

Students Remember Hiroshima

Exhibit Features Photos of 1945 Bombings

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Shigeko Sasamori told a story that is not heard often. She told a story of war, pain and peace. A quick glance at this small, soft-spoken woman would not lead someone to believe she is a survivor of the first nuclear attack. But in fact, this quiet woman in her seventies was only 13 when the first atomic bomb fell on the Japanese city of Hiroshima.

On the night of Oct. 28, with the help of the Institute for Conflict Analysis and Resolution, or ICAR, and the Conflict Analysis and Resolution Undergraduate Program at George Mason University, Sasamori told her story and the life changing events of Aug. 6, 1945.

An estimated 140,000 Japanese citizens died as a result of the atom bomb that fell on the cities of Hiroshima and Nagasaki. Sasamori was a young school girl at the time of the bombings. Her survival is unique in that she was within a mile radius of the bomb's release and subsequent drop. Sasamori suffered severe burns throughout her body. Fortunately in 1955, a decade

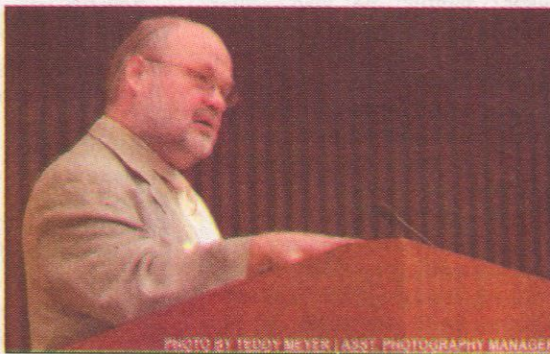
after the bombing, Sasamori traveled to the United States to undergo a series of surgeries that would span 30 operations. Since then, she has experienced health problems as a result of the bombings, most recently thyroid cancer and intestinal cancer. She currently lives in California along with her only son and two

grandchildren. **John Steinbach spoke at the Hiroshima exhibit.**

Sasamori commits to speaking engagements across the country throughout the year.

In cooperation with the Hiroshima Peace Memorial Museum and the Hiroshima-Nagasaki Peace Committee of the National Capital Area, the evening also provided the opportunity for guests to view an exhibition of the aftermath of the bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki. Photographs blown to a large scale were displayed

throughout the front ballroom of Student Union Building II. Horrific and unimaginable pictures taken immediately after the bombing and the days following brought Sasamori's story to those in attendance. Such titles of these photos read:



“The Charred Corpse of Boy”, “Human Shadow Etched in Stone”, and “Man Burned Over His Entire Body”.

When one student asked whether she was angry about what happened, Sasamori responded, “I never felt anger at American people. I am very thankful for surviving. I am angry for the war.” Though the coordination of the evening's event occurred just three weeks earlier, it attracted students like

Jared Schmitz, a junior studying Conflict Analysis and Resolution.

“It's not every day that you meet a survivor of the Hiroshima and Nagasaki bombings,” he said.

Under the leadership of Andrea Bartoli, PhD of ICAR, Haruka Nakayama, a first-year Master's student in the ICAR program was able to help organize the event. Even with the struggles she had in coordinating the event, Nakayama had a desire to ensure the event came to fruition.

“I wanted people to feel something from her experience. That was my motivation,” said Bartoli.

The night ended with an offering of a bookmark to everyone in the audience. The gift, which included Japanese sayings with English translations read: “Be attentive.” “Be intelligent.” “Be reasonable.” “Be responsible.” Sasamori noted that the first statement of being attentive is the most important. She impressed upon the importance of caring for other people because, “War is no good for anyone,” Sasamori said.