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# Students reach out in the aftermath of quake

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TNE WRITER

Magnitude 9.0 earthquake strikes the northeast of Japan on March 11 2:46 p.m. JST

Japanese officials said the Tohoku earthquake is the biggest earthquake on the Japanese record. Compared to the earthquake in Haiti in January of 2010, which had a magnitude of 7.0, this earthquake had a thousand times more energy.

As of March 24, the number of confirmed deaths is about 9,700 and the number of missing people is 16,500, according to the National Police Agency.

The earthquake not only caused the destruction of buildings, but also caused huge tsunamis. Tsunami waves carried off people and completely destroyed the towns along the east coast of northern Honshu. The city of Kamaishi recorded a 13 foot tall tsunami.

Keishi Oikawa, Miyagi, Japan sophomore, was in Miyagi prefecture in Japan at the time of the earthquake and tsunami occurred.

"I was taking a semester off and faced to the disaster," said Oikawa. "It was an earthquake shock I had never felt before. After the about 30 minutes, a huge tsunami came and my family escaped to the second floor of the house, so we survived. However, from where I was, I saw that so many people and houses were washed away and died."

The situation is incredibly bad, but people there are helping each other and working for recovery.

"We are suffering a historical disaster, but we are trying hard to be positive about recovery," said Oikawa. "The messages and donations from people outside of Japan encourage people



**The magnitude 9.0 earthquake that struck Japan on March 11, wrecked havoc and created chaos. In the hours that followed, a tsunami hit and tore apart families, communities and cities. People lost contact with each other, food, water and shelter. The death toll climbs daily.**

*Courtesy Photo*

in Japan so much. I want people to keep cheering us on. We are good at remembering favors and will pay back them."

Yoshihiro Mizuno, Osaka, Japan senior, was also taking a semester off in Tokyo for job hunting. Regularly, Japanese companies recruit graduating students once a year, but because of the earthquake, the job hunting process was postponed.

The earthquake caused another problem for the Fukushima Daiichi nuclear power plant.

Officials said the power plant lost its electricity because of the tsunami so the backup systems to cool down the generators' nuclear fuels did not work.

Consequently, it caused damages for the plants and diffused higher levels than normal amount of radiation in the air. Also, the people living within 20 kilometers, approximately 12.5 miles, from the power plant were evacuated to local shelters.

"Nuclear power plants must had any kinds of preparation

for disaster, but it was not prepared enough," said Mizuno. "The people in Japan are very nervous even they are safe for now. Rolled blackouts will last for couple months at least. The train systems are not working as much as usual, and when it is blackout, we cannot use the tap water too because it's pumped by electricity. I realized how our lives depend on electricity."

Mizuno said there was also informational confusion after the quake happened and it was difficult to receive correct information, there was even an overflow of cell phone chain mails.

Michiko Saiki, Saitama, Japan senior, started a charity Japan relief concert project for fundraising to donate to Japanese Red Cross Society. For the charity concert, the International Programs Office and music department are supporting.

"This is a situation we have never encountered, and I wanted to do something for Japan," said Saiki. "I have music, so

I decided to have a concert. I also wanted to be a leader for the people who also want to do something but do not know what to do. Actually, a lot of the

people raised their hands when I asked for it."

Another student organization, JNSU, will have a Red Cross fundraiser from March 28 to April 1 around the UC from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m.

"I realized again that a tsunami is such a scary thing," said Mitsutoshi Seko, Mie, Japan sophomore and JNSU president. "It is really important to be prepared for the disaster just in case. I think we can raise a limited amount of money, but sending it to Japan Red Cross Society, people can receive the supplies to survive. We are sending the revenue of last curry booth too."

The earthquake that occurred on March 11 brought huge damaged to Japan. Japan is still suffering the aftershock and it will suffer for long time until the recovery. It is a time the Tahlequah community can help.

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