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(1) Notice from OFIX

■ Seeking Residents at Sakai International Hall (Orion International House) for October

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 October 2013. Currently, the rooms available are about 8 rooms for male residents and 5 rooms for female residents (as of August 13).

There are international students from 12 different countries and regions, China, Korea, Vietnam, France, Germany, etc. living at Orion International House. Orion International House is not just a dormitory, but also holds events useful for international students. Aside from emergency drills to help feel at ease living in Japan, career counseling, job-hunting seminars, and company exchanges to help in job-hunting, there are also exchange meetings to deepen exchange with the local community and between the residents. Also, among the residents of Orion, there are those who are receiving support for dorm fees and have an exchange with companies giving that support.

In this issue, you will find comments from these residents.



(2) Activity Report

■ Disaster Prevention Drill for Foreigners (Co-sponsored by OFIX)

Ai Yamamoto, Director, Operations Division, Association for Toyonaka Multicultural Symbiosis

On July 12 (Fri), between 14:00 and 16:00, the Association for Toyonaka Multicultural Symbiosis and OFIX co-hosted the “Disaster Prevention Drill for Foreigners” at the Toyonaka International Center. There were a total of 47 participants, including Association employees and volunteers (and 24 foreigners representing ten nations). The Toyonaka City Crisis Management Office and Kita Fire Department cooperated in the drill, which consisted of lectures about information and precautions necessary in disasters, a realistic evacuation drill, practice in using a fire extinguisher, and a tasting of emergency foods. There were interpreters on hand for eight languages.

Participants were given a multilingual evacuation card (a portable card with spaces for the bearer’s name, address, and languages) and a multilingual emergency guide published by the Association and emergency food supplies. One Korean woman who participated said, “I never

thought about earthquakes or fires as disasters that could affect me, but I realized that drills like this one are important for surviving in the event that a disaster does

happen. When I go home, I want to discuss evacuation strategies and precautions with my children.”



(3) Intern Report

■ Not Farewell but “Uz redzēšanos”

Signe Zaharka (Asian Studies Program, Kansai Gaidai University)

Hello, my name is Signe Zaharka, and I am from Riga, the capital of Latvia, a country in northern Europe. I studied Japanese for two and half years as my major at the University of Latvia, and came to Japan as an international student six months ago, which was the fulfillment of a longstanding dream. After completing my first semester at Kansai Gaidai University, I came to OFIX for a summer internship (from June through August). Even though it was only three months, my internship experience at OFIX has taught me the importance of taking pride in my work and enjoying each day. Thanks to everyone’s kindness I was blessed with a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity that is sure to serve me in the future, and I learned that opportunities are limitless if one has the courage to pursue them. I would like to offer my heartfelt thanks to the OFIX employees who taught me these important things. Thank you.

At first I was a little nervous about working in a different cultural environment, but the warm welcome I received made me feel like I had been working at OFIX a long time already, or even that I had another family outside of Latvia, after just the first week. I learned a lot through my experiences as an intern. From the very beginning I was given

assignments such as updating the access map for the Osaka Information Center for Foreign Residents, translating notices for the Orion International House, and editing the OFIX homepage, not to mention greeting the French graduate students from the ESSEC Business School training program and the Korean high school students who came for the high school exchange program. All of these rare, unique experiences helped me learn business etiquette. I received much invaluable advice for my future career, and was blessed with the opportunity to visit consulates-general. I also participated in International Understanding Education and wrote an article introducing Latvian culture in this newsletter.

Time flew by, but it was very fulfilling and full of unforgettable experiences. I hope that someday I can be a capable professional like my colleagues at OFIX.

Although my internship is now over, I plan to continue working in a field related to international relations after I graduate, so I will leave OFIX with the Latvian phrase “uz redzēšanos (till we meet again),” not “farewell.” I want to thank everyone for the last three months.

(4) Orion Residents Contribution Corner

■ Orion International House Fellowship Program Fellow Report

OFIX coordinates the “Osaka Prefecture Sakai International Hall Orion International House Fellowship Program,” in which it offers financial aid and an opportunity to interact with Japanese companies to International House residents.

Two such fellows have submitted reports about their activities, hopes for the future, and impressions, which are printed below.

○ Park Suil, PhD student, Faculty of Environmental Sciences and Technology, Graduate School of Life and Environmental Sciences, Osaka Prefecture University

I belong to the doctoral program of the Faculty of Environmental Sciences and Technology, Graduate School of Life and Environmental Sciences, Osaka Prefecture University, where I am researching sustainable, environmentally friendly urban planning, with an emphasis on green spaces. I have been researching the development of regional cities such as Kobe, Osaka, and Busan, and being selected as an Orion International House Fellow in April has provided me with many interesting experiences, thanks to the support from Shinko Machinery Co. Ltd. In particular, interacting with the overseas customers of Shinko Machinery Co. Ltd. and the employees that I met at the barbeque has exposed me to new fields. During

my internship, I had the opportunity to introduce the charms and challenges of regional areas, including the urban culture, natural environment, and cityscape of Busan.

This fellowship program is much more than mere financial assistance from an Osaka corporate sponsor—my experiences as a fellow have had a direct impact on my research. I believe the various activities and experiences provided are meaningful for building supranational ties between our two cities and cooperating to develop sustainable, environmentally friendly regional urban spaces. I hope to utilize my varied experiences as a fellow to promote future cooperation and interaction between our two cities.

○ Zhang Chuanzhi, senior, Faculty of Industrial Society, Hagoromo University of International Studies

My name is Zhang Chuanzhi, and I am a foreign student from China. I have been an Orion

International House fellow since April 1. I still remember the day of my interview. I was so

nervous that I couldn't answer the questions properly. I thought I had probably failed, but two days later my university notified me of my acceptance. I was very happy, since this was my first time to be selected for something on the strength of an interview. Of course, being a fellow brings a certain sense of responsibility and some duties.

One duty is participating in Shinko Machinery Co. Ltd. functions once a month, such as welcome parties, the fellowship award ceremony, and barbecues. The first time I participated, I was too shy to make conversation, but from the second time on, I got to know the company president and

some of the employees, and even went out with them.

Another duty is participating in the company internship. From this experience I learned about Japanese companies, particularly the corporate culture and workflow patterns. This will be a great help to me when I look for a job. I intend to spend the rest of my time as a fellow participating in functions with the other fellows, and working hard at my internship.

Lastly, I would like to thank OFIX and Shinko Machinery Co. Ltd. for making my studies in Japan more fruitful. I learned a lot. Thank you very much.

(5) Special Report: Community-Based Foreigner Support

■ Be the Star of NIEFA!

Keiko Enomoto, Vice Chairperson, Neyagawa City International Exchange and Friendship Association

The Neyagawa City International Exchange and Friendship Association (NIEFA) was recognized as an NPO in December, 2004. Today, it has 260 registered members, volunteer interpreters, and registered host families. Our slogan is "Be the Star of NIEFA!" by which we mean "We will provide opportunities to interact with foreigners



and foreign cultures, so please use your interests and strengths to shine with NIEFA as your base." We organize Japanese language classes for foreigners in the daytime and evening on Tuesdays. The instructors are Japanese volunteers who have completed the NIEFA training course. Although numbers of students vary depending on the season, especially at the end of the fiscal year, the bond between the Japanese teachers and the learners is often very strong.

We also co-host reading hour at the library for English-language picture books once a month. Large numbers of children in kindergarten and the younger grades in elementary school participate with their parents, eager for a chance to expand their horizons by exposure to the sight and sound of English. Foreigners (not always native speakers) do the reading, and other volunteers keep the children interested through the hour-long session by explaining the story in Japanese and playing hand games.

Thus, the primary aim of NIEFA is to involve members and local residents in order to deepen mutual understanding of foreign cultures to achieve a society where everyone can live together. We believe that this not only broadens our own perspective, but also energizes our efforts as well.

In July of this year we sent a delegation of youths and adults to our sister city in the US, Newport News. The development of the next generation of leaders is an important part of NIEFA's mission. The youth delegates gave presentations in English at local high schools about their lifestyles and anecdotes. The local students were very interested, and the time allotted seemed too short, so it will be interesting to hear the impressions of the youth delegates after they return home. On a related note, the event "Shintenchi in Neyagawa," to be held on October 19 (Sat.) in front of Neyagawa station, is a community revival event started by the members of the youth delegation of ten years ago upon their return from our sister cities, and is now in its ninth year.

Recently it has become increasingly common to see foreign employees of companies in Neyagawa, as in other cities. NIEFA regularly dispatches interpreters, translates materials, and holds mixers and seminars (e.g. how to make bento lunches) in order to assist foreign families who struggle with the language and customs. Through this process the participants make discoveries about each other's cultures and reexamine their own customs, which seems to energize them. Last year we made use of these experiences by hosting a volunteer interpreting seminar, with support from OFIX.

The seminar covered a variety of categories with the most recent needs in mind, thanks to advice we received from OFIX, and the instructors were from various professional backgrounds. It was rewarding to welcome participants from a wide area and to make contacts in new fields. We also had to adjust our practices in order to accommodate the participants, since the seminar was long-term and covered each topic in detail. As a result, this seminar was a successful experiment in collaborating with other organizations.

We at NIEFA hope to continue to build an infrastructure to help support our volunteers in the future.

(6) Osaka Information Service for Foreign Residents

■ Before Returning to Your Country

In this issue, we will take up the procedures foreigners have to accomplish when they will return to their country after completing their studies or work. Foreigners with no intention of returning to Japan must submit the "Moving Overseas Notification" to their municipality. In this case, a "Certificate of Moving" would not be issued. You can submit the Notice 14 days before you return to your country. You are obligated to carry your Alien Registration Card or Resident Card at all times, so please bring your card with you to the airport. If you have no intention of returning to Japan, please return your card to the Immigration Officer at the airport. When you submit the Moving Overseas Notification" you lose your National Health Insurance and Seal Registration. Also, those who have received the Basic Resident Registration Card would have to

return it. If you would be leaving for a short time (less than 1 year) and Japan would still be your residence, you need not submit the Notice. For those who would be living in an area for over a year, the municipality will charge residential tax. Even if you return to your country at the middle of the fiscal year, you would still need to pay the entire amount.

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(Mon-Fri, not open on weekends and national holidays) (Hours 9:00-17:30)

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(7) OFIX Coordinator for International Relations Report

■ How to Give a Good Presentation 2

Hello everyone! This is your International Relations Coordinator Alvin! Did everyone enjoy the summer vacation? Well, last month I explained about how to give a good presentation, especially about preparing a power point presentation. This month, I will talk about the actual presentation.

When making a presentation, what is the most often committed no-no? It is reading the presentation. Please try to remember the presentations you have seen up till now. How many people did not read their presentation? If there were any, I think there would be only a few. By reading your presentation, you fail to do things that you must do. These are:

- 1) Eye contact: It is important to have eye contact with the audience. Look at each one and see if they are listening or if they understand the presentation based on their facial reactions. If you are reading something, you cannot look at the audience.
- 2) Gestures: In Japan, people do not usually move their hands or body when speaking. However, gestures are more important than the power point presentation. The audience is more focused on the presenter than the power point. Gestures also play a role of aiding in the understanding of what is being presented.

So, should we memorize our presentation? If possible, yes, but many people who memorize what they want to say look far off when they try to remember what they want to say. That

diminishes eye contact. The best way is to remember the flow of your presentation and write the important points on cue cards. If you know the flow of your presentation, you can adlib. You can check if you have said everything that you have to say by glancing at the cue cards.



Other important things in a presentation are facial expressions and voice (loudness, speed, etc.). For example, if you say this in a monotonous tone with no facial expressions: "This camp will not only improve your communication skill but will also enable you to make overseas friends", it would probably be very unconvincing. However, if you say it with a smiling face and emphasizing (making your voice loud) the important points, it could be more effective.

Making a presentation is not merely talking. Presentation is a kind of communication. Since it is our goal to have our presentation understood, if the audience does not understand it, the presentation is meaningless. So, let us use our eyes, face, voice and whole body when we make a presentation.

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