

Editorial Concerning “Social Work Education and Research in the US and Japan”

The 33rd annual meeting of Social Work Education was held at the Toki Messe in the Niigata Convention Center, on September 20th and 21st, 2003. The Niigata University of Health and Welfare, Department of Social Welfare served as the host school of the symposium and Professor Yamate directed the whole event. The guest speaker was Professor F.R. Baskind, the president of the board of directors of the U.S. Council on Social Work Education. Nearly five hundred educators, researchers and practitioners from universities, colleges and technical schools from all over Japan participated.

The next day, an international symposium was held at the Niigata University of Health and Welfare, limiting its participants to our faculty members and local practitioners. The symposium was opened with the speech of President Takahashi, which was followed by speeches by Professor Baskind and Professor Iwasaki*. After the speeches, intensive discussions were held on local issues relating to social work education and research.

The articles of this volume were contributed by the four professors who undertook major roles in these two events as mentioned above: President Takahashi, Professor Baskind, Professor Iwasaki, and Professor Yamate.

The Niigata University of Health and Welfare is now in the preparatory stages of initiating a Graduate School of Social Work, as well as a Graduate School of Health. Updating our professional skills and knowledge to meet and surpass what is required according to international standards is the task we are focusing on. Strengthening collaborative relationships between health and social work professionals through education and research activities is another important issue we are going to face in the very near future. I hope and believe that the articles in this volume, as well as the annual meeting and the symposium, provide an avenue to overcome these challenges.

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