

Media Contact: LoAnn Halden
Loann.halden@iglta.org
+1.954.253.4095

IGLTA Foundation Announces 2015 Conference Scholarship Recipients
Global LGBT travel organization welcomes the next generation of tourism professionals to its Los Angeles convention

Fort Lauderdale, FL (17 March, 2015)—The IGLTA Foundation recently selected five recipients for its third annual Building Bridges Scholarships, a group that represents China, Colombia, Jamaica and Japan. Each will receive an all-expenses-paid trip and conference registration for the International Gay & Lesbian Travel Association's Annual Global Convention in Los Angeles, 8-11 April.

The program was created to support the next generation of LGBT travel professionals (and allies). Scholarships went to three students and two small business owners.

"We're thrilled about this diverse group of well-deserving scholarship recipients," said IGLTA President/CEO John Tanzella. "This is the first time we've had Asia represented in the program, and the two small business owners we selected are developing tours for Bucaramanga, Colombia and Jamaica, reinforcing our commitment to assist LGBT businesses in emerging destinations or places with governmental challenges. We hope the conference experience will help lead them to bright futures in our industry."

Scholarship recipients will have the opportunity to network with travel industry leaders from around the world and attend two days of educational sessions.

Meet this year's Building Bridges Scholarship recipients:

- Kan Kikumoto is a student at Sophia University in Tokyo, Japan. He hopes to lead LGBT tours in Japan, his home country, when he completes his studies.
- Wang Hao (Charlie) was born and raised in China where he did an internship at the Beijing LGBT Center. He is now an economics student at the University of Tokyo and pursuing interests in LGBT tourism and marketing.
- Ena Yanagi studies tourism and gender and LGBT issues at Meiji Gakuin University in her home city of Yokohama, Japan. She wants to become a travel agent.
- Olubode Shawn Brown founded BLOOM Jamaica in 2010 to safely take gay and lesbian travelers to his home country for an annual party in Negril. This

year, he is launching BLOOM Escapes to offer small, customized tours to Jamaica with an insider, LGBT perspective.

- Fabio Rugeles owns the small business Cibum S.A.S., which is developing a gastronomy tour route to showcase his home city of Bucaramanga, Colombia to LGBT travelers.

For high-res photos of the scholarship recipients, email loann.halden@iglta.org. For more information on the Annual Global Convention: igltaconvention.org.

IGLTA thanks Platinum Global Partner Delta Air Lines for generously providing the round-trip flights to Los Angeles for the 2015 scholarship recipients.

About IGLTA & the IGLTA Foundation

The International Gay & Lesbian Travel Association is the leading member-based global organization dedicated to LGBT tourism and a proud Affiliate Member of the United Nations World Tourism Organization. The association's membership includes LGBT and LGBT-friendly accommodations, destinations, service providers, travel agents, tour operators, events and travel media in 80 countries. In 2012, the philanthropic IGLTA Foundation was launched to support the mission of the association and its membership through scholarships, marketing assistance in emerging destinations, and research. For more information, iglta.org or igltafoundation.org and follow us on social media, @IGLTA or @IGLTAFoundation.