The East Asia Institute at UTSA is pleased to announce the arrival of Ms. Chinatsu Oku who has been dispatched through the Japan Outreach Initiative (JOI) Program, sponsored by the Japan Foundation Center for Global Partnership (CGP) and The Laurasian Institution (TLI).

The Japan Outreach aims to promote awareness and understanding of Japan in regions of the United States that have relatively few Japan-related experiences. The program is also intended to provide opportunities for cultural exchange. The Japanese individuals who volunteer for this program are selected through a competitive process in which they are screened and interviewed to make sure they meet the right qualifications. Those selected then spend two years as outreach coordinators at organizations such as Japan American Societies, universities and among other entities.

Chinatsu is from Sendai, Japan. She graduated from Dokkyo University in Saitama, Japan with a BA in English. After graduating, Chinatsu received a position as the Chief of Planning and Sales in a travel agency at Tokyo, Her work then also included arranging Japanese historical sites visiting and traditional hands-on activities for non-Japanese tourists while rediscovering Japanese history and traditions.

Chinatsu enjoys visiting different places and has traveled to various destinations including Hawaii, Guam, London, Italy, France, Spain, Korea, the U.S., New Zealand, Australia, and China. She enjoyed
meeting and interacting with local people to learn about their cultures and customs.

As a part of the JOI program, Chinatsu thoroughly wishes to inform people on Japanese culture as well as upon Japan itself. “I’d like to meet new people to raise awareness about Japan and Japanese culture. I want it to last even after I’ve finished my term. After my departure, I hope they can then introduce Japanese culture and Japan to others”, says Chinatsu. In order to accomplish these goals, she plans on promoting Japan and Japanese culture by initiating a calligraphy class and a Japanese cooking class. She also plans to help the Japanese club at UTSA for Japanese cultural related programs and activities. In addition to the plans above, she would also like to raise a Japanese cultural awareness by conducting outreach activities in the San Antonio community. Chinatus is excited to be a part of the UTSA community to help promote Japan and outreach to the San Antonians.

“The East Asia Institute welcomes Ms. Oku to our office and we couldn’t be happier to host her for the following two years,” says Mimi Yu, East Asia Institute Associate Director. “We know she will make an impact not only at UTSA, but in the community as well. We are honored to be chosen as one of the six sites this year in the U.S. to host a JOI coordinator. Our office is looking forward to working with Ms. Oku to further help people in San Antonio understand and appreciate Japan better”.

To reach Chinatsu and request a special presentation, conduct a workshop, or if you have questions concerning any other Japanese related topics, please contact her at: chinatsu.oku@utsa.edu or at 210.900.3103
Office hours: 2 to 3 p.m. on Wednesdays, Main Building 1.209.
For most up to date info, please visit EAI Facebook page at www.facebook.com/eaiatutsa.