

DR. HAJIME KANAMORI –

A BELIEF IN ‘KIZUNA’

“FORTUNATELY, I CAN LET YOU KNOW I’M ALIVE.”

Those were the sober words of Hajime Kanamori, MD, PhD, MPH, in an email to colleagues at UNC Gillings School of Global Public Health in March 2011. Kanamori was in the northern part of Miyagi Prefecture, high in the hills, when a 9.0-magnitude earthquake and subsequent tsunami devastated countless Japanese towns and cities. Almost immediately, he was treating survivors who had made their way to evacuation centers.

“I believe in kizuna, the idea of bonds and connections between people,” he says. “We received supplies, prayers and support from international rescue and medical teams. Japan will recover and rebuild better with our efforts and the global community’s help. I thank the world from the bottom of my heart.”

Kanamori earned a certificate in field epidemiology at UNC’s public health school in 2011 and a Master of Public Health in Public Health Leadership in 2012. A physician at Tohoku University’s Graduate School of Medicine, he works to prevent and control infectious diseases.

“Through my practicum at UNC, I came to understand the role of infection control and outbreak investigation in challenging situations such as the Great East Japan Earthquake,” Kanamori said. “I also learned how UNC hospitals reduce health-care-associated infections and learned the basic skills of hospital epidemiology. That will be of great help in promoting better infection control activities at my hospital.”

—JB Shelton



Dr. Kanamori

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