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CWAJ Receives Office of Foreign Ministry's FY 2025 Commendation

Tokyo, Japan – October 15, 2025



(Photo courtesy of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan)

On September 5, 2025, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan presented the College Women's Association of Japan (CWAJ) with the Foreign Minister's Commendation for FY2025. CWAJ was recognized for its contributions to promoting mutual understanding of cultural, intellectual, and aesthetic values between Japan and other countries through its unique scholarship program and its annual exhibition of contemporary Japanese print art.

CWAJ was one of only seven organizations in Japan to receive this prestigious award in FY2025, underscoring the significance of its contributions. Globally, the Commendation was also conferred on 173 individuals and 58 groups.

CWAJ President Heidi Sweetnam stated, "I am deeply honored to accept this award on behalf of our 400 members representing more than 20 countries. For over seven decades, CWAJ has been dedicated to fostering cultural exchange through education and art." Over the past 52 years, CWAJ has awarded 144 study abroad scholarships to Japanese men and women and 132 scholarships to non-Japanese students pursuing studies in Japan. Prior to that time, these awards were known as travel grants. In total, CWAJ has supported more than 850 scholars, including both women and men as well as recipients of special scholarships for the visually impaired.

Beyond its scholarship programs, CWAJ has brought contemporary Japanese printmaking to audiences around the world through traveling exhibitions in Australia, New Zealand, England, and the United States, most recently at Highfield Hall in Cape Cod, Massachusetts. This distinctive exhibition continues to advance the global appreciation of Japanese print art. "Through these efforts, we are building enduring bridges of understanding between Japan and the international community," Sweetnam affirmed.

This year, the CWAJ Annual Print Show will be held October on 15–19. Proceeds will support the CWAJ Scholarship Program: <https://cwaj.org/print/find-us-at-print-show/>

About CWAJ: CWAJ is a non-profit organization that supports education and cultural exchange between Japan and the international community. Founded in 1949, CWAJ has a long history of promoting the empowerment and advancement of women through various programs and initiatives.

CWAJ has been funding scholarships for Japanese women to study abroad for over 50 years, providing scholarships for non-Japanese women to study in Japan for over 40 years, and was the first organization to provide non-loan scholarships to Japanese women and men with a visual impairment.

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