

Sekai wa Hitotsu

2013 Spring
No. 126
English

GIC Coordinator for International Relations Sally (Australia), Morishita (Brazil), and Gong (China), put on a special end of year event last year on December 16 in Yanagase Cinex Hall in order to deepen understanding between Japanese and non-Japanese communities within the prefecture. Participants got to know each other better through free talk, a performance of the Brazilian martial art Capoeira, and a quiz about different countries.



▲End of year event group photo (Courtesy of Mr Sekiya, Gifu Australia Society)

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Round Table Discussion: Gifu Prefecture International Exchange Students

GIC has a scholarship system available for self-funded international exchange students studying at prefectural tertiary education institutions. The purpose of this scholarship is not just lightening the financial burden on the students, but also stimulating international exchange and regional international activities. We have asked 5 scholarship students to talk about their experiences with international exchange activities, and how they feel about living in Japan.



— Today I would like to ask you for any tips you have on life in Japan or international exchange. First of all, do you mind introducing yourselves, and telling us your impressions of Japan since coming here?

Wang Chi I'm from Taipei, Taiwan. I guess I thought that the whole of Japan was going to be very modern and busy like Tokyo. I was pretty surprised when I came to Gifu. It's been 2 years since I got here, and I find that people are more closely connected here than they are in big cities. It's a town with a lot of human emotion.

Liu Hualing I was born in Shandong, China. It's been 4 years since I came to Japan. When I first came, I was struck by how people pay attention to detail here. Busses start moving after the passengers have sat down, and there is air conditioning installed under the seats. There are also diaper-changing facilities in public toilets. It was pretty surprising at first.

Deng Peng It's been 3 years since I came to Japan. It's been a pretty quick 3 years, almost too quick. I don't know where each day disappears to. If I look back over the past year, it feels as though it's gone as quickly as a single day. Japanese people are always in a rush. They even run on the escalators. When I was still in China, I always thought of Japan as a country covered in tall buildings and full of cars. However when I got to Gifu, I first realised that there are also villages in Japan. It goes to show that you never know until you actually go.

Kulkijja Sapon I'm from Thailand. I've been living in Japan for 2 years. Now, I'm studying Media Creations. Last year I went to Austria as a language exchange student. I noticed many differences between Japan and other countries while I was there. First of all, I noticed how safe Japan was. When I was in Italy I put my bag

down by my side to take a photo of a church. Within 3 minutes it was stolen. The next thing I noticed was the toilets. There are toilets all over Japan, and you can use them for free. In Europe you have to pay up to two hundred yen for them, and there's not so many.

Hengjiancuo I'm from Tibet, in China. The first time I came to Japan was during the summer holidays when I was a 3rd year university student, and I stayed for a month. At the time I was surprised about how green the mountains were. My hometown of Tibet is all high plateau, and the mountaintops are not green at all. I also thought it was odd that the break time of the university registrar was different from the break time of the students. When I asked why this was, I was told that it was because students come and ask questions during their break time. It struck me at that time that Japanese society pays attention to small details.

— Have you encountered any difficulties in Japan?

Kulkijja Sapon When I was living in Tokyo I noticed how difficult Japanese language is for students from Thailand, who don't use kanji in their writing system, compared to students from Chinese or Korean. Because of this I wasn't able to get a part time job at the beginning. Towards the end of my time there I was able to finally get a job at a Thai restaurant.

Hengjiancuo When I lived in Niigata prefecture I found the snow in winter pretty difficult to deal with. I studied Japanese language for 10 months, and then entered Gifu University as a graduate student. I think the pace of life suits me here in Gifu better than it does in Tokyo. In Tokyo it felt as though everyone was moving at a running speed. Japanese people also have a habit of not answering 'yes' or 'no' to a question clearly, and to us foreign people that can cause problems.

— Not giving clear answers can be seen as a fault of Japanese people, but it stems from an intention to maintain good relations with the people around you, and to avoid tension.

Wang Chi The expression 'good' (いい) can be pretty difficult. For example, I have tried to offer people tea before, and been answered with 'I'm good' (いいよ). I think that the person wants the tea- in actual fact they do not.

— At that time 'I'm good' meant 'I'm fine. I don't need any', didn't it. It is pretty difficult to understand. So anyway, as international exchange

Discussion participants

From universities and technical colleges as of 7 February 2013



Wang Chi
(Male, Taiwan)

Asahi University, Graduate School of Business Administration, PhD Programme, 1st semester 1st year.



Liu Hualing
(Female, China)

Chubu University, Graduate School of Business Administration and Information Science, 3rd year.



Hengjiancuo
(Female, China)

Gifu University, Graduate School of Education Masters Degree Programme, 1st year.



Deng Peng
(Male, China)

Gifu Shotoku Gakuen University, Faculty of Foreign Languages, 1st year.



Kulkijja Sopon
(Male, Thailand)

IAMAS Masters Degree in Media Creations, 1st year.

students I'm sure you've participated in many international exchange opportunities. Can you tell me about anything that has left a particularly strong impression with you?

Deng Peng I am doing language studies with local people at the Hashima City Citizens Hall (Shimin Kaikan) 'Japanese language plaza' (Nihongo Hiroba). The participants are mostly elderly, and we do a variety of different activities together. For example I've participated in an event where we have made Chinese, Japanese, Brazilian and Filipino food together. When I have time I also participate in similar events in Ichinomiya City, in Aichi Prefecture. Again, most of the Japanese participants were elderly people, and we have taken group trips to Nara and Kyoto, and seen the Todaiji (with the giant wooden Buddha) and the Kasuga Grand Shrine. Elderly people and young people interacting with each other while studying language seems to be a situation that works out pretty well.

Kulkijja Sopon My university accepts exchange students from Austria on a regular basis, and I have attended speech competitions and parties with them. At those events Japanese and Austrian students have a chance to interact. I have had the experience of explaining Japanese culture on behalf of my Japanese friends that can't speak English at a friendship exchange event.

Hengjiancuo I have visited a satoyama area (an uncultivated forest) in Gujo City with 20 other students. There were only elderly people there—apparently all the young people had left for the city. One of the things that I'll never forget is an open hearth with a fire that had been burning since the Edo Period. I also remember looking down in the town of Gujo Hachiman from an elevated area, and how the whole area was the shape of a fish.

Wang Chi I teach table tennis every day. I've also participated in a table tennis tournament at the Gifu National Sports Festival. I have participated in practice sessions not just at the university, but also at places like banks and junior high schools. This might just be because it's to do with sports, but at the university the hierarchical relationship between the students was particularly intense, and I was always greeted by the students saying 'good morning!' in a big voice. At the beginning I found this embarrassing, and would look the other way.

Liu Hualing I have participated in exchange activities run by the Japan Student Services Association. I

spent three days in Takayama City talking about my the culture and the future of my country with the participants, making curry, singing and dancing. It was a lot of fun. Also, yesterday I went as a volunteer interpreter to a nearby high school to help a Chinese boy and his parents by talking about his life here in Japan and his career path for the future.

— And last of all, tell me about your plans from now.

Liu Hualing I want to continue with my studies at a university in Japan. I don't mind whether it is at a university in Gifu Prefecture or elsewhere.

Wang Chi I want to continue coaching table tennis. I would like to find a job in Japan, if possible in the Tokai region.

Hengjiancuo I'm thinking about looking for work, but I'm also interested in getting a PhD. At the university I am at the moment there is no PhD in education available, so I'm thinking about furthering my studies at another university. However, if I can find a job I would like to work in Japan. I would like to work somewhere like Gifu, not in a big city.

Kulkijja Sopon I would like to work in Japan when I graduate. I am looking for a job at the moment. I'm very busy at the moment with applications for graduate courses and jobs piling up. I would like to work as a designer, in a job that uses the knowledge I have gained through my information related studies. I am working hard at learning the correct way to write a letter of application for a job by talking to my friends and teachers.

Deng Peng I still have another three years until I graduate, so I'm thinking about a lot of different things. I would like to be involved in a trade-related job in the future. I would like to start my own business, not work for someone else. Then, in about five years, I would like to be in a position where I can pay taxes, and be accepted as a member of society by Japanese people. I have the opportunity to go to China on a business trip as an interpreter for some Japanese businessmen soon, which I think will be a good learning experience.

— Thank you for all the useful information you have shared with us today. I'm sure that you all have a very bright future ahead of you, and wish you the very best.

Reflections

After hearing the participants talk about their experiences, I was encouraged by hearing how well considered each participant's goals and convictions were regarding their life here in Japan.



Gifu Foreign Community Supporter Training Course

Four Days of Connection *Thinking together about issues in the foreign community*

GIC held a human resource development course for people working as lifestyle consultants for the foreign resident community so that they are better able to deal with the increasingly complicated cases that are brought to them. Over 50 people attended over the 4 days.

The course was held 4 times, and specialists were invited from various fields to share specific knowledge and talk about current issues. After the talks participants and lecturers broke into groups and talked within set themes about issues and concerns with cases that they have to deal with, utilising a 'world cafe' discussion format.



According to one participant, 'This was a big learning experience, and I want to put that knowledge to use as a consultant.'

At the same time as building connections between the participants and the presenters and consolidating a coordinated framework for supporting the foreign community, participants gained professional skills through learning specialist knowledge. This was a productive workshop.

~ Themes ~

● **#1 Children (16 November)**

Developmental disorders, hikikomori, truancy

Presenters:

Yukiko Shiraki

Hikikomori Support Council, Gifu branch

Yukie Hirata

Career Leaf

● **#2 Regional Communities (14 December)**

Health and Community Cafes

Presenters:

Director Yonosuke Sugiura

Community Support Center Waon

Representative Director Tomo Nagai

Health Support Diaz

● **#3 Employment and Poverty (25 January)**

Food aid, independence support

Presenters:

Bureau Chief Toshio Motooka

Second Harvest Nagoya

Keiichi Hashimoto

Sasashima Kyoseikai

Consultant Cesario Yoshiyuki Haranaka

Gifu Prefecture Personal Support Center

● **#4 Women's Issues and overall summary (22 February)**

Domestic violence and a summary of all themes discussed

Presenters:

Naomi Hirose, Ayumidashita Women's group

Report : Lifestyle Survey for Foreign National Residents of Gifu Prefecture

A report on the results of a project that surveyed the living conditions of foreign residents within the prefecture called the 'Lifestyle Survey for Foreign National Residents of Gifu Prefecture' was presented to a total of 43 people active within the field of multiculturalism on 7 February at the Fureai Fukuju Kaikan.

Presenters reported on the realities and issues surrounding the foreign national community in Gifu Prefecture based on data from 500 surveys, and proposed ideas for what kind of support will be necessary in the future. This report presentation provided a learning opportunity for people involved in multicultural affairs on a daily basis to find out what kind of support they should be offering.

Participants listened intently to an explanation of Japanese language classes for foreign nationals, introduced as one example of a project that is being conducted to support a multicultural prefecture. After the presentation, participants and presenters participated in a lively discussion.

This report presentation provided an opportunity to revitalise support services and regional Japanese language classrooms.



Disaster Relief Language Assistant Training

Foreign residents do not escape large scale disasters, and they have specific needs due to possible factors like language barriers that prevent information flow, differences in culture and customs, and lack of experience with disaster situations. How regions should respond to this situation is an important thing to think about.

This workshop was held in cooperation with the NPO Kani International Exchange Association in order to find and train language volunteers with knowledge of disaster situations who are able to disseminate information and provide support to foreign residents if a disaster occurs.

A disaster situation evacuation center experience was run concurrently so that foreign residents could experience what it was like in an evacuation center.

Date: 17 February

Venue: Kani City Multicultural Center Frevia

Presenters:

National Committee for Managing Multiculturalism
Deputy Director Takagi Kazuhiko
Director Takahashi Nobuyuki

Participants:

32 (2 Chinese, 11 Brailian, 19 Japanese)

Participants imagined that a large earthquake had occurred in Kani City, and practiced running a multilingual support center.

Participants divided into groups, looked at a map and decided which group would go to which evacuation center. They also practiced translating information released by the disaster relief headquarters into various languages so that the information could reach people of many different nationalities. Participants were able to experience what language assistants actually do during a disaster by carrying out tasks like relaying the translated information to victims at the evacuation center and confirming whether the victims needed any other support.



● Participant comments

There are lots of people in the world who haven't experienced earthquakes, which are such a common experience in Japan. There are a lot of things that Japanese people don't notice or don't pay attention to. I think this workshop is going to come in useful if I ever have to provide support.

Goodbye Message from CIR Gong Chao

Well it certainly is true that time flies like an arrow. Almost a year has passed since I came to Japan, but it feels like I only arrived at Narita Airport yesterday. This is the first time I have been to Japan, so when I got here while I was feeling pretty nervous, I was also really excited. I liked the smell of the new spring and cherry blossoms floating through the lightly rain-soaked air.

I have been blessed with many things during my time in Japan, and I will never forget the well-mannered Japanese people, delicious Japanese food, and beautiful roads, skies, and clear rivers. The smiling faces of the people I've met, the kindness and consideration that people have shown have warmed the heart of this foreigner.

T, who took me around on the first day I got here, S who showed me the way to work, F with whom I always drink tea, F2 who dropped me home on the day there was a typhoon, Y who always calls me to say hello- everyone has been so kind to me. Thank you all so much.

I'm feeling very nostalgic as it's getting closer to when I leave. I've still got a month to go, so I'm going to go to all the places I want to go to, and eat a lot of the food I like. I am going to try to live a better, richer life.

This year has been a short period of my life, but it has also been a very important one. I will always feel grateful for it, and I will always do my best for Japan-China relations.

I wish you all the very best for the future.



Information for Foreign Residents

● Loans for workers or people who have lost their jobs

At the end of October last year Sony EMCS Corporation announced that they were closing their Minokamo site at the end of March. Some people working for the company and related companies will be affected through lost jobs or reductions in wages when this happens.

Gifu Prefecture has a loan system in place to offer support when an extreme economic change happens for the worse. This loan system is offered in conjunction with Tokai Rokin Bank, and details can be accessed from your nearest Tokai Rokin branch office.

Tokai Rokin Bank homepage- <http://tokai.rokin.or.jp/>

Gifu Prefecture Economic Change Measure; Loans of Emergency Livelihood Support Fund

Who is eligible	<p>You must fulfill at least one of the following requirements:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • You are an employee who is a resident of the prefecture and has been affected by extreme economic change. • You have been fired from your place of work due to a decision by your employer, and are currently looking for work. • You have had your salary reduced by 10 percent or more because of circumstances at your place of work. <p>NB to be a 'resident of the prefecture', you must fulfill all of the following conditions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • You must have been living in the prefecture for more than 1 (one) year, and have paid prefectural tax for that year. • You must have been at 1 (one) place of work for more than 1 (one) year. • The total income of your household must be 1.5 million yen or more. • You must be 20 years or older. • You must be eligible for a guarantee from a financial institution resulting from an inspection. <p>In some cases, a co-signer to the loan will be necessary.</p>
Loan limit	1 (one) million yen per household.
Repayment period	Within 10 years (including a deferral period of 6 months).
Loan interest	1.5% per year (a guarantee fee of 0.7% - 1.2% will be charged separately).
Repayment method	Repayment equal to the original amount lent plus interest (monthly installment or combination of monthly installment and twice-yearly payment).

● Free consultation with specialists

Free legal consultations with lawyers now underway!

GIC periodically runs free consultation sessions in conjunction with specialists. Starting in April this year we are adding legal consultation to our services. Privacy will be protected. Please do not hesitate to make enquiries.

The session will not be held if there are no appointments, so please call us first. If you require an interpreter, please tell us beforehand. English, Portuguese, Chinese and Tagalog language interpreters are available.

Consultation type	Dates and times	Consultation examples
Administrative procedure specialist consultations	<p>First Wednesday of every month 1 - 3 pm</p> <p>Third Sunday of every month 1 - 3 pm</p>	Procedures relating to visas, bringing family to Japan, naturalisation, international marriages, business licenses.
Legal consultations	<p>Second Wednesday of every month 1 - 3 pm</p>	Issues relating to the law like divorce, traffic accidents, or multiple debts.
'Kokoro no Soudan' counseling service *Portuguese only	<p>Fourth Sunday of every month 10 am - 5 pm</p>	Problems relating to mental anxiety etc.

Apart from GIC, Ogaki International Exchange Association holds administrative procedure specialist consultations, and Kani International Exchange Association holds administrative procedure specialist and legal consultations.

• Ogaki International Exchange Association Tel: 0584-82-2311 <http://www.i-oiea.jp/>

• Kani International Exchange Association Tel: 0574-60-1200 <http://www.ckn.ne.jp/~frevia/>

Gifu Japan-China Association

● Outline

This group runs exchange activities for Chinese people living in Gifu Prefecture so they can learn about and appreciate Japanese nature and culture. It also seeks to deepen the bonds of friendship and goodwill with Gifu Prefecture's friendship agreement partner, Jiangxi Province.

● Activities

- Regular meetings are held once a month. Various specialists on China are invited to share their knowledge at these meetings.
- An exchange event is held for Chinese New Year where anybody, but particularly Chinese residents, and also foreign residents of other nationalities, can make gyoza from scratch.
- Outdoor exchange events are held in spring and autumn where Chinese people can enjoy the nature and culture of Gifu Prefecture at a picnic under the cherry blossoms or a barbeque.
- When officials visit from Jiangxi Province, social events with the club members

- Founded 1 July 1997
- 35 Members
- Represented by Furukawa Ryuji
- 2-167-1-803 Haba, Seki City
Tel and Fax: 0575 25 2572

are held, and visits to Takayama and Shirakawa-go are hosted.

- Official visits and exchanges to China are held, centering around Jiangxi Province.

● Celebrating the 25 year anniversary of the friendship agreement between Gifu Prefecture and Jiangxi Province.

This year there are plans to build and donate a memorial stone statue 'Kagayaku Me' (the shining bud) to Gifu Prefecture, on the occasion of the 25 year anniversary between province and prefecture. Until now there have been no memorial stones or trees, and this stone statue will commemorate the history of the friendship, and the continuance of that friendship into the future.



▲ A visit to a preschool in Jiangxi Province

A few words from the association

We may not have that many members, but we are a group of people that love China, and we really value human connection, and enjoy holding exchange activities. The exchanges that we have been holding with the citizens of Jiangxi have been continuing for a very long time. We are planning a lot of activities particularly now that it is the 25 year anniversary of our friendship agreement. Anybody is free to participate, so if you have an interest, please join us!

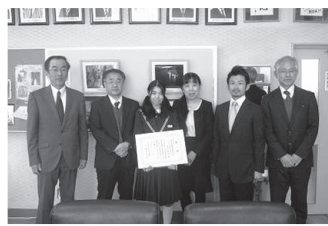
JICA
corner

2012 Essay Contest for
Junior and Senior
High School Students

JICA holds a yearly essay contest, with applications accepted from all over Japan. This year's JICA Director prize was awarded from among 44 459 entries to an essay by Gifu City Nagamori Minami Junior High School's Mina Yanagihara called 'Hitomi no Kagayaki' (A sparkle in your eye) about her emotional response and plan for action after an experience going to Afghanistan and meeting a local boy. We wish her all the best in her future efforts. Congratulations!



Hello everyone, this is Kagami from the JICA desk. It's already been a year since I started working at the JICA desk. I'll be working with renewed energy now that the cherry blossoms have started to bloom! I am pleased to announce that we have started recruiting more JICA volunteers.



Work that changes yourself and the world!

Ever thought about being a JICA volunteer?

Application period: 1 April - 13 May 2013
Overseas Cooperation Volunteers/ Senior Volunteers

Recruitment sessions and consultations held all over the country. Talk to former JICA volunteers! Come along!!

21 April (Sun) from 2 pm

Venue: Nigiwai Plaza, in front of Nakatsugawa Station

24 April (Weds) from 6.30 pm

Venue: Fureai Fukuju Kaikan

Details on our website- <http://www.jica.go.jp>

Please don't hesitate to get in touch with me regarding volunteering overseas or lectures on international understanding.
Mari Kagami, Gifu Coordinator for International Cooperation, Gifu Prefecture JICA Desk
Tel: 058-263-8069 E-mail: jicadpd-desk-gifuken@jica.go.jp

Message Board

Information about associations hosting international events and courses in Gifu Prefecture. If you would like to post any information here, please contact GIC.

GIC Events

Language Courses

Portuguese (Intermediate)

Verb inflections, conversation practice, short compositions, Brazilian culture.

When: 16 April – 11 June, Tuesdays
6.00 – 7.30 pm (No class 30 April)

Where: GIC

Cost: Non-members ¥1 200, members ¥600 (8 classes)

Capacity: 25 people

Instructor: Morishita Missao Anderson (CIR)

Enquiries: GIC

Korean (Beginner)

Korean characters (reading, writing, pronunciation), simple everyday conversation.

When: 11 April – 20 June, Thursdays
5:30 – 7:00 pm (No class 2, 9 and 16 May)

Where: GIC

Cost: Non-members ¥1 200, members ¥600 (8 lessons)

Capacity: 25 people

Instructor: I Kyonhi (GIC language volunteer)

Enquiries: GIC

Free Consultation for foreign residents

Supporting your lifestyle needs in Japan.

We have administrative procedure specialists and lawyers to help with any problems you might have with visas, international marriages or divorce, or anything else pertaining to foreign residents.

Administrative Procedure Specialist Consultation

When: First Wednesday and third Sunday of the month 1.00 – 3.00 pm

Where: GIC

Consultation examples:

Visa, naturalisation, international marriage procedures

Enquiries: GIC

Legal Consultation

When: Second Wednesday of the month 1.00 – 3.00 pm

Where: GIC

Consultation example: Divorce, traffic accidents, multiple debts, or other legal matters.

Enquiries: GIC



2013 Filipino Festival

This is an event designed to give the Children of Filipino residents a chance to experience Filipino traditions, as well as give the local people a chance to experience Filipino culture. Free Filipino lunch also available!

When: 3 May 2013 (Fri, p.h.)
10 am – 5 pm

Where: Kani City Multicultural Center 'Frevia'

Cost: Free

(Items at stalls are for sale)

Enquiries: Kani International Exchange Association

Tel: 0574-60-1200

<http://ctk.ne.jp/~frevia>

Japanese language classes for foreigners

Currently holding classes in basic Japanese. Participation part way through the semester OK. Fun lessons with small class numbers!

When: Beginner 1- 10 April – 7 August, Monday and Wednesday (31 times)

Beginner 2- 11 April – 11 July, Tuesday and Thursday (25 times)

Where: Gifu City Culture Center, 3F, Meeting room 1

Who: Foreign residents who want to learn Japanese

Capacity: 20 people per class

Cost: ¥13 000

(Discount available for late entrants)

Enquiries: Gifu City International Exchange Association

Tel: 058-263-1741

<http://homepage3.nifty.com/gifucity-ia/index.htm>

Support us- become a member

GIC runs projects that promote multiculturalism, international exchange and international cooperation. We are recruiting members that agree with our aims, and can support our activities financially.

Fees: 3000 yen for individuals, 5000 yen for groups

Fees will be calculated on a monthly basis for applications made part way through the year for first time members.

Benefits: Notification of international exchange or cooperation events
Priority acceptance and discounts to GIC events (language or cooking classes, etc.)

A copy of our information magazine 'Sekai Wa Hitotsu' posted to your home

Exemptions: Members of GIC are eligible for tax exemptions

Application: Please contact GIC

Advertise with us

We are now accepting applications for advertisements for our home page (in Japanese, English, Portuguese, Chinese or Tagalog) and our magazine 'Sekai Wa Hitotsu' (in Japanese, English, Portuguese, or Chinese). Please make enquiries to GIC for further details.

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E-mail: gic@gic.or.jp URL: <http://www.gic.or.jp>

Opening hours: Sunday to Friday 9.30 am - 6.00 pm

Closed: Saturday, Public Holidays, New Year Period.

