

## News Release

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April 3, 2013

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## **IU Kokomo professor combines teaching and research to prepare future educators**

**KOKOMO, Ind.** — Masato Ogawa sees himself as a teacher first, then as a researcher.

He has built in skills in both areas, teaching social studies education at Indiana University Kokomo for the last eight years. As he returns to his native Japan, where he accepted a job as professor of international education, he said he’s learned about people of varied backgrounds from his experience on campus.

“Teaching and research are connected,” he said. “I’ve sought the best teaching practices, and have continually tried to improve my teaching. My experiences have shaped my ideas, and also my research on multiculturalism and internationalism.”

His teaching skills have been recognized and rewarded during his career — he was the first recipient of the Chancellor’s Diversity Excellence Award, in 2009, and he received the IU Trustees Teaching Award in 2009 and 2011.

Paul Paese, dean of the School of Education, said he has big shoes to fill in replacing Ogawa.

“Dr. Ogawa made significant contributions to IU Kokomo and the School of Education,” he said. “He is an outstanding professor, an excellent researcher, and gave great service to the campus. He will be missed, and we wish him the best of luck for his future, and in his new position in Japan.”

He noted that Ogawa has presented and published internationally, and brought an international research scholar to IU Kokomo for a year. He also helped prepare Kokomo-Center Schools teachers for the opening of the International School at Central Middle School.

Senior Jordan Ousley, who is student teaching high school social studies, said Ogawa inspired him to go beyond the textbooks to teach his students.

“Dr. Ogawa was the most important instructor I had,” he said. “He truly wants us to succeed as teachers. He’s had a tremendous influence on many current and future social studies teachers.”

He said Ogawa presents criticism in a way designed to build up future teachers, and is willing to help them outside of the classroom.

“He’s inspired me not just to teach what is in the textbooks, but to add in bonus materials and extras that will interest my students,” he said. “Dr. Ogawa is very encouraging, and tells students the more you know and can share with your class, the better teacher you will be.”

Ogawa joined the IU Kokomo faculty in 2005, teaching social studies education for elementary and secondary education majors. He also held leadership positions, including serving as associate director of the Center for Economic Education and director of the Indiana University President’s Diversity Initiative summer diversity program, which had the goal of introducing minority students to careers in nursing, business, and education.

His experiences living in the United States prompted his interest in international and multicultural education. He moved to the United States in 1995, to earn his master’s degree and Ph.D. in social studies education from the University of Georgia.

He taught Japanese, social studies, and art at high schools in Idaho and Oregon before his career at IU Kokomo.

Ogawa began his new job Monday, April 1 at International Pacific University, Okayama, Japan. Its mission is international and global education, and offers a second campus in New Zealand.

Students focus not only on their majors, but also on learning English fluently. Japanese students begin learning English in middle school, but often concentrate on memorizing for a test. Ogawa said he would teach many of his classes in English, to help the students use the language and become comfortable and fluent.

“I want them to learn to use the language in a realistic way,” he said. “They need to be able to do more than pass a test. I can share my own experiences with these students.”

Moving back to Japan after 18 years was a big decision, he said, especially because his preschool-aged son was born in Carmel, and is a Hoosier. He speaks Japanese at home and English at his Montessori school, and is fluent in both, Ogawa said.

His new job means his family will live close to his wife's family, and within two hours of his own mother's home.

"It was a big decision for us to move," he said. "I'm an only child, and I could be responsible for my mother's care at some time. I want to be able to take care of her if necessary. It will be good to be near family, and have our son near his grandparents."

Ogawa said he has enjoyed the opportunities he's had on the IU Kokomo campus.

"I went to a big school, but I'm more comfortable teaching on a small campus," he said. "I'm able to meet and work with people in departments other than my own, which doesn't happen often at big schools. You also get to know the students better, and there is more balance between teaching and research."

*Indiana University Kokomo serves north central Indiana.*

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