

*LSU Graduate Eric Triche Still Finding His Niche*  
By Josh Duplechain

For some, the city of Dallas is a mecca, representing both the old and the new Texas. For LSU graduate Eric Triche, however, it was a stepping-stone to something more, something bigger.

Upon graduating in the spring of 2001, Triche's ultimate goal was to travel the world and put his education degree to use, teaching in various countries. To do that, he would need experience not only teaching in the classroom, but with learning to live away from Louisiana. Dallas, it seemed, was a perfect fit.

"It is the perfect 'test-drive' distance for moving away (from Louisiana)," Triche said. "And more importantly, I had found the perfect position in Richardson Independent School District, teaching sixth grade language arts and social studies at Jess Harben Elementary.

"I'm sure you can guess that I suffered a little harassment for wanting to leave the state. The reasoning for my desire to leave was pretty much rooted in my ultimate desire of traveling around the world."

It wasn't long after his arrival at Jess Harben that Triche established a connection with his students. One day while trying to explain to them that he was an alien, meaning "not from around here," his students took it to heart. Consequently, they began to bring him a collection of extra terrestrial objects that now live on his desk.

But Triche would receive something greater, if not in sentiment, than in importance. A few months into his first year of teaching, Triche received an application about a teaching opportunity in Japan through the Japanese Exchange Teaching Program. After applying in November, he learned in April that he had been accepted. One of the first things he did after learning of his acceptance, was to e-

mail the faculty of the LSU College of Education, to thank them for their support.

“I couldn’t stand the idea of leaving this most perfect position that I was lucky enough to get at Jess Harben,” Triche said. “On the other hand, (the opportunity in Japan) would help me reach my goal of teaching abroad.

“I decided that I couldn’t pass up the chance to teach in Japan, but it was extremely heart breaking to hear parents tell me that their kindergarten children were so upset because they really wanted to have me as a teacher in sixth grade.”

His contract in Japan, he said, is for one year but he may renew it for up to three years. He wanted to leave the state, he wanted to find a great teaching position and he wanted to teach in a foreign land, and now he’s nearly achieved all three. But there is one more goal left, Triche said. He wants to know what it’s like to be a minority.

“I teach so many beautiful students who are minorities, but I do not feel that I truly understand what it is like for them socially,” Triche said. “I know that my experience in Japan will help me to become a much more effective teacher in the future.”

*Article can be found online at*

<http://www.lsu.edu/lсутoday/020510/pageone.html#5>