



# CIVIC FORCE

## NEWS LETTER Vol.22

(December, 2020)



“Full House,” a book café in Odaka, Soma City, Fukushima Prefecture reopened on December 2 after temporarily closing due to COVID-19. On that day, the café was full with people who came to congratulate and give flowers to the owner and writer Ms. Miri Yu (second from left) who won the U.S. National Book Award. See page 2 for details.



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## Aiming to be a Team with More Mobility and Problem-Solving

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2020 is already coming to an end.

We began the year sincerely hoping for a year without disasters. However, a new threat called COVID-19 invaded our daily lives. The new virus not only paralyzed the economy but also forced us to change our behavior, our way of thinking and our society.

We at Civic Force have been confronting natural disasters for years, but the year 2020 forced us to face yet a new challenge. This summer in particular, as many areas in Japan were hit by heavy rains including Kumamoto and other prefectures in the Kyushu and Chubu regions, we faced a greater challenge. We had to protect ourselves and save as many lives as possible while maintaining the mobility of the team operating in the areas affected by the torrential rains and COVID-19. We are focusing on support activities that identify and solve inconspicuous issues in a timely manner, in addition to improving team mobility.

In this last newsletter of the year, we report on the NPO Partner Projects that are ongoing in Kumamoto and Oita Prefectures, areas affected by the 2020 Kyushu heavy rains. We also report on activities supporting the affected areas of the Great East Japan Earthquake as we near the ten-year memorial of the earthquake. Reconstruction and revitalization efforts have been stalled due to COVID-19, and new projects have had to deal with other emerging challenges.

Civic Force’s activities to assist disaster-affected people are supported by none other than you, the donors. We sincerely thank you for your kind support throughout the year and ask that you please continue supporting us in the coming year. Let’s prepare for the future together!

# Supporting Disaster Affected

The following articles describe the emergency responses, the aid activities, and the reconstruction efforts that Civic Force has provided in various disaster-affected areas in Japan.

2020  
Kyushu  
Heavy  
Rains

## Supporting Single-Parent Families amid Heavy Rains and Pandemic

More than half a year has passed since the heavy rains hit the Kyushu region, including Kumamoto Prefecture and the Chubu Region. People already in distress are suffering further hardship due to the complex disaster caused by COVID-19. In particular, the economic and mental burden has been increasing more and more for single-parent families who tend to become isolated.

Civic Force's NPO Partner Project newly started a cooperative service in October in collaboration with the Social Welfare Corporation Kumamoto Prefecture Single Parent Family Welfare Association. According to the association, there are 206 single-parent families living in the affected areas, 60 of which are living in temporary housing because their own homes were flooded. The project provides various services for single-parent families in the affected areas including Kuma Village, Ashikita City and Yatsushiro City. Services include a parent-child café providing mental support, an open-air camp, and preparatory courses for entrance exams.

The association has been supporting single-parent families since 1949 and currently has a membership of 1,750 households. Utilizing years of experience and extensive networks, it is continually providing services such as distributing "Food Boxes" to roughly 2,000 households for emergency assistance in the pandemic. According to the association's staff, an increasing number of parents are complaining that they cannot interact with their children gently because parents are facing mental hardship due to mental and physical burdens, and that care for both the parents and children is urgently needed.



## Focus on Harnessing the Power of Local Communities Despite Manpower Shortage

The NGO Collaboration Center for HANSHIN QUAKE Rehabilitation, which began its emergency assistance activities in Kumamoto Prefecture immediately after the disaster, is currently providing funds to support six disaster victim groups and voluntary disaster management teams that have been organized in Kuma Village, Hitoyoshi City, Yatsushiro City and other affected areas, so that they can continue their recovery and reconstruction activities. Making use of its own experiences, the Center is also carrying out activities to disseminate its past experiences in disaster recovery to the public.

Civic Force is collaborating with Riera, an NPO based in Hichiku City, Oita Prefecture, to assist Amagase Onsen, one of Oita's representative resorts, in overcoming the disaster and opening the way to a new future as a hot spring resort. As local people strongly believe that they should not depend on outside help because of the pandemic, Riera is focusing on support activities that gather the power of local communities in various situations.

## Pick Up!

Great  
East Japan  
Earthquake

## Writer Miri Yu's Novel Receives U.S. National Book Award

Miri Yu is the representative of Full House, one of Civic Force's partners. Her novel "Tokyo Ueno Station" won the 2020 U.S. National Book Award on November 19. The novel's main character is a man from Minamisoma City. Yu said, "I wrote this novel through interactions with the people of Minamisoma City who have been suffering from the hardships of the earthquake, tsunami and nuclear power plant accident. I hope that this book café will be a place of relaxation in the community."



Civic Force has been supporting the book café Full House since March 2020, as part of the Great East Japan Earthquake NPO Partner Projects. The café had been closed due to COVID-19, but it was reopened on December 2 and the cafe menu and other items have been renewed. Open Tuesday through Saturday from 11:00 to 18:00 (last order by 16:30).

## Assisting People Suffering Twofold from COVID-19 and Natural Disasters

Since May 2020, we have been implementing the NPO Partner Projects to support the disaster-affected areas and their surrounding communities where many of the recovery and reconstruction efforts have been behind the schedule due to the impact of the COVID-19. The projects have assisted the activities of four organizations in four prefectures through November and conducted further needs assessments.

### Sanriku Hitotsunagi Nature School

### Creating Opportunities for Children to Play Outside

Sanriku Hitotsunagi Nature School has been engaged in outdoor education and community building activities in Kamaishi City, Iwate Prefecture, one of the areas affected by the Great East Japan Earthquake. The school has organized "Aozora Park" every weekend since May 2020 to provide children who have been stressed by COVID-19 with a place to move around, and enjoy nature experiences and outdoor games at Nehama Beach and other locations. Satoshi Ito, the representative of the group, said, "We have also collaborated with local medical practitioners to devise ways to juggle implementing COVID-19 prevention measures and running program activities."



### Peace Jam

### Continuing to Support Mothers by Creating a Community Where They Can Work and Raise Children

Peace Jam has been supporting mothers who lost their jobs and places to raise their children due to the Great East Japan Earthquake. Peace Jam operated a handmade jam-making business using local fruits and vegetables. Having faced a critical situation again due to COVID-19, they have shifted their business to the manufacture and sales of products such as face masks and hand sanitizers to meet current demands so that they could secure the community where mothers could work and raise their children. The project with Peace Jam included supporting their secretariat operation.



### ezorock

### Supporting Parent-Child Bonding with Stimulating Wooden Toys



To help children and parents feeling stressed by the stay-at-home requests in the pandemic, Civic Force conducted a cooperative project with ezorock to lend them hand-made wooden toys for free, mainly during summer vacation from August to September. A total of 17 families in six areas including Sapporo City, Tomakomai City and Kuriyama Town (all in Hokkaido Prefecture) utilized the service. We have received positive feedback from the parents, such as "The way our children spend their time at home has changed since playing with the wooden toys," and "Thanks to the rent service, our parent-child relationship has been better."

### Arts and Sports for Everyone (ASE)

### Securing the Jobs of Disabled People via Online Events

It was the third collaboration with ASE since the 2016 Kumamoto Earthquake. Civic Force has held online seminars for staff members working at care centers for disabled people eight times since June to support people with disabilities on the verge of losing their jobs due to the economic slump. A total of 121 welfare service workers in Kumamoto Prefecture participated in the seminars. Also, we started an online shop named Shifuku Department Store where miscellaneous goods and vegetables produced at the welfare facilities are sold. The online shop now is selling 76 items created by 20 facilities.

### Great East Japan Earthquake

### NPO Partner Projects Ongoing in Three Prefectures in Tohoku Region: Iwate, Miyagi and Fukushima

NPO Partner Projects, which support reconstruction efforts in disaster-affected areas of the Great East Japan Earthquake, implemented 49 projects in collaboration with 37 groups between 2011 and 2018. Since 2019, under the name of "New Dream Support x NPO Partner Projects," Civic Force has been assisting young people's education, their mental and physical health, and their efforts to preserve and hand down culture to the next generation. Seven projects were executed in three prefectures in 2019 (around 30 million JPY in total). Please refer to the 2019 Annual Activity Report (May 2019 - April 2020) for details. The new projects below have launched from October 2020 and we will produce a report about the projects in detail on our website and through other channels

#### ■ Soma Aid and Rescue Team (Fukushima Prefecture)

Developing the next generation and building a community through a traditional horse festival in Minamisoma, Fukushima Prefecture.

#### ■ Sanriku Hitotsunagi Nature School (Iwate Prefecture)

Growing the next generation through community involvement and disaster management education



Donate NOW



【東日本大震災支援事業】  
夢生応援 × NPO パートナー協働事業  
2019年度活動報告  
2019年10月 - 2020年4月



# Creating an Emergency Preparedness

We are undertaking various efforts to develop our emergency preparedness mechanism in the face of disasters. This page introduces media coverage of our activity and information associated with our partner organizations.

## Emergency Preparedness Mechanism

### Partnering with Yahoo! on Disaster Risk Reduction Alert App

Airborne Rescue & Relief Operations With Search (ARROWS), which includes Civic Force, became a cooperative partner of Yahoo! on the “Disaster Map” app in September 2020. Prior to September, only individual users could post information on the affected areas immediately following a disaster. Now, support organizations working on the ground can also post or transmit information in real-time, which will contribute to saving more lives.



## Great East Japan Earthquake

### Staff Needed in Fukushima

Civic Force is seeking a person living in Fukushima to work as a program coordinator in our assistance activities for the Great East Japan Earthquake. Please check our website for details.

## Emergency Preparedness Mechanism

### Support Our Activities Easily

#### 《General Donations》

##### ■ Value Books: “Charibon”

<https://www.charibon.jp>

##### ■ Heads: “Charity Happiness Shopping Bags”

<https://www.e-heads.co.jp/products/detail2/3219>

##### ■ SUNNAP (sales limited in ASKUL)

“Phase-free Certified Paper Cup with Measurement”

<https://www.askul.co.jp/p/P678379/>

##### ■ Hondana-Otasuke-Tai: “Donation by Selling Second-Hand Books”

<https://hondana.biz/second-hand-books-selling-for-charity/charityhtml>

##### ■ EC Navi: “Smile Project”

[https://ecnavi.jp/smile\\_project/](https://ecnavi.jp/smile_project/)

#### 《2020 Kyushu Heavy Rains》

##### ■ Yahoo! Net Donation

<https://donation.yahoo.co.jp/detail/3747019>

##### ■ GlobalGiving (English site)

<https://www.globalgiving.org/projects/flood-and-landslide-relief-in-kyushu-japan-2020/>

#### 《COVID-19 Emergency Assistance》

##### ■ Yahoo! Net Donation

<https://donation.yahoo.co.jp/detail/3747017>

##### ■ GlobalGiving (English site)

<https://www.globalgiving.org/projects/coronavirus-relief-aid-distribution/>

#### 《Great East Japan Earthquake》

##### ■ Value Books: “Books for Japan”

<http://www.booksforjapan.jp/action/>

## MEDIA

### Donations Website 「SOLIO」

“Your donations can lead to a little better world!” A donation platform called “SOLIO” was launched in November, and Civic Force was selected as one of the recipients in the category of “Disaster Prevention and Assistance for Disaster-affected Areas,” one of the 12 social challenges. Please go to [solio.me](http://solio.me) for details.



## Emergency Preparedness Mechanism

### Start Your Support with Only 33 Yen per Day

In order to be better prepared for future disasters, we need your support. Become a monthly supporter and you can donate a fixed amount each month (in 1,000 yen units) and help prepare for future large-scale disasters. Payments can be made through bank transfers to Civic Force:

•Sumitomo Mitsui Banking Corporation:  
Aoyama Branch Account No. 6953964

•Japan Post Bank  
Account No. 00140-6-361805  
Account holder’s name of the above banks is “Civic Force”

•Credit card:  
Please check the “Donate Now!” section of the Civic Force website below  
<https://bokinchan3.com/civicforce/donation/bokin/page1.php>

