

EMPOWERING MARGINALIZED YOUTH IN JAPAN

Kozue Oka
of *Mirai no Mori*

Wednesday, Oct. 23rd, 7:00 pm

M*irai no Mori* creates life-changing outdoor programs for abused, neglected, and orphaned youths in Japan, supporting their growth into happy and successful adults. There are 30,000 children living in 600 children's homes in Japan. About 60% of these children had experienced some form of abuse before being moved to the homes. They live safe and comfortable lives at these homes thanks to the tremendous efforts of the care workers. However, most of these children still live with limited resources, opportunities, and exposure to the world, and face prejudice and discrimination from the society as well. This lecture will introduce *Mirai no Mori*, whose programs are designed for children in care homes to acquire skill and knowledge, through their own experience, to be able to choose and create their own path for the future.

Kozue Oka is the Executive Director at *Mirai no Mori*. Born and raised in Japan, she has always believed in the power of nature. After studying Environment/Outdoor Education in Sweden for a year, she joined *Mirai no Mori* to share her experiences and to create an environment in which youth can be steered toward a positive cycle of self-actualization and creativity by discovering new possibilities and develop into confident individuals.

Location: 5-7-12 Shinjuku, Shinjuku-ku, Tokyo, 2nd Floor
See <http://luj.tokyo/maps> for map; Tel: 03-3225-0425

The Lakeland Lectures are a forum for researchers, students and members of the public to discuss contemporary issues affecting Japan. Lakeland University has offered a U.S.-accredited liberal arts program in Tokyo since 1991. Lakeland's main campus is in Wisconsin, USA and was founded in 1862.