

**Deborah Baker
(1976~78)**

When I think of LIOJ, I smile. I consider the two years I spent there at the beginning of my professional life, 1976-78, a gift that I will always treasure. It was a transforming experience for me, both personally and professionally. I worked with an extraordinary group of people who challenged the boundaries I had set for myself. They taught me new ways to experience the world and myself.

LIOJ was also the only time in my life when I enjoyed the feeling of being a part of a community. We were a community that cared. We cared for each other, we cared about the quality of the work we did, and we cared about all of the people we met and worked with in Japan and on our travels.

LIOJ taught me about my limitations and my possibilities. I have become a professor of speech communication and I have worked in several educational institutions since LIOJ. I have never worked anywhere that has given so much to me.

Thank you, Mr. and Mrs. Shibusawa, for your considerable effort, personal vision, and your gracious, open generosity of spirit that gave me this gift:

a gift of personal and professional growth,
a gift of lifelong friendships,
a gift of belonging to a community.