

## A Note from New York: The Japanese Medical Society of America (JMSA)

JMAJ 52(3): 201–202, 2009

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The Japanese Medical Society of America (JMSA: <http://www.jmsa.org/>) was established in 1973 through the working relationship of 100 or so Japanese physicians in the greater New York area. The first president was Dr. George Nagamatsu, a well known urologist. The JMSA is involved in a variety of activities, and many members hold faculty appointments in Japanese medical schools as well as medical schools in the US. Current membership is approximately 200.

The scholarship program began with members contributing to the fund, but contributions from Japanese corporations and other individuals have grown over the years to the extent that approximately \$100,000 in scholarships is granted annually. The central theme of the scholarship program is that recipients must contribute to the Japanese community or to medical information exchange between Japan and the US. Thus there have been both Japanese and American recipients. Many past recipients now hold leadership positions within the JMSA.

The JMSA is active in providing community-related services such as lecture series and free medical consultations. The society also operates Japanese Community Outreach Program (JCOP), which is a program aimed at providing funding to a variety of healthcare-related NPOs that cater to the Japanese community. We solicit applications nationwide in the US, and grant approximately 10 awards following a very strict selection process. We are very grateful to many of Japanese corporations for funding this program.

Since 2005, the JMSA has taken a leadership role in Japanese Medical Support Network (JAMSNET: <http://www.ny.us.emb-japan.go.jp/jp/g/05.html>). This is a conglomeration of 20 or

so NPOs that provide health and mental health care services to the Japanese community in the New York area. Meetings have taken place at the Consulate General of Japan, which has supported JAMSNET greatly and with whom we have closely collaborated. We have also worked closely with the Japanese American Association of New York to organize a “Health Week” and “Senior Week” to promote community health awareness in the New York area. In this way, JAMSNET has improved communication amongst groups that provide services to the Japanese community. We are hoping that similar networks can be established in other areas of the US, and eventually around the world. For these efforts, we have recently been awarded the Foreign Minister’s Award by the Japanese Government.

The JMSA also remains acutely aware of Japanese nationals living in the US who have contributed tremendously to humanity through their achievements in science. We recently led efforts to restore Dr. Hideyo Noguchi’s gravesite in cooperation with Rockefeller University, the Japanese Consulate (New York), Woodlawn Cemetery, and the Noguchi Hideyo Kinenkai in Tokyo. Dr. Noguchi’s grave is located in Woodlawn Cemetery in the Bronx (New York). The cemetery plot is owned by Rockefeller University, which transported Dr. Noguchi’s remains to New York from the Ivory Coast, where he died. A bronze plaque on the gravestone reads “Through devotion to science, he lived and died for humanity.” We very much hope that many of the visitors to this gravesite will be inspired to dedicate more of themselves to activities that benefit others.

The JMSA is eager to collaborate with other

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like-minded organizations around the world. We are very grateful to the Japan Medical Asso-

ciation for providing us with this forum for reporting our activities.



**JMSA Scholarship Recipients at 2008 Annual Dinner (Author is 4th from left standing up.)**



**Dr. Noguchi's grave restoration ceremony, with members of JMSA Board members (Author is at all the way to the left.)**