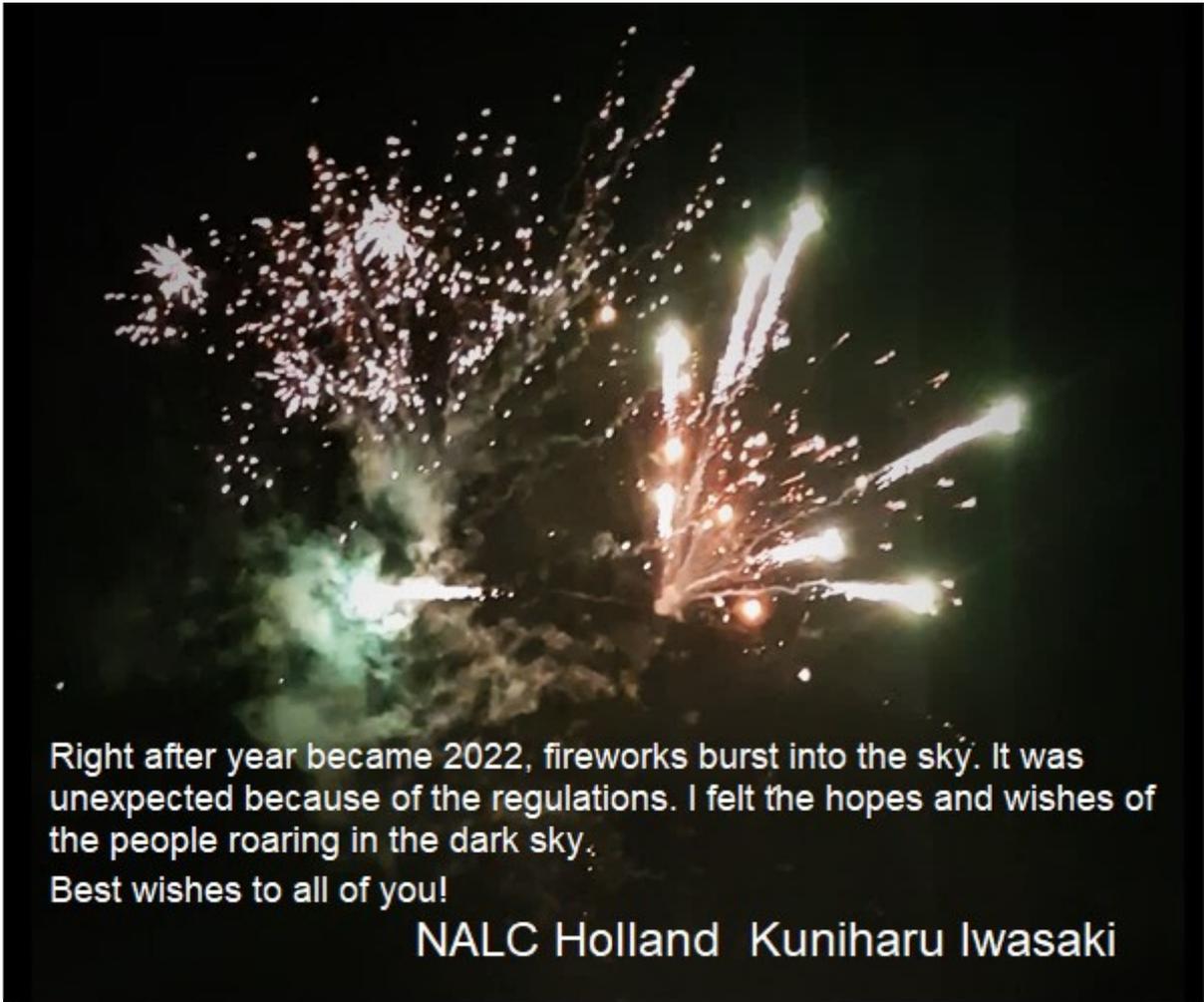


January 17, 2022

## NALC Holland *Newsletter vol.12*



## ~~ My experience through volunteer work ~~

**Junpei Honda**

Hello everyone, this is Junpei Honda. I'm student at NHL Stenden Hogeschool located in Leeuwarden, Friesland. In Japan, I'm bachelor's degree in economics at Oita university, then I came here as an exchange. In this time, let me talk about the reason why I decided to do volunteer work and this contents, and then I'll explain my opinion and future prospect.



### My motive of the volunteer work

In the beginning, let me explain how I came to volunteer. I was required to take "Volunteering" as part of my university's minor program. I was required to find an organization or group of my choice, volunteer for a specified amount of time, and write a report. I had a core desire to help Japanese people living in the Netherlands. I searched on the Internet and found "NALC HOLLAND", which was exactly what I was looking for. It said that it was an organization that supports volunteer activities of Japanese living in the Netherlands, which matched my desire to help people living in the Netherlands who needed help.

### #1 In NEMO SABO

The theme of my volunteer activities is "What can we do to prevent Japanese people living in the Netherlands from loneliness and isolated?" Since my major at university is European studies and politics, especially migration issue. I think that Japanese people living in the Netherlands, including myself, are equivalent to "immigrants" in the broad sense of the word. I started volunteering to focus on the lives, feelings, and problems of individual immigrants, which are not covered in the lectures, and to clarify the structural problems, as well as to raise the question of how we can support them psychologically. The first activity was to coordinate and prepare the meeting place for the exchange meeting

between "Stiching Hirado-Noordwijk" and Japanese people. The event was held at a cafe called NEMO SABO in Amstelveen, an area next to Amsterdam where many Japanese people live. In primary section, I had a hard time because I didn't receive any response from the organization, but in the end, thanks to Mrs. Otsuka, we were able to communicate smoothly through video chats. On the day of the event, I was able to hear interesting stories about the history and relationship between Netherlands and Hirado, and the plans for this year's event from Mr. Sjef, and many other people. It was a very interesting and meaningful experience for me.



Meeting with 「Stiching Hirado-Noordwijk」

### #2 Help 4-years old boy

The next volunteer activity I experienced was to support a 4-years-old boy who has an older sister with autism. The boy usually attends kindergarten, but he sometimes suffers from loneliness and isolation because his sister tends to get more assistance and attention at his home.

Siblings of children with illnesses or disabilities are called "Kyo-dai ji" also known as Brussen in Dutch, and it has become so common that there is a government-wide support system for them. At the beginning of our visit to the boy's house, he was a bit nervous, and it was difficult to communicate with each other, but after an hour, we got to know each other better, smiled more, and we had a lot of fun playing. Perhaps it was fortunate that the boy's house had many of his favorite toys, so he didn't have to be concerned about playthings. Also, although the boy was only 4 years old, he was tolerant, and he had curiosity and good personality, which made communication with him easily. However, when playing with the boy, I sometimes presented him with rules that were too complicated for a 4-years-old, which sometimes confused him. After playing with him for a long time, it became easy to figure out what was fun, boring, or difficult from his behavior. In the latter half of the day, I was able to recognize the boy's slight changes in facial expressions and play with him, forgetting about the time I had to spend with him, focusing on how much I could entertain him within his capacity. 4-year-olds are at an important stage in their development. During this period, I think we were able to overcome a simple but difficult balance: too easy and they would get bored easily, too hard and they would get confused and lose motivation. As time went by, we began to trust each other, and we came to understand each other's needs. I was able to rethink and learn that trust is the foundation of human relationships, no matter how big the age difference is. And I think I was able to ease the loneliness of the boys, which is the axis of this research, even if only for a little while. I'm so appreciate for their parents' understanding in giving me the such an opportunity to play freely with the boy, and

it was a precious experience and very meaningful moment for each other.

### My own future prospect

Actually, I had a hard time keeping up with the lectures at the university. I was always on the receiving help from my friends and classmates, and I felt helpless because I didn't feel like I was helping anyone. This volunteer activity was obviously the only one that I was able to plan and achieve results for myself. In this sense, I learned a great deal and it was the most fulfilling time for me. In addition, as the time passed, I feel that I was able to build trusting relationships with many of the people I was involved with, even if only slightly. This is something that can never be replaced by money. What I felt most strongly was that the sense of happiness is greater and more meaningful from the free smiles, gratitude, and experience of being enjoyed by the boy through volunteer activities than from any amount of money spent to acquire something. I think this is the essence of volunteer activities. I will finish the exchange and return to Japan. In the short term, I'll be able to help Dutch friends who has plan to come to Japan as an exchange from next semester. And then, in the long term, I would like to continue to support those who need help.

In conclusion,  
Thanks to Mr. Iwasaki who the chairman of NALC Holland, and also Mrs. Kanan, besides all the other people who supported this volunteer activity, I could go on my experience. I have overwhelming appreciation for them. I really hope everybody who involved with my volunteering will be alright for the future.



## Report: Online Potluck (September-December 2021)



Being together with one dish and talk comfortably about the thema such as experiences about volunteer activities. Who knows, in that kind of occasions, you might find someone who helps you with your daily small problems, or you might find a volunteer job that you can offer. That is “ potluck” Ms. Kannan and Ms. Osada offered their living rooms to organise “potluck” in the past. Because of Corona it is not possible, thus we organise “ Online Potluck” Unfortunately, it seems that Corona problem continues verder. Please join our “on-line potluck” , it is once a month, 2 hours on Sunday afternoon. The following is the summary of “online Potluck” of the last half year. Besides Nalc volunteer stories, the other volunteer activities of ‘JACOP’ and “Furusato house” were introduced and discussed.

### “ My whole family suffered from corona”

My 14-year-old second daughter got Corona. Isolation in the house was difficult. Unfortunately, at that time, the 17-year-old eldest daughter was in her exam period at her school. She had to leave the house thus, it was an extra pressure for her. Later, this eldest daughter, my husband and I also got Corona. As a measure against corona, I think that it is necessary to manage the physical condition by improving immunity.

### “Volunteer activities”

- Volunteer access to welfare facilities is restricted due to the corona.
- When you haven't been to volunteer for two years, your name will be removed from the list.
- Members continue to visit elder people doing the gardening /caring about meals.
- Cooperation with “Nichiran Net” is necessary.
- Small mutual help activities in the neighborhood can be found throughout the Netherlands.
- Volunteer members also need help. After the death of an elderly person, there are cases where the volunteer members have mental problems. It seems that support such as listening to the story is necessary.

### “Exchange with the elderly Dutch” at NEMO Cafe (Amstelveen)

This is a place to interact with elderly Dutch people near NEMO Cafe. You can learn Dutch culture from them. The idea came from a survey that elderly Dutch people feel lonely. This project might be a good contribution to the local community.

### “Supporting volunteer activities of an international student”

NALC Holland supports volunteer activities in the Netherlands for Mr. H; an international student from Oita University. Volunteers were carried out mainly through the activities of JACOP.

### Exchange with “Hirado --Noordwijk Foundation”

This group will hold a Japan Festival in June 2022. It is scheduled that Nalc will rent a table for Public Relations.

### “About the general meeting”

It is planned to organize the meeting both “ face to face” and “on-line”. The actual meeting will be held at a meeting room above NEMO cafe ( Amstelveen). Everyone is welcome there. For those who feel uncomfortable going out of the house, the meeting will be able to follow “on-line” via zoom.

(M. Higashi)



## “The restaurant of mistaken orders”

"All the employees giving service to you are people with dementia. Please be aware that they might make mistakes with your orders. We are happy if we will hear the reactions from you like; ' Oh, I've got something different than what I ordered ! Never mind, I eat this as this looks also delicious.' We sincerely hope that this kind of easy-going feeling will spread in Japan. "

The website of “The restaurant of mistaken order” starts with the above text. Further, it shows about this special restaurant projects which shows happy faces both of the patients and the customers. <http://www.mistakenorders.com>

The working people are dementia patients and are generally elderly. Even if they speak to the customers with cheerful smiles, they make mistakes in the order. One have a tray with food on it, but she doesn't know which table she should bring. One drank water for the customer, the other asked the customer to help him writing down the order in a memo. But everyone smiles, and the feeling of being cheerful is transmitted from the TV screen. And after the work, the cash salary in the envelope was distributed to each person (they are very proud and happy to receive it!).

The fun event is then over.

### A daughter living with her mother with dementia:

- My mother does not laugh so much at home. She will soon forget what she experienced today, but anyway I think she enjoyed today.

### Caregivers who usually take care of in the facility:

- Mr. X was delighted today. He said: "I could do something for the society today!!" Today, I thought that this smile was the true face of Mr. X. It was a good opportunity for me to look back on my many years of career as a caregiver.
- There are various kinds of dementia, but unfortunately, in the society, they talk like: "Mrs A is a person with dementia". Instead, it must be understood as "a person named Mrs A who has dementia".



This project is ringing the bell: "Dementia is misunderstood in the society, and the patients are sometimes isolated. Instead, a tolerant and comfortable society should be there. People with dementia should be able to live together together with the people without this sickness"

This project with this unique name seems to have been welcomed by many people, and the similar shops (such as "Happening Ramen" and "The world's kindest restaurant") have been created.

I hope it will be an opportunity for many people to change their way of thinking about dementia.

(H. Masako)

You can also read an interesting interview article: <https://nakamaaru.asahi.com/article/12660339>

The story how "The Restaurant of Mistaken Order" project started:

A director of a TV station visited a facility for people with dementia. Several residents were making hamburgers together. ( In that facility the patients were doing everything what they can do)

However, they finished in dumplings, in stead of hamburgers. He was surprised and almost said: "What? Didn't you make a hamburger steak?" But he did not say that as no one was in trouble. Everyone was eating happily. That experience led this TV director to promote "The restaurant of mistaken orders"



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An introduction to.....

## TV program: “ Restaurant Misverstand “

“ Alzheimer Nederland ” made a TV program “ Restaurant Misverstand” which summarizes the 6-week project in which about 10 people in their 50s/60s who suffered from Alzheimer's disease gather and work at a restaurant under the guidance of a professional cook. In their daily life they are quite confused because of the disease. Examples: One says his age 10 years older, the other can not say the name of his child.



Participants have no horeca experience (except for one). One handles fish terrifyingly while saying "I hate fish". One goes to get 4 small plates but comes back with 10 glasses. One can not fold several napkins. These people worked in a restaurant after various horeca trainings.

One took the order but made a mistake when telling the kitchen and started crying, "My brain doesn't work with logic! My head is exploded with too many information." One can not remember the name of the dish and wrote it on a piece of paper, but left it somewhere. Many troubles happens also in the kitchen: mistake in measuring, burning the pot....

One lady says that she is happy to work in that restaurant, but at the same time she says in dark eyes; "I had a better job before Alzheimer! I am too young to get this sickness." And she looks for someone who are in the same situation. Fellow colleagues with the same sickness help such people, comfort and encourage each other to continue working. And while having the failures, confusion, regrets, and sadness, they laughed at the failures and said, "It's fun to work here, I'm happy to meet people with the same illness. Although I know that we are in the different speed required in the society, I have more self-confidence. "

Everyone seems to be even more happy when their family comes to eat. One of the family member said in tears; "I have never seen such a healthy and happy mother since she got Alzheimer. I am glad that she participated in this project."

The program also filmed a number of stories with their family.

- A patient: "I have a teenage boy. I'm afraid that he does not want to see me because I changed a lot because of my illness."
- A son of sick mother; "She still recognizes me, but one day she will not be able to do that. When do I say good-bye to her?"

Many politicians were invited to the project to watch. The program also includes a doctor's commentary on Alzheimer's disease. Alzheimer's disease have several types; for instance, one makes you expressionless, and the other keeps saying funny things. In any cases, it is clear that it is good that an Alzheimer patients works in this way. They did few tests before and after the project and the result was clear: After the project was better than before.

Examples of the test "Take this paper with your right hand, fold it in half and place it on your lap", "Draw the numbers on the clock face"

🌱 While I was shocked to see many young patients, I watched this program with interests. The show's moderator, Johnny de Mol, is cheerful and doing his job nicely. It is worth watching this program. You will find Seizoen 1 and 2. (M.Higashi)

<https://www.kijk.nl/programmas/restaurant-misverstand>





## After watching both the Dutch and the Japanese projects



In both in Japan and in the Netherlands, there are an increasing number of restaurants saying: "we leave the ordering job to the computer. It is more accurate than the human and saves labor costs." This happens at such as soba shops, hamburger shops, or even at expensive restaurants.

And, it is impossible to pull humans up to the computer level in terms of their accuracy. As the result, humans have no work to do as the computers take them over. In other words, I may say that humans have created a computer-dominated society where human have difficulties to live.

Not only the works at restaurants, but also in any kinds of works, the Japanese society may requests you strict sense of: "Finish your works speedy and without any mistakes". Does the typical Japanese seriousness leads them to do so? These two projects in The Netherlands and in Japan were the wake up call to everyone: "Let us make a society which accept mistakes and the slowness. People are not always perfect. Furthermore, you never know when you will get this kind of illness." I am glad to see these two projects in the two countries.

( M. Higashi )



'Vlinderstruik' is one of my favorite plant in my garden.

Looking forward seeing them flowering again late in the summer of 2022.

Masako Higashi



This beautiful Japanese esdoorn tree is in the garden of VU where I am active as a volunteer. I take care of the Japanese garden and the bonsai. Even in the Corona time, I enjoy the nature like beautiful flowers and the red colour in the autumn every year. Please visit, I am sure that you will enjoy.

Emiko Kannan

~~ From the committee ~~



Contribution 2021/2022 (22 euro per year )

NALC Holland aims to cover its expenses of the meetings and the office supply by your contribution.

We appreciate your kind understandings and cooperations.

Account name: stichting NALC Holland

Account number: NL67INGB0006896387

Any questions about the payment, please contact K. Matsubara  
( [kayenkayo@gmail.com](mailto:kayenkayo@gmail.com) )



Did you report about your volunteer activities ?

You are kindly asked to report about your volunteer activities to the committee.

Please send the form and send your report to [emiko@kannan.jp](mailto:emiko@kannan.jp) (NAC) or [kayenkayo@gmail.com](mailto:kayenkayo@gmail.com)

Download ( [nalcholland.nl](http://nalcholland.nl) → Time banking system → How Time banking system works → Point application form )



Annual financial report and activity report are updated on the website.

<http://nalcholland.nl/category/financial-activity-report/>

### Colofon

NALC Holland URL: <http://www.nalcholland.nl>

Contact : [masako@telfort.nl](mailto:masako@telfort.nl) / 06 2425 2523