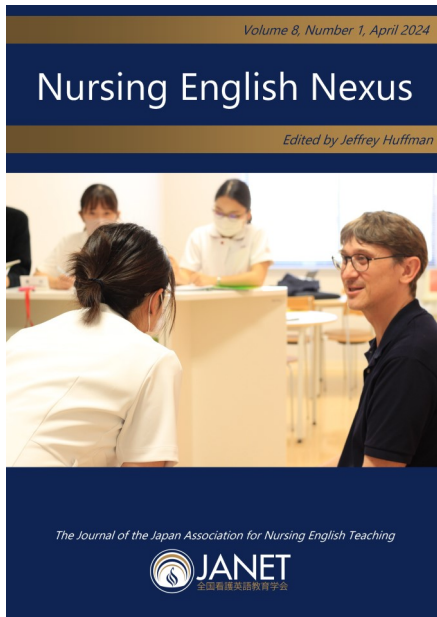


# A Nursing Student of Note

Michael Guest

Formerly of the University of Miyazaki, Faculty of Medicine



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## A Nursing Student of Note

Michael Guest (mikeguest59@yahoo.ca)

Formerly of the University of Miyazaki, Faculty of Medicine

It was my fourth week into the 2023 spring semester with my first-year nursing students, and so far, everything had been proceeding as expected. During that particular week's English lesson, I wanted to model a nursing interaction using one of the students as a patient. I chose Moe, a positive and eager student who always sat near the front of the class, to aid me in the demonstration. I asked Moe, who was playing the part of the patient, to stick out her arm. When she did so, however, I was quickly taken aback. Moe had no right hand. I don't think I covered my surprise too well, but I tried to continue the demonstration as if this were an everyday occurrence. There were a few murmurs among class members—who, of course, were well aware of Moe's disability—and indeed, Moe herself gave me a wry smile. No doubt, she had seen the same reaction many times in her life.

Moe Nakagawa was born without a right hand but, like most such disabled people, had adapted her condition so well that it was difficult to notice that she had any disability—she could perform all classroom functions as easily as any of her two-handed classmates, hence the fact that I had not previously noticed it. She had convinced the university entrance committee that she could excel as a nursing student despite the disability. However, because she would be unable to perform many nursing tasks, Moe instead plans to become a nursing educator. In fact, Moe has turned out to be one of those attentive, energetic students who brings a positive glow to every class.

But there is something even more intriguing about Moe Nakagawa. Moe is a sprinter of international stature. She has been running competitively since junior high school in Miyazaki and is the current Japanese record holder in both the 100-meter and 200-meter events within her disability category. She has represented Japan at international Paralympic meets and has recently, as her greatest achievement yet, qualified for the Paris Paralympics to be held in late August and early September this year. This has led to Moe becoming something of a minor celebrity here in Miyazaki, being featured in a local magazine and garnering a full-page spread in the regional newspaper.

In my first few classes with new students, I always have them interview partners in order to learn about one another and convey anything of interest about that partner in a written assignment. Moe's partner had not mentioned her disability (likely out of respect) nor her prowess in track and field. Neither did



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Moe state anything beyond the fact that she was in the track and field club in her self-introduction to me. Japanese humility and self-effacement are legendary, but if any of my students have reason to boast, it is Moe Nakagawa. I will be sure to cheer for her through my living room TV when she runs for Japan in Paris this summer. I suggest that you do the same.