

January 30, 2026

Embassy of Japan Celebrates Return of JET Alumni to Trinidad and Tobago

On Thursday, January 29, 2026, His Excellency Dr. Akima Umezawa, Ambassador of Japan, hosted a welcome back dinner at the Ambassador's residence to celebrate the successful completion of the Japan Exchange and Teaching (JET) Programme for those who recently returned to Trinidad and Tobago, following their tenure as Assistant English Language Teachers (ALTs) in Japan in 2025.

Dr. Nicole Roberts, Director, Center for Language Learning and Mrs. Shiho Arakawa, Japanese Instructor, Centre for Language Learning, Ms. Miriam Lochan, President of the JET Alumni Association of Trinidad and Tobago (JETAATT) and Mr. Laurence Inniss, Chair of the JET Alumni Association International, also attended the dinner.

Ambassador Umezawa commended the contributions of the former JET Participants in language education and grassroots international exchange in their respective schools and communities. He expressed appreciation for their role in strengthening people-to-people ties between Japan and Trinidad and Tobago and encouraged them to continue serving as cultural bridges now that they have returned home.

During the evening the participants shared reflections on their experiences living and working in Japan. Ms. Tanuja Ramkissoon, who was placed in Ehime Prefecture, spoke about adapting to life in her local Japanese community and engaging students through interactive English lessons and cultural activities. Ms. Jaleeca Philip, who was assigned to Hyogo Prefecture, reflected on her experiences working within the Japanese school system and participating in community events that deepened her understanding of Japanese culture and society.

Guests enjoyed an authentic Japanese dining experience, featuring traditional dishes such as beef sukiyaki, sushi, and tempura, all expertly prepared by the Japanese chef at the Ambassador's residence.

The Embassy of Japan remains committed to supporting educational and cultural exchange initiatives and values the continued involvement of JET alumni in fostering bilateral relations.

Please visit the Embassy of Japan's website for more information on the JET Programme and the Embassy's activities: https://www.tt.emb-japan.go.jp/itprtop_en/index.html



Ambassador Umezawa in discussion with the JET Returnees

L to R: Ambassador Umezawa, Ms. Jaleeca Philip, and Ms. Tanuja Ramkissoon



Group photo commemorating the return of the former JET participants

L to R: Mrs. Shiho Arakawa, Ms. Miriam Lochan, Dr. Nicole Roberts, Ambassador Umezawa, Ms. Jaleeca Philip, Ms. Tanuja Ramkissoon, and Mr. Laurence Inniss