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【01】 Event Reports

Careers Information Day for International Students

Continuing on from similar events last year, our first Careers Information Day for International Students was held on Saturday 26th June at My Dome Osaka. Although it was raining on the day, a total of 345 people from 18 different countries and regions came along. 29 companies had booths, and there were also careers counselors, visa advisors, and seminar corners where students learnt firsthand from previous graduates about working in Japan.

Since there were visitors from many different countries, three OFIX Chinese language volunteers and Richard, Coordinator for International Relations at OFIX, were on hand to assist with interpreting. Here are the results of the participant questionnaire:

1. The students gave many reasons for wanting to work in Japan, such as wanting to utilize their language skills, wanting to contribute to the development of Japanese business in their home country, and it being a great opportunity to learn the most up to date technology and production methods.
2. The top three careers of choice are: 1. Trade, 2. Interpreting/ Translation, 3. Product and Service Development.
3. Asked how they found out about this event, most said from their university, and many others said from the internet.

With it being difficult even for Japanese students to find work in the current climate, it is of course difficult for international students too. At OFIX we are committed to supporting international students and residents, as part of our drive to promote the future internationalization of Osaka. Another Careers Information Day for International Students is planned for January 2011, also at My Dome Osaka.

Information and Advice Day for Foreign Residents

A great number of foreign residents in Japan face difficulty adjusting to living in a new country. Things such as a different education system, complicated registration procedures at public facilities etc. It was with this in mind that a free Information and Advice Day for Foreign Residents was held on Sunday 11th July at the International House in Osaka. This was the 19th time the event has been held. Around 100 people from 26 different countries and regions attended the event.

At the OFIX booth our staff received enquiries on matters such as international marriage, and credit card applications. OFIX volunteers were on hand to offer interpreting assistance in many different languages (English, Chinese, Korean, Spanish, Portuguese, Indonesian, Thai, Filipino, and Vietnamese). Participants said that it was great to be able to discuss such issues in their native tongue. Others said it was good being able to discuss many different issues all under the same roof. A report on the event was even broadcast on that days NHK evening news, and this was the first time the event was published on the websites of a number of Consulate Generals based in Osaka. OFIX plans to continue its support of this most valuable of events, and make it even more useful as a port of call for foreign residents in the future.

For photos click here

http://www.ofix.or.jp/english/mail/backnumber/mail_english_no24.pdf

【02】Osaka Information Service for Foreign Residents

Unification of College Student and Pre-College Student Visas

In order to make things easier for international students and in line with the “Plan for 300,000 Exchange Students” initiated in 2008 by the Japanese Government, since July 1st the previously separate “College Student” and “Pre-College Student” visa statuses have been unified. With this change the “Pre-College Student” status is no longer in use, and is now covered by the “College Student” status.

Furthermore, previously, those with a “Pre-College Student” visa, and with the required “Permission to Engage in Activity Other Than That Permitted by the Status of Residence Previously Granted”, were only entitled to work for 4 hours a day. However, with the new changes, these students are now entitled to work 28 hours per week. Those presently holding a “Pre-College Student” visa, do not need to change visa status immediately, but need to do so the next time their visa is up for renewal.

Visa statuses have been unified in this way, however differences may occur between those studying at language schools, and those at universities with regards to commuting travel expense discounts and scholarships. For convenience the maximum length of the “College Student” visa has been increased from 2 years to 2 years and 3 months.

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

【03】OFIX Network

Osaka International Peace Center

The Osaka International Peace Center is situated in the middle of Osaka Castle Park, and is home to materials and exhibitions relating to war and peace. The nearest station is Morinomiya (JR or Osaka Subway). There are lots of summer events planned so please have a look at our website. Information is provided in English, Chinese, and Korean.

<http://www.peace-osaka.or.jp>

Entry is free for the those below middle school age, the over 65s, and those with disabilities.

Summer Events

Events for children

- Summer Holiday Film Festival

3rd-27th August : Animation film from 2pm. The films of Akiyuki Nosaka. Film changes every week!

<http://www.pref.osaka.jp/annai/moyo/detail.php?recid=6563>

- Story Telling: 3rd Thursday of every month (August 19th)

Weekend Cinema

Every Saturday (twice in August).

The focus of the films is Korea-Japan relations. On the 21st and 28th August the film shown will be Asia Blue. The film in September is Ai no Mokushiroku. Films begin at 2pm.

Everlasting Peace Project (free lemonade for first 250 applicants!)

Sat 7th August 2pm-4pm Seminar on peace in East Asia.

Sun 15th August 1:30pm-4pm Seminar and film

Special Photo Exhibition (from 27th July) War and Peace in Afghanistan

Tour of battle sites in Osaka: 2nd Sunday of every month

Atomic bomb photo exhibition scheduled for the start of August.

Enquiries :

Osaka International Peace Center

2-1 Osaka-jo, Chuou-ku, Osaka-shi, 540-0002

Tel: 06 - 6947 - 7208, FAX06 - 6943 - 6080

【04】 Osaka International Club News

Korea-Japan High School Students Exchange Programme Participant
Lee Ji Hyun

Hi everyone, my name is Lee Ji Hyun, a student at the Pusan Foreign Languages High School. I have been a fan of Japanese dramas and Japanese culture for a few years now, so was so excited when I got to take part in the recent Korea-Japan High School Students Exchange Programme, organized to commemorate the start of flights from Busan to Kansai Airport by Air Busan. During the programme I got to meet so many lovely people.

Taking part in a homestay gave me a true taste of life in Japan, and it was great fun chatting with high school students on a visit to Higashi High School in Osaka. Staff of the Osaka Convention and Tourism Bureau worked so hard to show us around Osaka, and the staff of OFIX were always on hand to help us out.

It was only a short four day trip, but I was able to experience things that I would never be able to by myself, such as everyday life in a Japanese home, and school life in Japan. Osaka was a beautiful city, with wonderful food and warm people. The more I stayed the more I

wanted to live there.

Thanks to this programme I was also able to learn much about my own hometown of Busan, and hope that in the future I can become an ambassador for the city, telling people around the world about it. I really hope to maintain contact with all the great people I met during the trip, and in some small way help to promote friendship relations between our respective countries.

For photo click here

http://www.ofix.or.jp/english/mail/backnumber/mail_english_no24.pdf

【05】 Event Reports

Essec Business School Student Osaka Training Programme

Sister relations began between Osaka Prefecture and Val-d'Oise (France) in 1987, since which time exchange has taken place in various fields such as business, the arts, and culture. The Essec Business School Student Osaka Training Programme is once such exchange programme which takes place every year organized predominantly by the Hirakata Foundation for Culture and International Exchange. This year saw 17 students from France visit Osaka from the 1st-16th July. The students then left for Tokyo to take part in summer work placements.

During their stay in Osaka the students took part in Japanese lessons, cultural activities, and exchange with local residents. OFIX actively supported the programme together with the Osaka Prefectural Government by organizing a courtesy visit to the Vice Governor of Osaka Prefecture, and to the Panasonic Centre on the 5th July. The students chatted to the Vice Governor and learnt much about Osaka. After the visit the students were taken on a tour of the Osaka Assembly, where they learnt about its history and took lots of photos.

In the afternoon the group visited the Panasonic Centre, where they were shown some of the latest products, and learnt about Panasonic's international strategy. All in all it was a very valuable day for the students. OFIX hopes to continue to support and contribute towards the further development of sister relations between Val-d'Oise and Osaka in the future.

For photo click here

http://www.ofix.or.jp/english/mail/backnumber/mail_english_no24.pdf

Osaka Prefecture Overseas Emigrants Family Association Lecture and Reception

The Osaka Prefecture Overseas Emigrants Family Association was set up in 1972 to further exchange of information between the families of emigrants overseas (predominantly to Brazil and other South American countries). OFIX currently acts as secretariat for the organization, and participants in events include the families of emigrants, those with an interest in foreign countries, and exchange with descendants of Japanese abroad.

On the 16th June the AGM for the organization was held at My Dome Osaka, along with a lecture and lunch reception. A total of 24 people took part. At the AGM last years budget and activities were discussed. Attendees included guests from JICA Osaka, and Osaka Prefectural Government, and there was also a message from the Governor of Osaka Prefecture.

This year sees a change in director for the organization, with Mr. Okui, who acted as director for 18 years stepping down. He is to be replaced by Mr. Yamamoto. After the AGM Mr. Okui gave a lecture on his 18 years as director. He reminisced about past activities, and expressed his wishes for the group to be successful going forward.

We look forward to receiving your continued support and cooperation. Anyone interested in finding out more please get in touch with OFIX

【06】 OFIX Coordinator for International Relations Report

The UK and England

Hi everyone, Richard here again.

I am sure that many of you have been enjoying the World Cup as I have. Although it was sad that both England and Japan went out in the second round! When talking about the World Cup a number of Japanese friends have made mention of the British (rather than English) team. I always make a point of telling them that there is no British team! I appreciate that it can be rather confusing though, what with the UK fielding a British team in the Olympics, yet entering separately as England, Scotland, Wales, and Northern Ireland in football tournaments. The reason for this is very simple actually. Each region has its own separate Football Association dating back to the 1870s, which means that the sport developed in the UK with separate teams, not to mention an immense rivalry.

National identity in the UK is a complicated subject, but one which comes to the fore during sporting events such as the World Cup. I read a very interesting newspaper article just after England had been knocked out of the Cup, saying that English national identity ceases to exist as soon as the English team is knocked out. The writer went on to make the interesting point that every other team in the World Cup had the requisites for nationhood, namely such things as a state, a leader, and an anthem. All of these are things which England does not have. Identification with the national team stems from a sense of national identity, but for England this appears to be the other way around, with a sense of national identity stemming from the team!

This apparent lack of national identity amongst the English becomes clear when you ask someone from the UK where they are from. From my experience the majority of English people (including myself) will say they are from the UK or Britain when asked this question. Ask a Scottish or Welsh person where they are from and it is highly unlikely they will say they are from the UK, but say they are from Scotland or Wales. Historical issues have obviously played a part in seeing that for a lot of Scots and Welsh being British is something that comes second to pride in their regional heritage.

Although things have changed greatly in recent years, another factor which perhaps made it difficult for the English to assert their Englishness in the past, is the association that the flag of St. George had with certain extreme elements of society during the 1980s. This meant that many people felt slightly uneasy about using it.

The multiethnic and multicultural nature of British society means that, unlike Japan, ideas of nationality and ethnic background are separate, and for me the term "British" encapsulates this idea best. As the descendant of immigrants to the UK myself, this is something that I am proud of, and perhaps one of the reasons I tend to say that I am British, rather than English when asked my nationality.

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_no24.pdf

Back Numbers

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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 Japan

Tel: 0081-6-6966-2400

Fax: 0081-6-6966-2401