

## *Letter from a Doctor*

- Juan Agustin D. Coruña IV
  - Please call me “Chinkin”
- Orthopedic Surgery - Foot and Ankle
  - Staying January 25-June 29, 2019
- I chose Nara Medical University (NMU) for my subspecialty training because it is the best in Asia. The staff are world-renowned in the field, have written text and publication considered to be dogma, and are sincere in their commitment to improving the welfare of their patients.

- The working circumstance has been very comfortable, working four times a week with such a great team. At times I wish I could be able to work more and involve myself with the department at a greater capacity, but I understand the liabilities and language barrier inherent to me as a foreign guest. There is a rich variety and consistency of challenging cases every week seen in the operating room, ranging from 2-4 surgeries a day. There is also an admirable setting for outpatient clinic where 15-20 patients visit for long-term care, excellent documentation, and well-stocked procedure rooms for necessary minor surgeries. I am very glad to also be exposed to the department meetings where new studies and present literature are presented, including all operations completed and to be performed the next week. There is an intimacy and subtleness to the staff relationship that seems to be difficult to explain in the English language. But it is clearly palpable to the observer that there is a “Japanese Way”, a “Japanese Order” in completing things where each member of the group, regardless of rank, has a valuable action to deliver and be nurtured by each one. It is a discipline I wish to take home.



(...continued)

My country has a population of 100 million. In my island, there are 4 million people. The Philippines has under 800 orthopedic surgeons, 15 of which are foot and ankle specialists. In my region, there are 14 orthopedic surgeons, and because of my education in Nara, I will be the first foot and ankle doctor there. That is how valuable my stay in this beautiful city is.

- Japan has always been a pleasant enigma to me. I have been here six times starting age 12, and each trip has always had an opportunity to surprise me in ways that awaken a genuine love for nature, for people, and for living. My impression of it, especially of Nara, is that relating to my island of origin: Peaceful, quiet, not polluted, with citizens who go out of their way to help you, who smile at you, and are polite. I could not be any happier training here because it fully reminds me of my home and my roots. It is a place where you grow as a person, fulfill your dreams, and be the person you ought to be. It has that magic to change you, proportionate to the effort and perseverance you exude and practice.

- For future guests in NMU, you are in for a treat, and you will have the time of your life. You will grow as a person here. Your family will grow here. You have eminent faculty at hands-reach, in a beautiful work environment, with state-of-the-art facilities, and colleagues who support your longings and aspirations.
- I am extremely lucky that the department secretary (Mari Miyagi) has helped me in all aspects of visa concerns and getting around the hospital.
- NMU should also pride itself with its International Center which has been pivotal in my comfortable stay here in Nara. Through Ms. Yuki Koda, my heater malfunction in the middle of winter, and internet connection downtime were all addressed within reasonable time. These were all achieved with excellent English communication, punctuality, and care. The efforts of the department and International Center are all highly commendable, and reflect on the efforts of the institution to continue inviting international students to its grounds.



- I have stayed at the guest house for almost six months. It is a very generous accommodation with amenities and conveniences for the modest traveler. The residence affords a zen surrounding worthy of self-reflection. It is in a historical town of the same architecture, where children walk to school, the distance to the hospital or major transportation hub 10-15 minutes on foot. There are food items and sites locally, and making trips to other cities and regions possible. With my family of four, we have built a routine of doing grocery once a week, cooking our meals at home, and visiting museums, parks, and forest every few days. Nature thrives in Nara, and it is such a spectacle to witness your children enjoy its beauty. As a visual artist and writer, my wife has been inspired by her stay here in Nara.
- Just a suggestion, a bidet added to the toilet might be more convenient.





Yoshino before and during  
cherry blossom season





Takatori River during winter,  
Sakura, and peak of spring





My family with  
Professor Tanaka





With members of  
the Foot and  
Ankle Group





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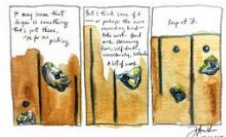
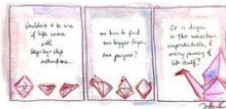
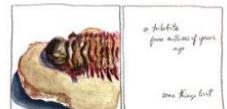
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# Art by my wife in Japan

## Jo Anne Coruña

[astudyofobjects.com/ikigai-studies](http://astudyofobjects.com/ikigai-studies)





My operative plan for a low tibial osteotomy procedure, a technique I learned here.

