

## The 2010 Reischauer Scholars Program Japan Day Honorees

By Naomi Funahashi, Reischauer Scholars Program Coordinator and Instructor

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The Stanford Program on International and Cross-cultural Education (SPICE) honored two of the top students of the 2010 Reischauer Scholars Program (RSP) at the RSP Japan Day event at Stanford University on August 16, 2010. The RSP, an online course on Japan and U.S.-Japan relations that is offered to high school juniors and seniors across the United States, recognized the students based on their coursework and exceptional research essays.

The event featured opening remarks by Gary Mukai, SPICE Director; Acting Consul General Hideyuki Mitsuoka, Consul General of Japan in San Francisco; and Professor Emeritus Daniel Okimoto, Stanford University. The program was highlighted by presentations by student honorees Rachel Waltman and Jiyoung Lee, who wrote research essays on changing roles of women in the workplace in Japan, and media censorship following the atomic bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki.

Named in honor of former Ambassador to Japan Edwin O. Reischauer, the RSP annually selects 25–30 exceptional high school students from throughout the United States to engage in an intensive study of Japan. Selected students will participate in this online course on Japan from February to June 2011. Currently entering its eighth year, the RSP provides students with a broad overview of Japanese history, literature, religion, art, politics, economics, and contemporary society, with a special focus on the U.S.–Japan relationship. Ambassadors, top scholars, and experts throughout the United States and Japan provide online lectures and engage students in live discussion sessions. Students also complete readings and weekly assignments, with the coursework culminating with an independent research project. Final research projects are printed in journal format, and students also lead presentations on Japan at their schools or in their local communities. Students who successfully complete the course earn Stanford Continuing Studies Program (CSP) credit and a Certificate of Completion from SPICE, Stanford University.

The 2011 Reischauer Scholars Program is currently accepting applications. Current high school sophomores, juniors, and seniors (Classes of 2011, 2012, and 2013) in the United States are eligible to apply.

Please download the 2011 Reischauer Scholars Program application at <http://reischauerscholars.org>. The application deadline for the 2011 RSP is October 15, 2010. All applications must be postmarked by this date. For more information, e-mail Naomi Funahashi, Reischauer Scholars Program Coordinator, at [nfunahashi@stanford.edu](mailto:nfunahashi@stanford.edu).

## The Reischauer Scholars Program: Educating the Next Generation of Global Citizens

By Rachel Waltman

Edwin O. Reischauer once said: "A great deal must still be done to educate people in the United States, Japan, and everywhere else for peaceful participation in a world community." The Reischauer Scholars Program (RSP) does just that. RSP is an internet-mediated course offered through the Stanford Program on International and Cross-Cultural Education (SPICE) that provides students with a broad overview of Japanese history, religion, economics, and contemporary society, with a focus on the U.S.-Japan relationship. RSP was a wonderful experience, and I would strongly recommend it to any high school student seeking to gain a deeper knowledge of Japan, as well as a better understanding of U.S.-Japan relations.

The path that led me to RSP was somewhat different from that of my fellow classmates. From an early age, I always have been interested in the study of foreign languages and culture. Throughout high school, I have studied five different foreign languages, although not Japanese – at least not yet! My interest in foreign culture and in meeting new people led me to participate in the High School Diplomats (HSD) program,

sponsored by AIU Insurance and the Freeman Foundation. HSD brings together forty American and forty Japanese high school students for ten days at Princeton University to learn about each others' life, culture, and country. I loved this program, and especially enjoyed meeting my counterparts from Japan, many of whom I still keep in touch with today. While the program taught me a lot about Japan, I also discovered how much I didn't know, and how much there was that I wanted to learn.

When I was accepted into RSP, I was overjoyed and also a little nervous, since I did not speak Japanese and did not have an extensive knowledge of Japanese history. However, I soon discovered that all that was required to succeed in the program (aside from an internet connection) were enthusiasm and a desire to learn. The topics covered in the course – from feudalism, to Japanese perspectives on Pearl Harbor, to contemporary Japanese society – were fascinating; the lectures by noted experts, such as Stanford Professors Peter Duus and Daniel Okimoto, among others, were first-rate; and once I overcame my initial shyness, the interactive discussions with my fellow students on the RSP discussion board were really fun and something I looked forward to each week.

Bringing together twenty-six students from around the country with diverse backgrounds and different levels of experience related to Japan allowed for spirited discussions and a sharing of knowledge that was unlike anything I have experienced in my irregular high school classes. Since many of the students in the program had lived in or visited Japan, they could often share personal anecdotes that really made the learning come alive.

When it came time to choose a topic for the final research paper, there were many different topics that had sparked my interest, making it hard to choose just one. I ultimately decided on the changing status of women in the workplace in Japan, because this issue touches on so many of the different topics we studied during the course – from the Meiji Era's concept of the good wife, wise mother, to the guarantee of women's rights in Japan's post-war Constitution; to the more contemporary issues of Japan's declining birth rate and aging population.

At the end of the program, I was fortunate enough to be selected to present my research at RSP's Japan Day event at Stanford University on August 16, 2010. While there, I had the pleasure of meeting a number of prominent Japanese scholars and dignitaries, including Acting Consul General Hideyuki Mitsuoka, Consulate General of Japan, San Francisco, as well as members of the Japan Society of Northern California and the Freeman Spogli Institute.

Participating in the Reischauer Scholars Program not only has expanded my world view, but also has deepened my desire to pursue the study of Japanese language and culture. I thank everyone at SPICE, especially Naomi Funahashi and Gary Mukai, for providing me with this wonderful opportunity.

### The Reischauer Scholars Program: Discovering New Passion

Jiyeon Lee

I still cannot believe a whole season of summer has already passed since I turned in my independent research paper as the last assignment of the Reischauer Scholars Program. It feels like the five months I spent with the fellow Reischauer scholars and faculty were only yesterday. Looking back, I realize that I had a very unique opportunity to learn about Japan with a group of people who had different backgrounds and experiences, but with a shared enthusiasm and curiosity towards Japan. Also, it was a privilege to watch engaging, eye-opening lectures of renowned scholars and professors, all in the comfort of my own home. The five months were truly a once-in-a-lifetime experience.

Before I joined the Reischauer Scholars Program, my interest in Japan was mainly focused on Japanese television dramas (and not to forget about my all-time favorite actor, Kimura Takuya). Therefore, I was more excited to talk about Japanese popular culture or contemporary Japanese society, than to talk about, for example, Japanese politics. However, the lively, meaningful, and respectful discussions following the online lectures and readings from the first week immediately pulled me into spending minutes and hours in front of my laptop, reading others' posts on topics like Japanese history and politics and writing my responses to those posts. Even though the given weekly topics were very broad, such as religion or education, my peers and I found

ways to narrow down these topics and to come up with our own subtopics by using examples from our readings, lectures, and our own experiences, as if we had agreed to do so beforehand. I eventually became heavily engaged in reading the textbook and in watching the lectures so as to write more and interact more in the discussion forums. The virtual classroom sessions, led by amazing guest lecturers, also helped me understand various topics on a deeper level.

I am especially glad that my RSP peers and I were required to write our own independent research paper, because it provided a thought-provoking closure to the course. At first, I was a little intimidated by the thought of writing a ten-page paper. However, after deciding on a topic, the research and the writing came more naturally than I expected. I chose to write on the U.S. censorship on the atomic bomb, because I wanted to write about something that I had no previous background knowledge of. Through writing my research paper, I not only learned a great deal about a part of history that I would not have learned through my other high school classes, but also about ways to effectively express and organize my thoughts on a particular subject.

My interest and curiosity towards Japan only grew bigger and bigger throughout the course of the program. I am now strongly motivated to further explore Japan, its history, culture, and politics in college. I thank the Reischauer Scholars Program for helping me discover this new passion.