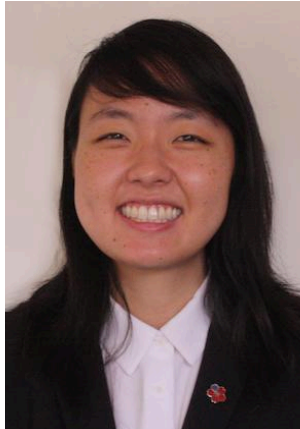


Vivian Chen



- JETAA USA, Country Representative (2024-2025)
- JETAADC, Washington, DC Communications and Technology Chair (2023-2024)
- JETAADC, Washington, DC, Professional Development Co-Chair (2022-2023)
- Sasakawa Peace Foundation USA, Washington, DC Communications Intern (2021-2022)
- U.S.-Japan Council, Washington, DC Toshizo Watanabe Study Abroad Scholarship Application Reviewer (2020-present)
- TOMODACHI SoftBank Leadership Program, Berkeley, CA, Resident Advisor (2019-2020)
- JET Program, Interviewer and Volunteer (2018-present)
- JET Program, Masuda City, Shimane Prefecture, ALT (2016-2018)

First Year as JETAA USA Country Representative and Future Strategic Goals

It was a privilege to serve as a JETAA USA Country Representative (CR) for the first time last year. As a CR, I have had the opportunity to contribute to key initiatives that strengthen our national community of over 40,000 JET Program alumni here in the United States. Becoming CR this past year has further cemented my commitment to enhancing the JET Program alumni experience through JETAA USA activities and believe that my continued involvement will lead to even greater success in the coming year. As a CR, I have been impressed with how strong the JET Program alumni network here is in the United States through meeting JETAA Chapters for annual Chapter Check-ins and hosting Quarterly Forums to learn more about on-the-ground challenges and successes. It has been a challenging but also rewarding experience working with fellow CR Valerie Stewart, JETAA USA's Board of Advisors, USJETAA, the Embassy of Japan in Washington, DC, and other JET Program stakeholders.

Over the past year, I had the honor of collaborating with all of the aforementioned partners and others including JETAAMN to hold a successful 2024 NatCon in St. Paul, Minnesota. Helping arrange the agenda, logistics, speakers, and programming, and working closely with NatCon organizers to host a national conference was a daunting but meaningful experience. This year in particular, I can contribute even more to the planning process for NatCon as a potential second-term CR because this year's NatCon is set to take place in Washington, DC, where I am currently based. Since I work and live in the DMV (DC, Maryland, Virginia) metropolitan area and am close with the current JETAADC Board, I feel that I am uniquely positioned to coordinate closely with JETAADC, USJETAA, JLGC New York, the Embassy of Japan in Washington, DC, and other U.S.-Japan-related organizations along with NatCon planners to work toward a more streamlined and impactful conference for all participants.

Pivoting to other achievements, I made progress in expanding JETAA USA's professional development presence. After launching JETAA USA's official LinkedIn Page last year, the LinkedIn Page has grown steadily and now nears 1,500 followers. In addition to refreshing JETAA USA's social media platforms, the JETAA USA website has been revamped to a new hosting platform with the goal of providing valuable resources and templates for JETAA Chapters along with fostering greater engagement and streamlined communication between JETAA USA and JETAA Chapters. While the website still remains an ongoing work in progress, I am eager to run for another CR term to continue bolstering these efforts, especially now that JETAA USA has a dedicated webmaster in place and a user-friendly interface for updating the website. These online initiatives are not only for enhancing exchange and engagement with JET Program alumni but also aim to create lasting connections within the JET Program alumni community.

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For a potential second year as a JETAA USA CR, I would like to continue to use my experience in government and non-profit work, in addition to my work in program management, public relations, and technology, to better serve all of our JETAA Chapters. These strategic goals include:

- Supporting the planning and implementation of the 2025 NatCon that will be hosted by JETAADC
- Improving the newly-revamped JETAA USA website to have more resources for JETAA Chapters and increasing viewership and engagement applications, especially for new JET Program alumni
- Strategizing and implementing ways to expand the JET Program alumni to the U.S.-Japan careers pipeline for strengthening the JETAA alumni network (i.e., JETAA USA LinkedIn Page promotion and professional development resources)
- Scheduling JETAA USA Quarterly Meetings to strengthen relationships between JETAA leaders and other related stakeholders for greater coordination and partnership in addition to continuing to offer annual Chapter Check-ins
- Considering ways to further collaboration between JETAA USA and USJETAA along with other relevant U.S.-Japan grassroots partners such as Japan-America Societies, U.S.-Japan-related organizations, and others
- Developing opportunities to connect recent JET returnees with JET Program alumni all across the United States for professional development opportunities in addition to even global outreach through JETAA-I by potentially using the JETAADC Mentorship Program as a model

JETAA Experience Prior to JETAA USA Country Representative

In 2019, I first experienced what being part of JETAA was like after moving to Washington, DC. I saw how active and vibrant the JET Program alumni community could be through my local alumni chapter, JETAADC. After joining JETAADC activities, I knew I wanted to do more than just participate in events. I wanted to become more involved from the organizing perspective. As a result, I joined the JETAADC Board as the Professional Development Co-Chair in 2022. As the co-chair, I managed the JETAADC Mentorship Program, an annual four-month funded program that pairs recent JET returnees in the DMV (DC, Maryland, Virginia) area with experienced JET Program alumni mentors to help them transition into their post-JET career trajectories and find employment after returning from Japan.

In 2023, I switched to a different role within JETAADC by taking on both the Communications and Technology Chair positions to help support the growth of our chapter's online presence and public relations. I updated our website and grew our JETAADC membership base on social media platforms, in particular, increasing our LinkedIn Page follower count by over 500 new members. As of this month, the current LinkedIn Page has nearly 2,500 followers. I learned immensely from my other board members and JETAADC partners like the Embassy in Japan and the JET Program Office on what it is like running an alumni chapter and organizing events. I also represented JETAADC at the JETAA 2023 National Convention (NatCon) in Monterey, California. Meeting JETAA leaders from all across North America at NatCon and Japanese government representatives opened my eyes to the larger ecosystem of JETAA leadership that is connecting and sustaining the global alumni community.