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【01】 Notices

Careers Information Day for Foreign Students

This event provides an opportunity for international students to meet with companies (both Japanese and international) looking to hire international students. There will also be plenty of general information available on job-hunting in Japan.

Eligible to attend:

International students graduated in March 2010 or scheduled to graduate in March 2011.

Japanese and international companies looking to hire international students.

Outline:

Company booths (around 30), consultation corner, career counseling, status of residence/visa advice, HR staff advice.

Date/Time: Sat 26th June 10:00-17:00 (tentative)

Venue: 1st Floor, My Dome Osaka

Participation: Free

Enquiries: OFIX Tel: 06-6966-2400

Email: info@ofix.or.jp

Further details: : <http://www.ofix.or.jp/english/shien/index2.html>

OFIX Support for International Understanding Education

Support for NPO International Understanding Education Programmes

In order to enhance international understanding in Osaka Prefecture, and to support the activities of NPO s involved in international exchange, OFIX offers assistance to cover travel expenses incurred by NPO s during school visits.

Eligible Organizations

NGO s and NPO s based in Osaka Prefecture, Municipal International Exchange Associations etc

Eligible Activities

International understanding lessons undertaken by NPO s etc at schools within Osaka Prefecture (elementary, middle, high schools, special education schools etc)

Maximum funding available 5,000 Yen per person per school visit

* Further details (Japanese only)
<http://www.ofix.or.jp/boran/index2.html>

Support for International Understanding Education Programme

OFIX makes arrangements for OFIX staff, international students/trainees, JICA international cooperation promoters to be dispatched to classes and exchange activities at schools and educational facilities in Osaka. This is completely free of charge.

*Further details <http://www.ofix.or.jp/english/jigyoku/index.html>

International Understanding Education Search Engine

On the OFIX homepage you will also find a search engine of NPO s which currently undertake international understanding lessons in Osaka Prefecture.

* Further details (Japanese only) <http://www.ofix.or.jp/jigyoku/index.html>

【02】 OFIX Programme/Activity Outline for 2010-2011

In recent years the number of foreign visitors to Osaka has grown to more than 2 million per year, and the number of foreign residents to around 210,000 (1 in 40). In particular, we have seen an increase in exchange in the varied fields of education, business, and tourism with other countries and regions in Asia which are currently experiencing great economic growth.

In order to better promote the internationalization of Osaka it is becoming ever more important to develop a society where people of different ethnic backgrounds can live in harmony, accepting each others cultural differences, whilst participating in the local community. Over the coming year at OFIX we will focus on the following five areas, whilst working to develop ever closer relations with related organizations such as the International House, Osaka.

(1) Communication Support for Foreign Residents

We will offer information services for foreign residents, including the provision of FAQ information in foreign languages. We also aim to improve our network of information services in Osaka, and collaborating with municipalities, NPOs, and volunteer organizations to improve the spread of information.

(2) Support for NPOs involved in the promotion of multiculturalism

We will continue to offer financial support for NPOs involved in international understanding education activities, as well as update the NPO data on our website, and hold volunteer training. We will also aim to strengthen existing and develop new exchange activities.

(3) Development of the OFIX Volunteer System

We will endeavor to have NPO and municipal volunteers take part in our training, and increase the opportunities for volunteers to take part in training to hone their skills. We also hope to hold events in collaboration with the International House, Osaka.

(4) International Student Support

We will focus on careers search support for international students. Also, we will work to promote exchange between the students living at the OFIX run Sakai International Hall and the local residents.

(5) Promotion of Sister City Relations

Osaka will host an exhibit at the 2010 Shanghai Expo. OFIX will work together with the Prefectural Government towards this and assist in gaining support from local businesses etc.

【03】 Osaka Information Service for Foreign Residents

Driving in Osaka

Public transport in Osaka is fairly convenient, however, there are many foreign residents with small children, or faced with a difficult commute to work that decide to drive. Despite holding a drivers license in their home country, if a foreign resident drives with this in Japan he/she is driving illegally, and will be unable to claim insurance if involved in an accident.

An International Driving Permit is only valid for one year, so those resident in Japan for longer than this are required to apply for a Japanese drivers license. For those that hold a valid foreign drivers license, and can prove that residence of 3 months or more in the country of issue, it is possible to convert to a Japanese license. In order to do this, applicants must provide a translation of their foreign drivers license, and pass the required test on driving knowledge and techniques. (Those holding a drivers license issued in the UK, Canada, or Korea, are not required to take the test). The application process takes place at the driving test centre nearest to the municipality at which the applicant undertook his/her alien registration. For those living in Osaka, the centres are in Kadoma City, and Izumi City. The actual test is provided in English and Chinese, but the application forms are only available in Japanese.

Osaka Information Service for Foreign Residents

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

Tel (direct line) 06-6941-2297 (Hours 9:00-17:45)

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

【04】 OFIX Coordinator for International Relations Report

Anime Action

Hi everyone, Richard here again.

I am often asked why I became interested in learning Japanese, and living in Japan. It is a tough question to answer, because there is no one reason in particular. I began learning Japanese at school purely to try something new and different.

However, for many people the answer is easy: anime and manga (Japanese cartoons and comics). Of course popular in Japan for decades, anime and manga only started to become household terms in the West from the 1980s onwards. Manga in particular has taken its time to reach the UK, and is still not that widely read. To be honest, comics in the UK are still very much thought of as being primarily for kids. When I was at school I used to avidly read The Beano and The Dandy, two weekly comics both dating back to the late 1930s, but once I had outgrown these there was nothing aimed at teens or adults to move on to. I do remember enjoying Asterix and Tin Tin, comic book stories originating from France and Belgium respectively.

In Japan there are comics for all ages, and bookshops are divided accordingly. Huge weekly comics are published every week, and the trains are full of businessmen reading them on their way to work. A sight which I have become used to, but one which would be totally unthinkable in the UK! Over the years I have become a bit of a manga fan myself, reading comedy, thriller, and mystery comics for the most part. I have never really got into the fantasy stories, and have yet to sit with one of the huge weekly digests on the way to work!

Although manga has never really caught on in the UK, anime has gradually built up a solid fan base over the years. I think the first anime film to gain popularity in the UK was Akira, which came out in the early 90s. And then of course there are anime such as Pokemon and the wonderful films of Hayao Miyazaki, which has been popular for well over 10 years now. Doraemon and Atom Boy are two hugely popular cartoon shows, which have become household names in many countries around the world. However, for some reason they have never been shown in the UK.

Closely connected to anime and manga is the phenomenon of Cosplay. This word is an amalgamation of "Costume" and "Play", and it pretty much is just that. Cosplay emerged in the 1980s in Japan, and has grown and grown in popularity since then. The idea is that anime and manga fans dress up as their favourite characters, gather together, and have their photos taken. I recently went to a huge cosplay event held in the Nihonbashi area of Osaka, and it was quite amazing! The main road was cornered off, and cosplayers were free to walk around, and pose for their adoring fans. I only intended to have a quick look, but ended up staying for a good few hours! Next year I'm thinking of dressing up myself, perhaps as Harry Potter, since everyone tells me I look just like him!

For photos click here

http://www.ofix.or.jp/english/mail/backnumber/mail_english_no21.pdf

【05】 OFIX Programme Reports

Osaka Prefecture Overseas Emigrants Family Association Activity Report Session

On the 23rd February the Osaka Prefecture Overseas Emigrants Family Association (Director: Mr. Masamitsu Okui, Secretariat: OFIX) held an activity report session at My Dome Osaka. A total of 16 people took part, including staff of JICA and the Osaka Prefectural Government. One member of JICA was previously based in Brazil, so he gave the group a short talk about his time there. After this Mr. Yamamoto, the deputy chairman of the association gave a presentation, which was then followed by a further talk about Brazil. After a truly thought provoking discussion session, the group viewed a video of the recent celebrations which took place in Brazil to commemorate the 70th anniversary of emigration from Japan. This was then followed by a lunch reception. As secretariat OFIX is keen to hold more seminars and sessions over the coming year.

For photo click here

http://www.ofix.or.jp/english/mail/backnumber/mail_english_no21.pdf

【06】 OFIX Sakai International Student Hall News

Sumo Training Event Mark Bell (New Zealand)

My name is Mark and I currently live at the Sakai International Hall (Orion International House).

Recently I had the chance to visit a Sumo training session in Nakamozu with a bunch of my friends from Orion. When we arrived we were greeted by Mr. Matsumoto, our guide for the day, and a local police officer. After a short while we were led to where the training session was due to take place, and 10-15 Sumo wrestlers began their powerful training. I had seen sumo wrestling on TV a few times in the past, but seeing it with my own eyes I was blown away by the sheer brute force of the sport. Even now I can still hear the sound of the fighters clashing.

Next up, a sumo wrestler with a white mawashi (belt), instead of the standard black one, came forward to practice. Mr. Matsumoto informed us that this was because his rank was higher than the other fighters.

I thought it was interesting how fighters were treated differently depending on their rank. The fighter with the white mawashi was the highest ranked wrestler, so he was always the last to enter the practice ring, after all of the other fighters had cleaned the area for him.

After the practice session we were invited to try chanko nabe, the stew that sumo wrestlers always eat. It was actually a lot tastier and healthier than I imagined it would be. It was kind of strange having the wrestlers act as our waiters for the day! All in all it was a great day, and a wonderful experience I won't forget in a hurry!

For photos click here

http://www.ofix.or.jp/english/mail/backnumber/mail_english_no21.pdf

Seeking Residents at the Sakai International Hall!

For further details click here:

<http://www.ofix.or.jp/english/shien/index.html>

Osaka Prefectural Government E-Newsletter

『 G E O (Global E-net Osaka) 』

Full of information about events in Osaka, and fun facts about the area.

<http://www.pref.osaka.jp/kokusai/geo/index.html>

Information for foreign residents in Osaka

<http://www.ofix.or.jp/english/life/index.html>

Event Calendar (Japanese only)

<http://www.ofix.or.jp/cgi-bin/calender.cgi>

Seeking residents for the Orion International Hall

<http://www.ofix.or.jp/english/shien/index.html>

Seeking New OFIX Supporting Members

http://www.ofix.or.jp/english/ofix/index3_1.html

The Japan Times now available to read at OFIX Plaza.

Comments/Suggestions: info@ofix.or.jp

Please send Osaka International Club reports to the following address:

clubnews@ofix.or.jp

To cancel your registration or change your registered email address

<http://www.ofix.or.jp/english/mail/index.html>

Print-out version (PDF) of OFIX News with photos

http://www.ofix.or.jp/english/mail/backnumber/mail_english_no21.pdf

Back Numbers

<http://www.ofix.or.jp/english/mail/backnumber.html>

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