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(1) Activity Report 1

■ OFIX Volunteer Leader Character



To improve the popularity and expand the area of activities of OFIX volunteers, a character design contest was held. We would like to thank everyone who made their submissions.

As a result of the selection committee's strict evaluation, the winning design was the submission of Mr. Eiichi Shiozaki, a graphic designer living in Osaka City. Mr. Shiozaki used the globe to create a character to represent

people who aim to make a safe and liveable place for foreigners. The selection committee thought that the design had a friendly and warm character and the color combination is good.



On March 9, the award was presented by the Board of Director.

Please love it as a symbol of the OFIX volunteer's activity from now on.

(4) OFIX Scholar Report



My name is U To and I have been a scholar of OFIX since April 2009.

After I graduated high school in 2001, I decided to study in Japan to become someone who can adapt to the global society. This year is exactly my 9th year in Japan.

This March, I graduated and received my PhD degree from Osaka University Graduate School of Medicine and will work with company called AS ONE from April. Thank you very much for all the support you have given me.

When I came to Japan for the first time in 2003, I enjoyed my 4 years as a student at Aomori University Department of Engineering, Faculty of Bioengineering. After graduating from Aomori University, I entered Osaka University's Graduate School of Medicine and aggressively did research on cancer and an iPS cells. I was also able to present

my research results at various Academic Society Meetings.

Aside from research, I also participated in international exchange activities. While I was the President of the Chinese foreign student alumni association of Osaka University, through interacting with people of various values, I absorbed the good sides of people, which made me change and grow. From these experiences, I was able to feel first hand the importance of Japan-China Friendship. I was able to understand the importance of teamwork in the events we had planned together and from now on I would like to continue to put importance in the relationship of trust between people.

In the future, I would like to make use of my background as a foreigner, my own line of sight, the know-how I have gained from my experiences in International Exchange activities, my language ability, as well as the specialized knowledge I have learned to be a bridge between Japanese and Chinese business.

Lastly, I would like to wish OFIX further development and success and the well-being of everyone.

(3) Ando Program / Osaka Invitational Program for Short-Term Overseas Trainees in Architecture and Arts

■ Ando Club in Sri Lanka

Past participants of the Ando program from Sri Lanka take great pleasure in informing the Osaka Foundation for International Exchange (OFIX) that we have taken the initiative to form an Ando Club in Sri Lanka that would work in collaboration with the industry and the extended network of educational institutions.

The International Conference on Structural Engineering, Construction and Management (ICSECM 2011) was held in Kandy Sri Lanka during 15-17 Dec. 2011. Pleasingly seven out of the nine Ando program participants from Sri Lanka attended the conference.



From L-R: Suranga Monohara (2007), Amal Peiris (2011), Ranjith Dissanayake (1999), Dharshana Vitharana (2010), Subhashi Ranatunga (2008) and Sampath Narasinghe (2005)

Past participants of the Ando Program at the International Conference on Structural Engineering, Construction and Management (ICSECM 2011), Kandy, Sri Lanka

The Ando Club in Sri Lanka had its first general meeting on the 17th of December 2011, where the office bearers were elected and future events of progress were discussed. It is admirable to note the higher educational initiatives and industry collaborations that have been built by these past participants of the Ando Program.

All members have collectively decided to initiate programs utilizing the resources of the industry and academia to promote Sustainable Built Environment in Sri Lanka. Further collaboration and cooperation with organizations such as the Green Building Council of Sri Lanka and the wider institutional network of individual members will enhance the growth of the Ando Club in Sri Lanka. The club will meet every month in Kandy, Sri Lanka.

The extremely supportive role of OFIX is acknowledged in granting the opportunity and unique experience to students/professionals every year by holding the Ando Program in Osaka, Japan.

(4) Osaka Information Service for Foreign Residents

■ The Temporary Resident Card

In the last issue of OFIX News, we have explained about the new immigration law that will be implemented this July. In this issue, we will continue to further explain about the new law. Under the new law, the current "Alien Registration Card" will be abolished and will be replaced by a "Resident Card". As a transition, a "Temporary Resident Card" will be issued out. The creation of this card will start on May 7, two months before the implementation of the law. Mid to long term foreign residents in Japan who the new law applies to will be informed of the information to be put on the Resident Card, which will be based on the Alien Registration Certificate. If the notice returns because the address is unknown, the person will be judged as not actually living in

the said address and the temporary resident card may be deleted. Also, foreigners who do not get the temporary resident card by July 9, they have to report it within 14 days after the new law is in effect.

◎Osaka Information Service for Foreign Residents

(Mon-Fri, not open on weekends and national holidays)

(Hours 9:00-17:30)

Tel (direct line) 06-6941-2297

E-mail: jouhou-c@ofix.or.jp

Languages : English, Chinese, Korean, Portuguese, Spanish, Vietnamese, Filipino, Thai, Japanese

(5) Volunteer's Voice

※We would like to introduce an article from Ms. Kayoko Mori, one of the volunteers who have supported the activities of OFIX.

■ The Wealth I Acquired from 20 Years of International Relations – Kayoko Mori (Host Family and Cultural Volunteer)

It has been 20 years since our family has been involved with international exchange. By the thread of chance, I have met with many people of other countries and I could see their growth. From the time that they came to study, worked, married and raised

their children, they would sometimes write and tell me about it. Even if there is no contact for some time, I would suddenly get a correspondence from them and I am happy that I have kept myself healthy. On the other hand, during wars and disasters, I am

concerned about them, and there are times that I do not know who to cheer for during the Olympics or soccer games. International exchange is showing and looking at each other's lifestyle as it should be and by doing this, you can correctly understand the customs and culture of that person's country, and you would be able to see what you have to do, what is necessary, even if the exchange is only for a short time. Even if it is difficult to go beyond the

difficulties in the difference between languages and customs, no matter what country the person comes from, there are things that we can understand in our hearts. They, who have come to Japan, surely love Japan. I was able to gain much experience that I would not get from textbooks and they are my wealth of my family.

(6) Notices

■ Study in the US Orientation

To all those who are thinking: "I am interested in America and going overseas!" or "I'd like to study overseas!" On April 21 (Saturday) a "Study in the US Orientation" will be held, sponsored by Fulbright Japan and co-sponsored by Osaka Foundation of International Exchange, and Kansai American Center. There will also be an explanation about the Fulbright scholarship.

Fulbright Japan is a Japan-American exchange specialist funded by the Japanese and American governments. There is much information about studying in America and there is much time for question and answer. So if you have many questions about studying in America, you can ask all the questions that you want. We await everyone's participation.



Program

- [University and Graduate School Study Orientation]
1. Outline and Goal of Fulbright Japan (Japan-US Educational Commission)
 2. Recent trends in studying in America
 3. Comparison of Japanese and American Higher

Education

4. Characteristics of American University/Graduate School Education
5. Guide to choosing universities
6. Process of procedures for studying in America
7. Talk on American Study Experience
8. Question and Answer

13:30 Opening

14:00 American University/Graduate School Study Orientation

16:00 Closing

[Fulbright Scholarship Orientation]

16:00-17:00

For applications

[University and Graduate School Study Orientation]

http://www.fulbright.jp/study/event/setsume_os.html

[Fulbright Scholarship]

http://www.fulbright.jp/study/event/setsume_gr.html

Venue 44th Floor Large Meeting Room Sakishu Chosha Osaka Prefecture, Osaka City Suminoe-ku Nanko Kita 1-14-16

<http://www.pref.osaka.jp/location/location16.html>

■ Orion International House

OFIX is managing the Sakai International Hall (Orion International House), a residence for international students. We are currently seeking new residents to move in from April 2012.



Orion International House: about 400m Northeast

from JR Ueno Shiba Station Each room is for single occupancy. Each room is fitted with bath, toilet, air-conditioner, desk, bed, internet connection (Fiber Optic), etc.

Monthly Rent: : 26,000 Yen (includes communal fees, no deposit required) Electric and water bills are paid separately.

There is a kitchen on each floor and you can cook and do your laundry.

There is a friendly caretaker, and support officer on site. (1 male and 1 female)

International exchange and other fun events are also held in the dorm.

You may visit and have a look at the rooms anytime.

※Currently, there are no rooms available, but if there will be any vacancy, you may apply any time. You may find out about the vacancy status on our

home page.

※ Sakai International Hall Homepage
http://www.ofix.or.jp/english/shien/index.html

Applications should be made through the relevant international offices at the applicants' university.

(7) OFIX Coordinator for International Relations Report

■ Greetings and Culture

Hello, everyone! This is your International Relations Coordinator, Alvin. I give my thanks to the many people who have read my article again last month. Last month, I received a comment from a reader, which is very rare. If any of you have any comments or requests you can let me know by sending me mail at info@ofix.or.jp. This month, I will be talking about greetings and culture.

In 2004, I went to Russia to meet a Filipino friend. At that time, he introduced me to his Russian friend (female). It was the first time for us to meet so I put out my hand for a handshake, but she opened her arms for a hug. For a moment, I did not know what to do. Eventually, we ended up shaking hands. Because of that event, I thought that greetings are different depending on to the culture. I was told later on that in Russia, when you meet someone for the first time, you do not hug (my friend's friend was a special case). Furthermore, if a lady does not put out her hand, a man does not ask for a hand shake but slightly nods only.

Greetings are very important. Especially in this age of globalization, making the wrong greeting may offend the other party. So what kinds of greetings are there?

Philippines: When you meet someone for the first time, you shake hands. If you are good friends, no matter what gender, you sometimes hug. Between male and female friends, sometimes the greeting is a kiss on the cheek. (Actually, you just touch cheeks and make a kissing sound).

Latin America, France and Italy: The greetings in these countries are similar, have only slight differences. Overall, guys shake hands. If you are good friends, you hug. Male-female and female-female friends kiss each other on the cheek. The number of times you kiss the person on the cheek is different depending on the country. For example, in Spain, you kiss twice (one on each cheek). In the

other countries, once is enough. Women meeting for the first time may kiss each other on the cheek. A man meeting a woman for the first time may give a kiss on the cheek in some countries, but in some countries, this is not done. So, please note the custom of the country you will be going to. If you will not kiss, a hand shake will be proper.

Middle East Countries: Greetings between men is a hand shake, but the left hand is not used. The right hand is used for a hand shake (and for eating). For a man and woman meeting for the first time, no physical contact is done. It is just verbal greetings. For greetings between women, a light kiss on the cheek is given. (The kiss is similar to the Philippine kiss where you do not actually kiss the cheek, but touch cheeks and make a sound.)

Malaysia and Indonesia: Greetings between men and between women meeting for the first time is a hand shake using both hands. Greeting between a man and a woman meeting for the first time is a slight nod. If a lady puts out her hand then you can shake hands (normal hand shake).



Other cultures have strange greetings, for example, like the traditional greetings of the Eskimos and the Maori tribe in New Zealand. They rub their noses together when they greet each other.

It is said, "When in Rome, do as the Romans do." The next time we go on a trip to another country, let us learn the way they greet there.

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Distributed by Osaka Foundation of International Exchange
5th Floor, MyDome Osaka, 2-5 Hommachi-bashi, Chuo-ku, Osaka-shi, 540-0029
TEL:06-6966-2400 FAX:06-6966-2401 Homepage: <http://www.ofix.or.jp>

