

## Dancing with a Wish for Earthquake Reconstruction Iwaki's traditional culture "Jangara Nenbutsu Folk Dance"

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In cooperation with Sony Corporation, Save the Children Japan (SCJ) founded the RESTART JAPAN Fund to assist children in areas affected by the Great East Japan Earthquake. As part of its activities, we have been promoting our "Achieve Your Dream Project" to support the children, who will be the next generation responsible for the future, to strive for their dreams and goals.

The first group of organizations which received a grant started their activities from June 1, 2012. One of the groups is Team Jangara of Iwaki Kaisei High School in Fukushima, which implements Jangara Nenbutsu Folk Dance as one of its after-school activities. They danced at the public viewing event of the training ship Fukushima Maru at Onahama Port.



Jangara Nenbutsu Folk Dance is not only a cultural tradition from the Edo Period, but also a dance performed as a service for the departed souls. Team Jangara of Iwaki Kaisei High School was founded in October 2010 with the aim to continue this cultural tradition of their community. The team had been active mainly in their hometown; however, one year after their founding, the Great East Japan Earthquake occurred and their drums and other necessary equipment for dancing were swept away by the tsunami. They are still continuing their activities, hoping for the reconstruction of their community and for the repose of victims' souls. Currently, the team performs at such events as reconstruction festivals organized by Iwaki City and gatherings organized by the Council for Social

Welfare, as well as at local elementary schools. It also receives numerous requests from throughout Japan to perform, placing a great drain on their travel budget. Thus, the “Achieve Your Dream Project” primarily supported their travel expenses.



Yusaku Toda of Team Jangara, who studies Radio Engineering in an Information Communication Course, said, “We have been invited to various local events and had opportunities to show our performance. I want to continue our Jangara performance at local elementary schools or other places, to make this cultural tradition familiar for everyone.”



The members of Team Jangara also wish to continue and spread this cultural tradition of their community, and to give courage and hope to those who watch their dances. They practice hard every day in order that Jangara can inspire passion in their audiences.

Through the “Achieve Your Dream Project” by the RESTART JAPAN Fund, we wish to help children move closer to their dreams. We will continue to share the activities conducted by the organizations that receive grants in this website.

(Reported by Yoshinori Miwa, Public Relations)