

Contents**(1) Activity Report**

- Sakai City International Students and Volunteer Interpreters Joint Emergency Drill
- Overseas Emigrants Family Association Lecture “Outline of Brazil’s Recent Situation”
- One World Festival
- 2nd Exchange Meeting with Consulate Generals

(2) Contribution Corner

- Intern Report “Once-in-a-lifetime chance”
- Participating in the Kita Ward Exchange Festival

(3) Osaka Information Service for Foreign Residents

- Taxes

(4) OFIX Coordinator for International Relations Report

- The Philippine Education System

(1) Activity Report**■ Sakai City International Students and Volunteer Interpreters Joint Emergency Drill**

On December 23, 2012, the Sakai City International Students and Volunteer Interpreters Joint Emergency Drill was held, sponsored by the Sakai City International Student Exchange Executive Committee and Osaka Foundation for International Exchange.

The emergency drill was divided into two groups, one group to experience being in an evacuation center and another group that will support the evacuees. In the evacuation center group, participants first experienced an earthquake simulation at the Abeno Life Safety Learning Center and learned the importance of first protecting oneself, checking for fires and securing an exit, and calmly acting in the event of an earthquake. Afterwards, they learned about evacuating to an evacuation center, and the importance of confirming one’s safety. The evacuation center drill was conducted at a temporary shelter set up at Sakai City Hall. International students who are not familiar with the evacuation center were grouped together. They experienced lining up, writing their names on the evacuees list and consulting with the administration staff.

The supporting group, after learning about the importance of supporting foreigner evacuees, they aided the international students in the evacuation group to sign up on the evacuees list and helped the administration staff

by interpreting consultations. The training was conducted to ensure a smooth operation of an evacuation center.

The one-day training made the participants a bit tired, but they went home all saying it was fun and a learning experience. OFIX will continue to hold disaster drills for foreigners in the future.

**■ Overseas Emigrants Family Association Lecture “Outline of Brazil’s Recent Situation”**

The Osaka Prefecture Overseas Emigrants Family Association, of which OFIX is the Secretariat, invited Mr. Tatsumune Abe, CEO of TAS International, and held a lecture entitled “Outline of Brazil’s Recent Situation” on February 19 (Tuesday).

On the day of the lecture, aside from the

members, members’ friends, OFIX volunteers, Prof. Masashi Hayashida of Osaka University Communication Design Center, JICA Kansai, and Osaka Prefectural Office Personnel also attended as visitors. Miho Emilia Tamada from Nara Prefecture, a consultation staff in the Portuguese language who lectured last year, also attended.

Mr. Abe, who has been involved in activities bridging Japan and Brazil, talked about the present condition of Brazil and its rapid economic growth, and also different aspects of his business. Through temporary staffing and employment support of Brazilians in Japan, he was able to directly see the problems they are facing. It was a very meaningful lecture and it made us think of the relationship of Brazil and Japan.

Osaka Prefecture Overseas Emigrants Family Association will continue to conduct activities for the support and understanding of Nikkeijin.



■ One World Festival

On February 2 (Sat.) and 3 (Sun.), the 20th One World Festival was held at the Osaka International House. The weather was great and in the 2 days, 16,500 people attended the event. This festival is held every year in Osaka where NGOs involved in international cooperation, international associations, governmental institutions, educational institutions, companies and various institutions set up booths to introduce their activities. OFIX, as part of the Executive Committee, has

been participating from the planning stage and is in charge of public relations, promoting with the help of Consulate Generals in Kansai, Publishing Companies printing ethnic media and FM Cocolo. Maybe because of that, foreigners who attended the event this year were more than the number of foreigners who came last year. I think this year we were able to have a true One World Festival.

In “Everyone’s Kitchen”, where food stalls of various countries are gathered, everyone lined up to enjoy the peculiar foreign cuisine.



■ 2nd Exchange Meeting with Consulate Generals

On February 12, 2013 (Tuesday), an Exchange Meeting with the Consulate Generals was held at the Hotel Primrose, sponsored by The Daiyukyo Foundation of International Exchange, Assistance & Research and supported by Osaka Foundation for International Exchange (OFIX). Participants included Daiyukyo’s scholars and OFIX’s supporter, Staff from the Consulate Generals of each student, and OFIX Officers. As special visitors, Senior Executive Director-International Relations of Osaka Prefecture, Mr. Kusumoto, was also invited. From the Consulate Generals in Kansai, representatives from the Consulate General of the People's

Republic of China, the Consulate General of the Republic of Indonesia in Osaka, the South Korean Consulate General in Osaka, and the Osaka-Kobe Consulate General of the Republic of the Philippines attended. Lee Tai Ru, who is studying at Osaka University, and Devi Kusulini from Indonesia, who is studying at Osaka Prefectural University and a tutor at Orion International House, delivered their presentations positively.

The Consulate Generals were also very thankful and gave their constructive opinion on how to call for students overseas to come and study in Osaka.



(2) Contribution Corner

In this issue, we will be introducing contributions from Wang Fei Xue, an intern from Nara Women’s University and Orion International House Tutor Hiroki Ishihara from Osaka Prefectural University.

■ Intern Report “Once-in-a-lifetime chance”

Wang Fei Xue
(Nara Women’s University Graduate School of Humanities and Sciences Doctoral Researcher)

My name is Wang Fei Xue and I came from the capital of Luoyang. Thanks to everyone, I was

able to safely complete the internship at Osaka Foundation for International Exchange (OFIX). I

would like to thank everyone for the various valuable experiences I had received in my short 7-month internship.

In 2012, I received the The Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology Technical Personnel Training Subsidy “Post Doctor Internship Promotion Project” and was able to undertake internship at OFIX from August last year to February this year. From my first day, I was entrusted to translate Osaka Prefecture’s “Grand Design Osaka”, which envisions the future plans of Osaka, into Chinese. I faced the computer and gave my best in translating it. Since it was an important official translation, I was very careful and always checking the dictionary. When I finished it, I had more confidence. After that, I have been given other translation work one after another. I was translating and at the same time I widened my viewpoint learning things I didn’t know. Also, aside from interpreting for the Information for Foreign Residents and Visitors on topics of “Work and Residential Status”, “School”, “Health Insurance”, etc. I was also involved with the Liaison conference of volunteers registered with

OFIX from the proposal stage. I was also able to experience a disaster prevention workshop for international students. Everyday was very fulfilling. I learned many things from OFIX staff. I was able to spend a very meaningful 7 months. Through this internship, I felt the joy of accomplishing something together with my colleagues and I will continue to do my best, not forgetting that each chance is a once-in-a-lifetime chance.



■ Participating in the Kita Ward Exchange Festival

**Sakai International Hall (Orion International House) Tutor
Hiroki Ishihara (Osaka Prefectural University Computer Science and Intelligent Systems)**

Following last year, I participated in the Kita Ward Region Exchange Festival. The Kita Ward Exchange Festival is a festival aimed at deepening friendship, exchange and solidarity between the residents of the Kita Ward in Sakai City. In this festival, I opened a stall as the Nishi Mozu School Ward. To prepare for the festival, the International Hall Residents and the community residents had a meeting a number of times since summer to discuss what to sell. There were many ideas given and decided on cooking food from various countries as it would make use of the character of the international students, special skills are not needed, and people of the community can also help with the preparation. The international students ordered ingredients from their countries and recreated the taste of each country’s cuisine.

The weather on the day of the festival was good and more people came to the stall as compared to last year. We prepared 4 dishes good for 100 people each and sold it. We were able to completely sell 2 dishes in the morning. We were also able to sell out the remaining 2 dishes. I felt that this was the result of the cooperation of the international house residents and the community. Among those from the community members who

participated, there were also people who participated in the new resident welcome party. I feel that through the festival, the friendship between the dorm residents and the community members had deepened. If there are any international students who wish have a stall of their own during a Japanese festival, please move to Orion International House.



(3) Osaka Information Service for Foreign Residents

■ Taxes

The time to declare your tax is coming soon. So I chose taxes for the topic for this issue. The tax declaration to be done will be for the income tax from January 1 until December 31, 2012, so the rate will still be the same. However, from 2013, there is a change in the rate. Have you noticed that the withholding tax deducted from your salary has increased? To be able to raise the funds needed for the revival from the Great East Japan Earthquake (March 2011), the "Revival Special Income Tax" was founded. From this, you will declare and pay your income tax together with the Revival Special Income Tax each year from 2012 until 2036. After January 1, 2012, an income tax

and a Revival Special Income tax will be withheld from the salary and other allowances of wage earners. The total tax rate is [Total tax rate (%)=income tax rate (%) x 102.1%].

©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

(4) OFIX Coordinator for International Relations Report

■ The Philippine Education System

The Philippine education system is very much different from Japanese education system, but gradually changing. Until 2011, the Philippines had a 6-4 education system, meaning 6 years of elementary and 4 years of high school. There was no middle school. So students enter the university at a young age of 16 or 17 years old. Compulsory education was from elementary until high school. This 10-year education system posed problems for students who wished to study overseas, but found it difficult because the educational system was different. I was one of those who had a problem. I received a scholarship to study in a graduate school in Japan, but most graduate schools require 16 years of education to be admitted. The current President of the Philippines recognized the fact that the Philippines has to match the educational system of many countries overseas for the future advancement of the country. In 2012, the Philippine government, after many years of ignoring the matter, finally changed the system, which they now call the K-12 system.

Under this system, the years of education is changed from 10 years to 13 years. What has changed was that Preschool has also become compulsory education. Elementary school is still 6 years. What was once high school is now junior high school and it is 4 years. Then there is high school, which is only for 2

years. Naming has also changed a little. Before, high school was called 1st year high school, 2nd year high school and so forth. Now it is Grade 7, 8, 9 until 12. Another thing that changed was that compulsory education starts at Preschool. So now, the Filipino child has to study for 13 years, instead of 10.

Classes are from Mondays to Fridays from around. Some private schools have special classes on Saturdays. Class hours are from 7:00 am to 4:00 pm for elementary and high school. There is a recess period of 15 minutes and 1 hour for the lunch period.

Although students study hard, I believe they do not study as hard as Japanese students because Filipino students don't go to cram school and they have a lot of time to play and enjoy. So even if they are in their last year of high school, there is no such thing as "university entrance examination study". Students just study the best that they can on their own. Actually, I really didn't study for the entrance exam, but was lucky enough to pass the university of my choice.

How about it? Did you understand the educational system in the Philippines? There are still many things that can be improved, but it is changing.

- © Comments and suggestions for OFIX News: info@ofix.or.jp
- © Osaka International Club Reports: clubnews@ofix.or.jp
- © Register to OFIX News: <http://www.ofix.or.jp/english/mail/index.html>
- © OFIX News Back Numbers: <http://www.ofix.or.jp/english/mail/backnumber.html>

☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆

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>

