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Business and Nonprofit Leaders Collaborate to Advance Maternal Wellbeing

~WIT Launches Japan's First Program Focused on Nonprofit Governance and Board Training

Tokyo, Japan and online: In July 2021, [World in Tohoku \(WIT\)](http://worldintohoku.org) is launching the Board Fellow Program to encourage cross-sector collaboration between private companies and non-profit organizations and train future social impact leaders. The theme of the inaugural year of the program is "Inclusion & Empowerment," and particularly focuses on achieving a society where women can realize their full potential even after having children. To kick off the program, WIT will host a public virtual event on "governance that leads to social impact" on July 16th.

One in four mothers in Japan suffers from postnatal depression, and 46.9% of women leave the workforce after having their first child. The child poverty rate among single-mother households exceeds 55 percent. This situation has only worsened during the Covid-19 pandemic. This year, the Board Fellow Program will involve three direct-service non-profit organizations working on issues of maternal wellbeing—Kizuna Mail Project, Nobel, and Madre Bonita—as well as an employee from J.P. Morgan, professors, lawyers, and doctors.

Rather than simply providing a volunteer opportunity for corporate leaders, the Board Fellow Program will have participants dive into social and governance issues over six months, enabling them to see issues from the perspective of nonprofits. In this way, the program will promote long-term collaborations, such as having corporate employees serve on non-profit boards, a practice that is still rare in Japan. Aki Ko, Founder of Nobel, said, "Through discussions with business leaders with different perspectives, we can get closer to a society where mothers raise children with support from the whole community."

For more information on the Board Fellow Program:

<http://worldintohoku.org/bfp/>

Please contact info@worldintohoku.org if you are interested in programs on nonprofit board, governance, and cross-sector collaboration to solve social issues.





Photo 1: Nobel provides childcare for sick children of working mothers. Courtesy of Nobel.

Photo 2: A postnatal care class run by Madre Bonita. Courtesy of Junko Kimura- Matsumoto.



About WIT: WIT cultivates leaders, organizations, and communities that co-create across boundaries to better society. We have provided leadership development programs to 200+ mission-driven organizations, 500+ leaders from the business and social sectors, and students.

Book “Governance of non-profit organizations” (2020, Eiji Press)

<http://worldintohoku.org/>

About the participating nonprofits:

The **Kizuna Mail Project** combats issues like postnatal depression and lonely child-rearing by promoting casual text message communication for new parents to establish connections with others.

<https://www.kizunamail.com/>

Nobel strives for a society where mothers can balance work and child-rearing by providing back-up daycares and childcare services for mothers of sick children.

<https://nponobel.jp/>

Madre Bonita empowers mothers to realize their full potential by providing postnatal care classes, instructor training, and research on postnatal child-rearing.

<https://www.madrebonita.com/>

About the participants:

In addition to the above non-profit organizations, the following is the participants from various sectors including business, academia, and social:

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|-----------------|---|
| Yu Ishida | Miyagi University/ Mori-no Dengonban Yururu |
| Noriko Utsuzawa | Doulaship Japan |
| Megumi Urasaki | NTT DOCOMO, Inc. |
| Yasuko Ohara | Creative Mom’s Link |



Itaru Kato	J.P. Morgan
Azusa Kurokawa	Orange Page Co., Ltd.
Sadayo Kobayashi	KODOMOLOGY Co., Ltd.
Haruna Shibata	ROHTO Pharmaceutical Co., Ltd.
Ryushi Shimizu	NTT DOCOMO, Inc.
Hitoshi Nishimura	A human resources company
Takeshi Nemoto	Nishimura & Asahi
Kazuyo Hashimoto	Replus
Aki Matsuyama	salesforce.com Co., Ltd.
Takahide Maruki	Sompo Japan Insurance Inc.
Honami Yoshida	JKSK, doctor, Ph.D. in Medicine, Master of Public Health