

**Phil Nguyen**  
**JALT 2025 Award for Early Career Excellence**

**Letter 1**

I am delighted to submit a nomination of Phil Nguyen for the 2025 JALT Award for Early Career Excellence. All the contributions he has made for JALT in the past 10+ years professionally and with his technical expertise have been extraordinary.

Currently I work with Phil at three JALT committees: International Conference Committee, PanSIG Committee, and SPIN Committee. At all of them, he is a huge part of the group.

It was at the JALT 2023 at Tsukuba that he first invited me to work together. I was overwhelmed by the responsibilities he held for just one conference, which included conference platform director, on-site registration staff, tech analyst, and on-site student volunteer coordinator (there might have been more that I am not aware of). I also learned during the conference that he took over 200 hours during the summer to build and set up the conference platform on his own. It was very surprising, or even shocking to me, to hear that he devoted the full-time equivalent time to help with making a better conference during the summer break, when teachers usually spend their time taking a break or for their own professional development.

Phil has served as the Treasurer at PanSIG conferences, making the conference finances very healthy after COVID. Now he is assigned as the Site Chair for the 2026 conference. This gesture of his endless contribution and endeavor for JALT even expresses his loyalty for the organization.

He has done a lot for the SPIN Committee too. For the annual SPIN Symposium alone, he has contributed by running the event Indico page, handling Zoom, creating the timetable, and as the proceedings chief editor. Also last year, he led the student poster session at Nagoya & Gifu and Toyohashi's co-event. Despite the professionalism he shows at bigger conferences, the way he interacted with the student presenters, who were very nervous in the academic setting, was very kind and considerate. This also shows his potential of working as the Chief Coordinator of Pink Shirt Volunteers at the 2025 International Conference.

Phil and I have also co-presented at a conference hosted by Niigata Chapter and TD SIG. Although he no longer belongs to the Niigata officer team after moving to Nagoya, his engagement and communications with the chapter officers demonstrated the contributions he had made to the chapter. This showed his involvement in JALT not only at the national level, but also at the local level, which are the fundamental elements of JALT as a nationwide organization.

However, the most delightful part of working with Phil is not his reliability, his knowledge, or skills, but it is his humbleness. He never shows off or talks much about his contributions or achievements. Therefore, I am very confident to conclude this nomination letter by saying that Phil Nguyen deserves to receive this Award of Early Career Excellence and a recognition from JALT as a long-term and heavy contributor to the organization.

-Natsuho Mizoguchi

**Letter 2**

Especially since the COVID-19 pandemic breakout, Phil has proved himself to be a leader in adopting new technologies, both in his classes as well as in the wider JALT community. First, he uses a variety of technology to enhance his students' learning; in his classes his students hardly use their cellphones and are on their laptops to do work. He helps them improve not only their IT skills, but also problem solving as they aren't relying on their cellphones for support. He also teaches his students not only about using apps, but also about making apps for classes, and using them in conjunction with their presentations.

Second, he helps other teachers learn how to use technology. Since 2019, he has done 18 presentations. In the early days, just before the pandemic, he was already explaining ICT to teachers and how it could augment

their English classes. After that, he presented on a variety of topics such as how to use Zoom, how to do webinars, and how to use a variety of learning management systems (LMS), such as Moodle, Microsoft 365, and Microsoft Teams. He has also helped teachers learn how to use particular programs, such as Canva.

No one can argue that he has been a valuable asset to the JALT community at large. Calmly and with a sense of humour, he is involved in a lot of the front-end JALT work, such as supporting officers, taking care of various databaess, and, in his own words, "Just being a cool-IT go-to guy." It must also be said that his hair and fashion are always on point.

I like to think that I played a small part in Phil's journey when, in 2020, I asked him about setting up some online events for Niigata JALT. He said, "I want to try out this webinar thing" and I said, "Go for it." And the rest, as they say, is history.

In summary, Phil is an outstanding, knowledgeable, reliable, and very necessary person and I think he should be rewarded by the JALT community for his dedicated service.

-Melodie Cook

### **Letter 3**

Phil has been an educator and a crucial member of JALT for many years. As a teacher, he has worked to create effective lessons for his students, and used his background in computers and technology to bring new and motivating resources into the classroom. Within JALT, he has served tirelessly as treasurer in several groups, and been essential in helping to organize both technology and volunteer resources for a number of major conferences. In addition, he is one of the main officers of the SPIN committee, which works to support JALT members who are currently students. Phil is always dedicated to helping both his own students and fellow JALT members.

-Martin Sedaghat

### **Letter 4**

Phil Nguyen has actively contributed to the teaching scholarship of technology applications to English as a foreign language classrooms since 2019. His research has examined the important area of integrating different technologies for practical pedagogical applications. This includes exploring the compatibility between various learning management systems (LMSs) including Moodle, Microsoft's LMS, and Google Workspace for Education with different productivity tools like Office 365 and Google Drive applications. Most recently, he has worked on integrating some of the newest generative artificial intelligence (GAI) tools with such classroom management systems. This important work bridges classroom practice with cutting-edge software solutions for business productivity, helping familiarize students with the tools that they will need to use after their schooling is complete and they begin working in various applied business contexts. Phil has also tirelessly contributed to JALT as an organization, serving as the Treasurer for the PanSIG Conference since 2020, helping to ensure its financial viability and success. He has also served on JALT's Technology Advisory and Support Committee since 2019, helping to steer several important decisions including online conference hosting software solutions and more generally the smooth running of JALT's technology implementations, including its Google services for JALT.org. Further, he was the Niigata JALT Secretary 2018-2019 and its Treasurer 2019-2024. Finally, he has sought to share the benefits of JALT with other early career scholars through his participation in the JALT Student Peer Interaction Network (SPIN) Committee since 2023, helping organize student symposium events, thus actively including young teacher-researchers in JALT's activities. As such, Phil has demonstrated exemplary service to the field and to JALT and so I strongly recommend him for JALT's Early Career Excellence Award.

-Theron Muller