



Message for the 2021 Japan Bowl participants

皆さん、こんにちは。

It is a pleasure to send words of greeting and congratulations to all the students participating in the 2021 Japan Bowl Ontario. Now in its 4th year, I would like to take this opportunity to thank the Japan Society and Huron University College for their dedication in organizing this event.

I realize that for most high-school students, preparing for the Japan Bowl is both time-consuming and hard work. But the Japan Bowl is not just about learning the language. You are given a hefty taste of the culture, history, and social context that bring the language to life. I hear that this year you have been focusing on Hokkaido and Kyushu, and on the seasons. I love the idea of studying “verbs with multiple meanings,” and in particular, of studying “practical kanji”—so important when you come and visit Japan! And, I hope that you all enjoyed the Conversation Round in which you interviewed each other.

Whatever the results in the Japan Bowl, you are all to be congratulated on taking this first big step to acquire Japanese language skills, and by doing so, for playing a role in establishing understanding between our different cultures. Many Japan Bowl participants go on to university careers that feature Japanese studies as part of the curriculum and, after graduation, go on to pursue careers that incorporate further contact with Japan. We hope that you will do so too.

In the same way that learning English helped me to better understand the world beyond Japan, I am confident that learning Japanese will lead to a greater awareness and knowledge of the world for this year’s Japan Bowl participants. Please do remember that human beings and societies have much more in common than they have differences and it is up to all of us to nurture and cultivate this common ground so that we may create a better society for the future.

学生の皆さん、

将来、是非、日本とカナダ両国の架け橋となってください。いつの日か、どこかで、皆さんとお会いすることを楽しみにしております。