

Finalists for the 1st DBJ New Business Plan Competition for Women Entrepreneurs



Lin Kobayashi

Special Nikkei Award

Tokyo Metropolitan

Creating new frontiers in the Asia Pacific region to cultivate leaders who will produce innovations - Japan's first international boarding high school -

Received a full scholarship from the Japan Federation of Economic Organizations to study at an international school in Canada with boarding for all students. Based on this experience, studied development economics at university, and then worked as a program officer for UNICEF in the Philippines, providing informal education to homeless children. Met Mamoru Taniya, the school's Representative Founder, in 2007, decided to devote her life to founding schools, and returned to Japan in August 2008. Earned an international baccalaureate degree in 1993, graduated from the Faculty of Economics at the University of Tokyo in 1998, and earned a master's degree from the School of Education at Stanford University in 2005.

[Executive Director, Foundation for International School of Asia, Karuizawa]



Chizuru Gorai

DBJ Woman Entrepreneur Prize

Hiroshima Prefecture

Business base for shared offices, manufacturing, and skill development for entrepreneurs and creators

- Actualizing "things people want to see" - [SO@R Business Port]

After quitting her job in a publishing company due to marriage and childbirth, spent six years as a housewife and then found employment in a planning firm. After being involved in various retail promotion projects, went independent in 1999. Set up Hiroshima SOHO Club in December 2000, and then established Hiroshima SOHO Office in 2001. Established SOHO Soken PLC and became its president in 2002. In 2009, increased the company's capital stock under financial backing by powerful local corporations and renamed the company Soar Service Co., Ltd. The same year, relocated and expanded the Hiroshima SOHO Office and opened SO@R Business Port as a communal facility for creators and entrepreneurs. Based on the philosophy of actualizing the "things people want to see" in Hiroshima, has been developing projects that will connect people and corporations to invigorate the region.

[President & CEO, Soar Service Co., Ltd.]



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Maiko Asada

Tokyo Metropolitan

Video encoder that changes the future

Achieving high resolution, low cost, and low power consumption

Experienced equity investment at age 11 and began studying English in order to be active globally. After transferring jobs to a trading company, enrolled in the School of Political Science and Economics at Waseda University at the age of 26 to learn the cause of the economic recession in Japan. Became a Japan stock analyst for Diamond Financial Research, and worked for Barclays Capital before going independent to support capital alliances and civil rehabilitation of small and medium-size companies. In 2010, met Jason Ho, a technical advisor to NASA, and received a proposal for business revitalization through injecting capital and introducing technology as well as a patent portfolio in money-losing enterprises in Japan. After the Great East Japan Earthquake, became director of Revatron with the goal of rebuilding the Japanese economy.

[President, Revatron]



Akiko Nishiura

Tokyo Metropolitan

Sharing "wasted" space

Creating Japan's first secondary market for underutilized space

Kanagawa Prefecture-born graduate of the Faculty of Foreign Studies at Sophia University. Joined the Overseas Sales Division of Sony in 1991. Transferred to Sony Chile in 1994, placed in charge of marketing for audio products. Left Sony in 2000 and returned to Japan. Worked in advertising and sales at All About Japan at the time of its establishment, and then joined Sony Computer Entertainment, Inc. in 2001. Placed in charge of localization and product development for PlayStation 2 and PSP in the Product Planning Division. Left SCE in 2006, and began work related to official development assistance (ODA) with Japan International Cooperation System. Left JICS in 2007 to have a baby. After approximately six months of planning and preparation, started "nokisaki.com" in April 2008.

[President, Nokisaki Co., Ltd.]



Yoshimi Wie

Chiba Prefecture

Designing nursing care for the future
"Lifilm" urine detection sheet

While in university, established student project aba for the purpose of developing equipment and robots to support nursing care facilities. Decided to start a business to make commercial products from the equipment developed, incorporating the student project. The business was recognized for its feasibility and future, winning the grand prize in the student division at the Chiba Business Contest in October 2011. After winning this award, was featured in media outlets including Fuji Sankei Business I, the Chiba and Tokyo Editions of Asahi Shimbun, the Yururi community paper in Chiba, the Nikkan Kogyo Shimbun, and Chiba cable television.

[President and CEO, aba Co., Ltd.]



Yuriko Kato

DBJ Woman Entrepreneur
Grand Prize

Shizuoka Prefecture

Vegetable Providing® Project that aims for sustainable farming while efficiently connecting people with IT to provide delicious and safe produce from the farm to your dinner table

Enrolled in the Department of Agriculture at the University of Tokyo, with an interest in environmental issues. Studied agriculture systems for addressing food crises, earned a master's degree in England, and participated in a NASA project in the United States. Returned to Japan in 2000, got married, and worked on the research and development of industrial machinery. Was promoted to research and development leader, but, while raising her child, became motivated again to focus on resolving social issues. Gained renewed awareness of agriculture's importance to society, and established M2 Labo. Co. in 2009. Provided agricultural business support in Shizuoka Prefecture for two years, and is currently a member of both the Shizuoka Prefecture Agricultural Policy Council, the Shizuoka Prefecture Research Assessment Council as well as a volunteer planner for the Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry, and Fisheries. [President, M2 Labo. Co.]



Mari Mitsuoka

Fukuoka Prefecture

Preventive care classes using tablet computers Mitsuoka Method of "Young Brain Training"

Participated in kendo throughout her academic career. While raising her child, started a computer class at a community center in Onojo, Fukuoka Prefecture. Specialized in computer courses for senior citizens, and continued to create more classes for the purpose of lifelong learning. Incorporated the company in 2009, and established a preventive care department. Created a program that would hold the attention of students, based on the "Mitsuoka Method of Young Brain Training". Currently, there are more than 3000 students enrolled. Has started the creation of a system for cultivating human resources that can utilize communication skills and IT to provide support for the elderly to live long and healthy lives. [President, Somelight Co., Inc.]



Haruka Mera

Future Challenge Award

Tokyo Metropolitan

Japan's first cloud funding to support "doers" Platform project to support creative activities, activities that are important to society, and to achieve dreams

Graduated from the Graduate School of Media Design at Keio University in 2012. Studied at Stanford University in 2010, and then returned to Japan to serve as director of Ohma Co., Ltd., a web venture she was involved in since her university days. In March 2011 started "READY FOR?", Japan's first cloud funding service, to provide a system that enables the procurement of investments via the Internet for NPOs and creators. Selected as a global shaper by the World Economic Forum in 2011, and became the youngest Japanese person in history to participate in the annual meeting in Davos. [Director, Ohma Co., Ltd., READY FOR? Team]



Miori Kashima

Special Disaster Recovery Award

Miyagi Prefecture

Share with everyone. Round-trip busses, exciting work ... What systems can we use to share space and time?

Graduate of Keio University. Worked for Recruit Co., Ltd. and RMC, before going independent in 2009. Established Anemoa Inc., which provides uniform services from product proposals to promotion, based on research including on-site needs surveys and the purchasing trends of users. Major projects include rebranding for Universal Studios Japan® and reports for regional medical groups. Since March 2011, has been providing support following the Great East Japan Earthquake while continuing management of the company. Established "Guru Guru Cheer Squad" to provide transportation support and start "community meals" at temporary housing locations. Opened the "Ishinoma Kitchen" community restaurant on the first floor of the Ishinomaki City Hall in April 2012. [CEO, Anemoa Col, Ltd.]



Hideko Oikawa

DBJ Woman Entrepreneur
Disaster Recovery Prize

Miyagi Prefecture

Maximizing the effective utilization of regional resources from Kensenuma Creating a new fashion brand using regional resources

Operated an abacus school in Natari, Utatsu-cho, Miyagi Prefecture in 1971, and then began serving as senior managing director at Oikawa Denim, Ltd. in April 1981 before eventually becoming president on January 30, 1991. Currently, in addition to managing the company, she is active in many regional and disaster-prevention organizations, such as a member of the Japan Central Disaster Management Council and the Miyagi Prefectural Hibiki High School Council, the chairperson of the Koizumi Ladies' Society and the Kensenuma Motoyoshi Ladies' Fire Prevention Club, and a director of Rias Active 21. [President, Oikawa Denim, Ltd.]