

Toya-Usu Volcano Meisters

as an Interpreter of the Global Geopark and Disaster Prevention

Toya Caldera and Usu volcano global geopark is certifying local residents who can tell the history of eruptions and disasters of Usu volcano as Volcano Meister. (Meister means expert in German.) Many Meisters are also involved in geopark guide activity because they are given a role to tell about not only disaster prevention but also about the charms of the geopark.

Over the past six years, twenty-nine Meisters have been certified. They have been active in various ways, such as acting as workshop lecturer, a field tour guide, an author of a guidebook, etc. The number of applicants for Meister certification is growing and activity is increasing more and more each year.



	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	TOTAL
Applications	6	6	7	11	7	12	10/5 EXAM	49
Certifications	6	5	5	5	2	6		29

The Number of Volcano



In our region, certification of "Toya-Usu Volcano Meisters," leaders in regional disaster prevention who have prepared themselves for the next eruptions began in 2008; certification evaluations have taken place once a year, and 29 Meisters have been certified. Volcano Meisters thoroughly study the nature and characteristics of the Toya caldera and Usu volcano area, passing on scientifically correct information, records and memories of eruptions, and their knowledge of ways to reduce disaster risk to the next generation of people both inside and outside of the area. Through these activities, as "academic and knowledge sharing practitioners," they have become our Geopark's messengers of information, focused mainly on disaster prevention. In actuality, the tours guided by the Volcano Meisters, who, based on their knowledge of the Usu volcano and experience of previous eruptions, explain a wide range of information to visitors (including the attractions of the area, the blessings bestowed by the volcano, and more), provide a large sense of satisfaction to visitors. Also, the Toya-Usu Volcano Junior Meisters, the Volcano Meisters' division for middle and high school students, conducts year-round certification and has currently certified 95 Junior Meisters. Our council is managed systematically in cooperation with Hokkaido Government and will support the Volcano Meisters' future activities.

The Volcano Meisters boast a diverse membership, employees in the tourism trade, teachers, nature guides, curators, visitor center personnel, photographers, town council members, commercial & industrial association employees, and more. In 2011, the Toya-Usu Volcano Meister Network, a volunteer group was formed. It is an educational association that not only organizes educational conferences and geotour lectures to pass on evacuation experiences from past eruptions and disaster-prevention wisdom but also enthusiastically continues to extoll the charms of the Toya-Usu Volcano Geopark far and wide. Also, Volcano Meisters specializing in fields such as geology, ecology, archaeology, area historical research, and research studies provide robust support to the council activity through their roles as lecturers and authors of guidebooks.



"Defending!" The Report of GGN Revalidation 2013 (The poster for the 4th JGN Conference)

