

Paper Cranes for Japan Project

On 11 March 2011, a massive earthquake struck the Tohoku region of Japan, resulting in a devastating tsunami that ravaged the coast and damaged many things. In response, Students Rebuild partnered with DoSomething.org to ensure students worldwide have a way to support their Japanese peers.

The challenge named “Paper Cranes for Japan” was to make and mail in an origami crane by 15 April 2011, and each crane received was matched with \$2 to rebuild in Japan by the Bezos Family Foundation. Their initial goal was 100,000 cranes to represent wishes of support and healing, which would trigger \$200,000 from the foundation to fund Architecture for Humanity's Tohoku Rebuilding Program in partnership with Japanese designers and builders.

The response from children all over the world exceeded our wildest hopes. At the end, we tallied an incredible 2 million cranes! When the crane count exceeded the half-million mark, the Bezos Family Foundation decided to double its gift to \$400,000 to reflect and further support the outpouring of generosity from young people across the world. Shortly after, an anonymous donor came forward to add \$100,000—making \$500,000 for Japan!

On Friday, January 13, a massive sculpture was unveiled in Japan's Sendai Train Station created from 100,000 paper cranes—representative of the over 2 million cranes contributed by young people worldwide. Organized by the Supporting Organization for Artists of Tohoku (SOAT) and designed by the students at the Tohoku University of Art & Design, the sculpture was the centerpiece of a three-day public event Jan. 13 – 15 called “Gift by Gift for a Better World,” featuring interactive workshops with several area schools. In the spirit of the challenge, the sculpture and gift boxes that children made during the workshop were handed to local schools a symbolic gift from students around the globe.

The event was broadcasted all over the world by NHK World, and featured on many local TV programs and newspapers.

Locations of the Installation:

- Tsutsujigaoka Elementary School, Sendai, Miyagi, Japan
- Higashi-Nibancho Elementary School, Sendai Miyagi, Japan
- Saiwai-cho Youth Center, Sendai Miyagi, Japan
- Chuo Community Center, Sendai, Miyagi, Japan (temporary installation 20 January – 5 February, 2012)

Local Organizer: NPO Supporting Organization for Artists of Tohoku (SOAT)

Organizers Students Rebuild, Architecture for Humanity

Sponsors: Bezos Family Foundation, S-Pal Sendai

Partners: Miyagi Prefecture, City of Sendai, Miyagi Prefecture Department of Education, City of Sendai Department of Education, Culture Foundation of Miyagi Prefecture, Sendai Hito-Machi Koryu Foundation, NHK Sendai, TBC Tohoku Broadcasting, Sendai Broadcasting, Miyagi TV, KHB Higashi-Nihon Broadcasting, Kahoku Shimpō, Yomiuri Shimbun Tohoku Branch, Yamagata Shimbun, Yamagata Broadcasting, Asahi Shimbun Sendai, Mainichi Shimbun Sendai Branch

Implementing Partners: Tohoku University of Art & Design, Tohoku Seikatsu Bunka University, Miyagi University of Education, Tsutsujigaoka Elementary School, Higashi-Nibancho Elementary School, Chuo Community Center, Tsutsujigaoka Community Center, Saiwai-cho Community Center, Saiwai-cho Youth

Center, Sendai Art Laboratory, Atelier ZON, AlternartCT

Paper Cranes for Japan / "Gift by Gift for a Better World" Workshop Opening Day, 13 January 2012



150 fifth and sixth graders from Tsutsujigaoka Elementary School and 30 third graders from Higashi-nibancho Elementary School participated.

100,000 paper cranes were flown in from 38 countries.





Students sang "Furusato (Home)" at the opening.

Installation at Tsutsujigaoka Elementary School



Installation at Saiwai-cho Youth Center in Sendai



Installation at Higashi-nibancho Elementary School



Installation at Chuo Community Center





NHK World broadcasted the unveiling event at Tsutsujigaoka Elementary School. Students made a speech in English and a couple of other languages to thank their friends all over the world.