

In Hills

Japan is highlighted

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studies including Japanese language, social studies and science.

And in Japan, students not only go to school on Saturday, but breadwinners go to work.

"Once they get a job in one company, they stay in that company," Gingerich said.

"They somehow build up that feeling of loyalty to the company. The job is important — he (the Japanese man) has to work hard to keep it."

Although 40 percent of the work force in Japan is women, they tend to stay in the more traditional roles of teacher, nurse, salesperson and factory worker. And when they get married and start a family, they resign.

BUT THAT doesn't mean a Japanese woman has no power, Gingerich said.

"They manage the financial part of the household," she said. "Some of the wives even give their husbands spending money for the day."

staff photos
by Sharon LeMieux



Mani Nakamura carries tea into the living room to share with guests.



Seventeen-year-old Yuu Nakamura spends time on the phone, mostly concerning plans for the evening's studies.

Farmington's bilingual director offers friendship to community

By Casey Hans
staff writer

Talk about cultural diversity in Farmington and Farmington Hills, and all fingers point toward Haroune Alameddine.

The bilingual director for the Farmington Public Schools has a warmth that extends through most any salutation, whether it is with a trusting handshake or, often, with a hug.

"When you come in and I shake your hand, it's an extending — a handshake of friendship and respect," he said. "All this is extended to you."

A native of Lebanon, Alameddine considers himself a man of all cultures and is partly the reason so many people of varying cultures settle in the Farmington and Farmington Hills area.

TAKE, FOR example, he calls he has received from foreign embassies asking about the opportunities here. Or the one he got from the U.S. State Department recently.

"I was very surprised," Alameddine said about the call. "But, you know, Farmington Public Schools has a good name."

The Farmington superintendent of schools, Michael Flanagan, has called Alameddine "Mr. Ambassador" because of his handling of eth-

nic diversity here.

Other community leaders say he is the key person when discussions of cultural diversity arise, or a problem occurs where cultural understanding is needed.

FOR GOOD reason, the Farmington district has a well-developed bilingual program for those moving here who speak little, or no English.

The program builds on itself, drawing people of all ethnic backgrounds to this area which, in turn, continues to make the program better.



Farmington schools bilingual director Haroune Alameddine shares tea at the Nakamura home.

By Casey Hans
staff writer

As an active student adviser and teacher at North Farmington High School, Bill Brinker saw many similarities between students here and those he met and saw in Japan.

It's just that some of the after-school activities are different. "By some magic, they (the students) come back into school and grab mops and rags and clean the school," he said, offering one of several tales of his trip to the Far East.

BRINKER WAS one of four teachers — two from New York and another from California — who received an all-expenses paid trip to Japan in 1990, sponsored by the Hitachi company.

"Even though it was an exhausting trip over there, I was on a constant high," he said.

While there, he saw much of the country, including the old capital of Kyoto, Tokyo and the Hitachi headquarters.

'One of the most moving experiences was the visit to the museum at Hiroshima.'

— Bill Brinker
teacher

The teachers also visited two middle schools, three high schools and one elementary school, and stayed with host families. Brinker's host was an elementary school principal.

BRINKER IS not alone in his travels and cultural learning.

This summer, teachers from across the state are immersing themselves in Japanese culture at Michigan State University during a weeklong "Teaching about Japan" institute.

Farmington educators Nancy Heilman, Janet Tobe, Deborah Wilson and Haroune Alameddine are

part of a group of 65 participating in the seminar, designed to teach them about Japanese culture.

It is co-sponsored by the Michigan and Ohio departments of education.

Teachers will learn about language, history, literature, resources for teaching about Japan, business protocol and sensitivity training for cross-cultural situations.

BRINKER LEARNED his lessons firsthand.

In Japan, he found many children reluctant to speak to strangers. He took along an ample supply of buttons, Detroit Tiger stickers, and other items to encourage them to talk.

He shot slides of the experience, which he has used in history classes and with other teachers. He hopes to continue to share his experiences with other schools.

"One of the most moving experiences," he said, "was the visit to the museum at Hiroshima."

"We did not say a word until we got back to the hotel."



The Nakamura family sits down to share dinner at their Farmington Hills home.



Mani Nakamura serves tea to Yoshiko Gingerich, a paraprofessional in the school district's bilingual department who befriends and helps a number of Japanese families in the area.

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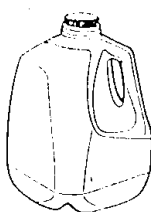


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