

## **April 22, 2024 - Toyama Cup Press Release**

Over the weekend Faith Adler from the University of Oregon became this year's winner of the 28<sup>th</sup> Toyama Cup, winning a free trip to Toyama by giving an emotional personal speech in Japanese on the importance of friendships, communication and speaking from your heart.

Only 3 points covered all 5 contestants, in addition to Faith was Greg Lundgren also from the University of Oregon, Eric Lane and Casper Ko from Oregon State, and Steffen Riley from Lewis & Clark.

In the lower division, Athena Yates from Mount Hood Community College took first place with a fascinating talk on the taboo of tattoos in Japan, beating out 4 others.

Alongside the competition, the participants spent significant time hanging out and talking with their counterparts, students in Japan from the University of Toyama and Toyama University of International Studies.

The competition is hosted by the Japan-America Society of Oregon and sponsored by Toyama Prefecture. Toyama is the sister state of Oregon. A significant volunteer force creates the event, including JASO's education committee plus individuals from Shokookai of Portland, the Consular Office of Japan in Portland, the International School of Beaverton, Portland State University, and the Association of Teachers of Japanese in Oregon.

The Toyama Cup has grown to become the premier forum for Japanese language students in Oregon and Southwest Washington to challenge their own language skills, whilst also connecting to and starting friendships with their peers in Toyama.

For more information on the Toyama Cup, or JASO's other work in strengthening the Oregon-Japan relationship, go to [www.jaso.org](http://www.jaso.org) or email [info@jaso.org](mailto:info@jaso.org).

### Level 1 Participants

1. Athena Yates, Mount Hood Community College
  2. Kylie Bissonette, Mount Hood Community College
  3. Benji Hayes, Portland State University
- Sydney Phanthamath, Clark College  
Keru Turner, Portland State University

### Level 2 Participants

1. Faith Adler, University of Oregon
  2. Eric Lane, University of Oregon
  3. Steffen Riley, Lewis & Clark College
- Gregory Lundgren, Oregon State University  
Casper Ko, Oregon State University