

## people

### Emily Atkins (17)

#### Hawaii high school student receives Dharma name on family trip

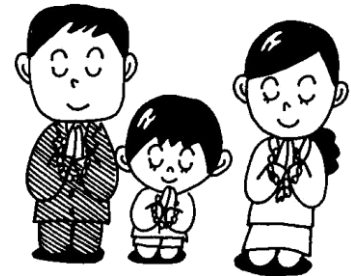
A high school student and member of Paauilo Hongwanji Mission, Atkins, while on a family trip in Japan took part in the Confirmation Ceremony (*Kikyo-shiki*) at Hongwanji on July 2. Taking part in the ceremony, Atkins smilingly shared, "The ceremony was Beautiful! Performing the ceremonial etiquette for the first time I was nervous, but the ceremony was very solemn and I am happy to have been able to take part in the ceremony together with the Japanese members."

Attending Dharma school since she was a child, Atkins together with her parents continue to

attend monthly Sunday services at the Paauilo temple. With a strong interest in peace, Atkins has been actively participating in Hawaii State's annual Peace Day observance on September 21 and volunteers for a food assistance program conducted at a neighboring Hongwanji temple. Family trips are an annual tradition for the Atkins. In addition to Kyoto, they have visited places including Hiroshima and Okinawa during this trip. Atkins comments, "At the Atomic Bomb Dome and Peace Memorial Museum in Hiroshima, I was at a loss for words at the tragedy that was brought about

through war and nuclear weapons. There continues to be conflicts taking place around the world. If only we would try to understand one another and the world becomes a city full of "kindness...."

(Hongwanji Journal, July 20, p.8.)



## Visitors from Switzerland and France participate in Confirmation

Wanting to affirm one's devotion as a Jodo Shinshu follower, a group each from Switzerland and France came to Japan and happened to both take part in the Confirmation Ceremony at Hongwanji on October 25.

Led by sangha representative, Rev. Jérôme Ducor, seven members of La Société Bouddhique Suisse Jodo-Shinshu: Shingyoji, visited Japan to deepen their understanding of Buddhism. On October 25, the group attended the morning service at Hongwanji and enjoyed a tour of the Shoin chambers and Hiunkaku pavilion. Three members of the group (pictured left to right); Françoise GENOUD (72), Evelyne Le KHAN NGUYEN (67), and Raymond DE MORAWITZ (67) participated in the Confirmation Ceremony following the morning service.

"Listening to the [Jodo Shinshu] teaching shared by Rev. Ducor



these past few years, I wanted to confirm my trust in the Dharma and decided to take part in the Confirmation Ceremony. Taking part in the rite, I am fulfilled.

Having received the Dharma name, "Shin'ne 心慧 (wisdom of [entrusting] heart)", I shall cherish the entrusting heart I have received, and hope to live up to the

wisdom of Amida in my life going forward.” commented Genoud.

Nguyen said that she was encouraged by Rev. Ducor, who shared that there was a ceremony through which we could renew our self-awareness as a Buddhist, to take part in the ceremony. “The Three Treasures recited during the ceremony is also widely known in my home country of Vietnam so it was very meaningful for me to recite. I was touched by the solemnness of the ceremony.”

De Morawitz shared, “Ducor and I have been friends since I was eight and I also knew the founder of Shingyoji, Rev. Jean Eracle as well. Some 30 years ago, I also had the opportunity to meet the then Monshu Emeritus Ohtani Koshu (posthumous name: Shonyo). It was through my encounter with these people, that I have come to appreciate the Dharma. Surrounded in the solemn atmosphere of the ceremony and to have been confirmed by Monshu Emeritus Ohtani Koshin I am grateful. Had I not come to Japan, I would not have been able to have this valuable experience.”

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(pictured left to right) Samaloo JORDAN (28), Conan YOHAN (32), and Megumi SHINDO (30) took part in the afternoon Ceremony. The three work in the same IT company and are travelling in Japan with the main aim of visiting Hongwanji and taking part in the Confirmation Ceremony. Megumi’s father, Koji Shindo, is a Hongwanji affiliated priest and accompanied them for the trip.

Megumi, who was born and raised in France says, “My mother passed away last January and yesterday (Oct 24) we interred her ashes at Otani Mausoleum. I’ve been hearing about the Jodo Shinshu teachings from my father and decided to take part in the Confirmation Ceremony to

have a connection with my mother and become a Jodo Shinshu follower myself. During the Dharma talk that followed the ceremony, it was said that “we would all meet again in the Pure Land.” I was really touched as this was what I had wanted to hear. I will treasure this teaching.”

Megumi’s fiancé, Conan shared, “I might never have a chance to visit Hongwanji again, so this was my once and only chance. I want to hear the teachings together with Megumi so I

groups in France so by interacting more with the Switzerland group we can also transmit the Jodo Shinshu teachings in France.”

(Hongwanji Journal. Nov. 10, 2023. p.2.)



decided to become a Buddhist and receive my Dharma name. Today is the start of my journey.”

Jordan said, “I’ve listened a lot about Buddhism from Megumi’s father and am really convinced about the teachings of the Buddha-Dharma. That is why I also made a resolve and took part in the ceremony. The solemn atmosphere of the ceremony really touched me.”

Rev. Koji Shindo said, “It was by pure coincidence that we met the group from Switzerland. After going back to France, I hope to visit the temple in Switzerland. There are no Jodo Shinshu