

**Fukushima Mimpo, Dec. 2, 2014**

(Translation)

***Students of Iitate Village Deeply Inspired by Haiku Album Presented by NYC Elementary School Students  
“We will live strong with hope for our brothers in Japan”***

***Two students read the Haiku poems aloud in English at a school assembly***

On December 1<sup>st</sup>, a collection of Haiku poems addressed to the victims of the 3.11 Great East Japan Earthquake and composed by students of PS4 Duke Ellington Elementary School of New York was recited to the Iitate Village students of Kusano, Meshitoi and Usuishii elementary schools at their temporary shared school building located in Kawamata-machi, Fukushima. With uplifting phrases such as “We will live strong with hope for our brothers in Japan,” the young students of Iitate Village were deeply moved by the heartwarming support found in the Haiku poems.

The album, titled “One for Japan” and signifying what each one of us can do for Japan, contains 12 Haiku poems in support of the victims of the disaster, and was composed by 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> graders of Duke Ellington Elementary School in New York City.

The Haiku poems, written in English, were introduced at a school assembly. Ms. Kotomi Ito (11-years-old) and Ms. Hana Oowada (12-years-old) recited two Haiku poems each in front of all the students. The poems spoke of affection to loved ones and the significance of living strong under difficult conditions. While Ms. Ito and Ms. Oowada read the Haiku poems aloud, Japanese translations were displayed on a screen for the approximate 180 students in attendance in the auditorium. “It makes me again realize the importance of retaining hope that our hometown will recover from the damage,” said Ms. Ito.

***Renowned Haiku poet, Ms. Madoka Mayuzumi, acted as intermediary***

***A concert by U.S.-based choir group “TOMO” at Iitate Village was the beginning***

This project kicked-off with a mini-concert by the U.S.-based mixed choir group ‘TOMO’ held at Iitate Middle School (temporary building) this past October. The album of Haiku poems was gifted to the temporary shared school of the three elementary schools during a concert for students who are living in evacuation shelters as a result of the nuclear plant accident. Mr. Masaki Shirota is the music director of “TOMO,” and his friend, Ms. Madoka Mayuzumi, a renowned Haiku poet, served as an intermediary to help make this project come true.