Paul's University)
“Promote Food Barrier-Free”

食物アレルギーや宗教・信条上の理由で食べれない食べ物がある人が、正しい成分表示の提示によって、安全に食を楽しめるようにする、フードバリアフリーを日本で促進することを目指しています。



7th Speaker

Ms. Yui Koyano (Sophia University)
“Save the House”

空き家問題は自分には関係ないと思っていませんか？実は、空き家問題はとても身近に、容易に生じ得る問題です。あなたと家族の大切な家を空き家問題から守るために今すべきことについて伝えたいです。



8th Speaker

Mr. Sojun Ikeda (Hosei University)
“What Makes a Good Listener?”

「よい聞き手」とはどんな人だと思いますか？私はスピーチを通してよい聞き手になるために必要な考え方をお伝えしたいと思います。私は皆さんが相手の立場に立って考えることができる人になってほしいです。



9th Speaker

Ms. Yurie Kagawa (Mukogawa Women’s University)
“For all lives”

私たちが、普段食卓で何気なく食べる一切れのお肉の背景には犠牲となった動物の命がある、という当たり前の事実を再認識し、食べ物に感謝の気持ちを持つ事こそが、畜産業における問題の解決にも繋がるでしょう。



10th Speaker

Ms. Nao Sugita (Keio University)
“A Bridge Between Mei and People”

「出る杭は打たれる」空気の中で、少数派の意見や価値観は無視・拒否されてしまうことがあります。「出る杭」が集団に活かされるために、まず第一歩として少数派と多数派の橋渡しをしてみませんか？

PRIZES

【1st~3rd Prize】

	1st Prize	2nd Prize	3rd Prize
Keio English Speaking Society	Fukuzawa Trophy Certificate A Travel Ticket	Trophy Certificate A Gift Certificate	Trophy Certificate A Gift Certificate
CASIO	Electronic dictionary		

【Participant Prize】

Keio English Speaking Society	Herbarium
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【Applicant Gift】

Keio English Speaking Society	Starbucks Ticket
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PAST YEAR'S WINNERS

- 1st Mr. Hisataka Takasugi (Keio University)
- 2nd Ms. Ruri Ikeda (Univ. of the Sacred Heart)
- 3rd Mr. Akihiko Hakura (Waseda University)
- 4th Ms. Naomi Hayashi (Keio University)
- 5th Mr. Naomichi Komuro (Hitotsubashi University)
- 6th Mr. Akihiko Mizuno (Keio University)
- 7th Ms. Etshuko Kato (Seisen Woman's College)
- 8th Ms. Izumi Kobayashi (Keio University)
- 9th Mr. Ken Takehisa (Hitotsubashi University)
- 10th Mr. Makoto Ito (Kyoto University)
- 11th Mr. Shihei Sakazaki (Waseda University)
- 12th Mr. Azumi Kuroiwa (Keio University)
- 13th Mr. Chikara Nagano (Keio University)
- 14th Mr. Koichiro Taniyama (Waseda University)
- 15th Ms. Yuko Morishita (Keio University)
- 16th Mr. Hyoe Nakagiri (Keio University)
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WINNER'S SPEECH, 2020



“Be the Main Actor”

Ms. Haruka Kuchiki

Sophia University

Health. This is an element that fundamentally supports our life. Speaking of health, some of you may say, “Hey Haruka, I’m sick of hearing that word!” Why? I know, because we got attacked by COVID-19 this year! But the situation is changing. Recently, in Japan, we get through the worst of it, and few people have become worse. A vaccine may be made effective soon. Let’s hang in there a little longer. In the near future, we can regain our health, the fundamental, to get relieved.

How good would it have been if I could tell you like this? Can we really get relieved? Can we be in good health when the pandemic finishes? No, unfortunately, we can’t. If we want to be truly healthy, we have to work on changing our awareness toward our health. Today, I would like for all of us to reevaluate our full awareness of the concept of "health," thinking about how we can protect ourselves. I hope this speech can make a change in all of us so that we can truly manage to maintain our health.

Currently, we are so sensitive to be in good health. We do everything we can do, such as washing and sanitizing our hands or wearing masks all the time. We meet on Zoom today because we want to protect our health, right? COVID-19 heightened our awareness toward our health and changed our actions.

However, the awareness we have toward our health right now is only temporary. All of you want to say good-bye to life that you have to sacrifice meeting someone or going somewhere just for protecting your health, right? COVID-19 almost forced us to change. Before the pandemic, we weren’t like what we are now. We were not who always protect our health on our own initiative regardless of the condition.

When I said we were not healthy enough before, some of you may feel that “I didn’t get sick. I had no health problem to study or work. What was the matter with that?” Let me share with you data that the Ministry of Health, Labor, and Welfare reported in 2017. It showed that the number of people who die because of lifestyle diseases such as heart, brain, or lung disease has been increasing for the past seventy years, and now they occupy two thirds of the whole cause of death in Japan. Also, surprisingly, lifestyle diseases include an unbalanced diet, lack of exercise, and even stress, which we don’t usually think “sick”.

Please think about how your life was before the COVID-19 pandemic. How many of you can confidently say that you had all of a balanced diet, enough exercise, and less stress? Yes, it means, if we wait the peaceful post-pandemic days without looking at again our thinking and actions toward our health, we face the risk to become rather unhealthy. That's ironic!

Then, why are we allowed to be so impoverished in health-consciousness? One of the reasons is the misunderstanding toward doctors and medical science. Nowadays medical treatment is so great that we think doctors anyway cure our diseases in the end. This kind of mentality makes us take our health for granted and have little to none awareness of our health.

However, such a way of thinking is wrong. Being born into a doctor's family, I was lucky enough to take in the basics of medicine since I was little. My parents told me stories about their job and patients. Some stories are about patients beyond help. At that time, I know the doctors do their best to save the patients, but I feel their powerlessness, realizing the medical science doesn't guarantee our health.

From their stories, I learned that it is eventually our personal actions that form our health. For example, a doctor requires a patient with high blood pressure to carry out a dietary restriction. It is because, with high blood pressure, proper food management on a day-to-day basis is undoubtedly what ultimately helps the patient prevent the risk of further organ damage, and other potential illnesses in the long run. No matter how good medicine the doctor gives you, your condition is never be improved as expected unless you follow the requirement from the doctor.

We are exactly who should be the main actor to control our own health. We have to change our awareness and actions. If we stop paying attention and lowering the awareness toward health after this pandemic, it means that we ourselves throw away an absolutely essential way to keep us healthy. Isn't it a waste to choose to walk on a way to unhealthy ourselves?

Being the main actor to control our own health can be achieved by a small step and never be nerve-racking. I recommend you to decide one or two things for your health from today, setting such as what to eat regularly, when to go to bed, or how much to drink alcohol, and to make it a habit. As for me, I make a habit of sleeping for more than six hours and carrying a water bottle with me, and it works. Even a habit is simple, it actually helps us a lot to be healthier.

For the last few months, in Japan, we often hear the word "New Normal". Is "New Normal" only relevant to COVID-19? No, it isn't! Why don't we make a "New Normal" of our awareness and actions to be healthy? Ladies and gentlemen, please do not stop paying attention to our health. We are exactly who have the responsibility to control our health condition. We are the main actors.

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Winter is on my head, but eternal spring is in my heart.

- *Victor Hugo* -

In every winter's heart there is a quivering spring, and
behind the veil of each night there is a shining dawn.

- *Khalil Gibran*

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