

SUMMARY OF THE 2009 UT PROJECT REPORT

1. What is the UT Project?-Background and Objectives-

UT Project stands for the project of alliance among business, academic, and public which aims for the vitalization of Yuki Tsumugi industry. The project consists of volunteers from University of Tsukuba faculty, Shiho-kai (Support Group for Univ. of Tsukuba students), Textile Technology Office, Industrial Technology Institute of Ibaraki Prefecture, etc. UT was named after the initial letter of University of Tsukuba and (Y)Uki-Tsumugi.

Yuki Tsumugi is a traditional craft with a history since ancient times, and was designated as a national important intangible cultural property in 1956. Although Yuki-Tsumugi is well known, due to the kimono culture's diminishment nowadays, preservation and development as an industry have limitations and the industry is seeking for new measures to promote its growth. Meanwhile, making use of the network, University of Tsukuba faculty who has observed the Yuki-Tsumugi industry for long time has started the UT Project in cooperation with University of Tsukuba, Ibaraki Prefecture, Yuki-City and Yuki-Tsumugi industry.

The UT Project has aimed for exploitation of the new products, expansion of sales channels, and extracurricular activities of students.

2. "Competition of Daily Commodities Made of Yuki-Tsumugi"

(1) Objectives of Competition

The objective of the UT Project is to let the students of University of Tsukuba and other citizens get close to Yuki-Tsumugi and invigorate the Yuki-Tsumugi industry. In 2009, *hagire* fabrics (the leftover fabrics from the kimono making from piece goods) and *kirisune* threads (the leftover threads which are unable to be woven at the time of weaving piece goods due to the structure of looms) were provided to the UT Project through the courtesy of Yuki-Tsumugi industry. The UT project looked for ideas of daily commodities made of these fabrics and/or threads and provided each applicant a certain size or amount of *hagire* and/or *kirisune* to make daily commodities. The UT project aimed that applicants could learn how to make use of the traditional textile techniques and culture and promote Yuki-Tsumugi.

(2) Main Schedule

* Distribution of application forms (September 2009)

- * Start of Web Site(October 2009)
- * Promotion at the booth in the shop during the University of Tsukuba Cultural Festival (October10~12, 2009)
- * Reception of designs for initial screenings (October13~November 6, 2009)
- * Initial screening(November12,2009)
- * Provision of *hagire* fabrics and *kirisune* threads to those who passed initial screening(November21~28, 2009)
- * Reception of works for final review(November16, 2009~January 8, 2010)
- * Final review(January 26, 2010)
- * Exhibitions of entries (February, 2010 at University of Tsukuba and Yuki City)



(Above) Origins of *hagire* fabrics(right) and *kirisune* threads(left).

(3) Showcase of Prize-Winning Works



(Above left) Grand Prize:”Corsage” made by Sumie Ebine

(Above right) Prize of Society of Development Study for New Fields:
 “Bag of Yo-yo Quilt” made by Hideko Akutsu



(Above left) Prize of the Chief of the Textile Technology Office:

“Wedding Dress for Licca-chan” made by Maiko Ohtsu

(Above right) Prize of the Chief of the Textile Technology Office:

“Corsage of *Kirisune*” made by Hideko Akutsu

(4) Overview of Applications and Conclusion of Competition

In the year of 2009 Competition, 34 *hagire* fabric works and 10 *kirisune* threads were collected for initial screenings, and 32 *hagire* works and 10 *kirisune* works were gathered for the final review. 17 of them were students of the University of Tsukuba. As a result of the final review, 17 works won the prizes.

Although the *hagire* and *kirisune* provided to applicants were limited, applicants made inventive efforts to create the works and the result was of high quality. It appeared that this process made them feel close to, enjoy and absorb the tradition of Yuki-Tsumugi. Applicants were allowed to use other necessary materials freely and there was a work that combines Yuki-Tsumugi and other Japanese kimono fabrics. From the viewpoint of promotion of Yuki-Tsumugi, it can be said that the fact that general people other than those who buy kimono could have access to Tsumugi was significant. And there was an applicant who voiced that Yuki-Tsumugi fabrics were much more colorful than expected. The trial of practical use of Yuki-Tsumugi *hagire* and *kirisune* can also be consistent with the recent tide of the spirit of recycle.