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Editorial Note

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### 【01】 New Year's Reflections

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Happy New Year! May you be of good health as you greet this new year.

Thank you very much for promoting Osaka Prefecture's Internationalization Strategy and for your cooperation with and guidance for our projects. The wave of globalization is at its peak and surging towards Japan together with the 21st Century IT revolution.

In the English conversation school where I go to, you would now be able to see many elementary students. We have a tendency to take globalization only from the point of view of early English language education. Along with the training of excellent human resources, local municipalities and international exchange associations must build a society

that would widely welcome foreigners by providing consultations on daily living and disaster support, with the aim to achieve "internationalization from within".

To achieve this, we will be promoting the 3 pillars of the 3-year Mid-term Management Plan (Proposal) of OFIX starting from the fiscal year 2015. The three pillars are: (1) Expansion of International Understanding Education at the Elementary and Junior High school level; (2) Promotion of setting up consultation desks for foreigners at the local municipalities; and (3) Expansion of disaster volunteers.

First, as English will be taught in schools at an early stage, please understand that the International Understanding Education Foreign Supporter Dispatch program would help deepen the understanding of the world's cultures and languages.

Next, consultation desks set up at the municipalities are still few. We would like to have municipalities, which are familiar to the residents, to set up a consultation desk as a place for primary consultation, or for consulting about daily life. If you wish to hold a 1-day Consultation service as a trial, we would co-sponsor it and give our utmost support .

Lastly, with regards to the expansion of disaster volunteers, securing manpower in preparation for a future Tonankai earthquake is a problem. It is the responsibility of the local municipalities and our Foundation to explain to the international society what they should do when in danger.

The wave of globalization is getting higher every year, so we would like to take steady steps in the future.

Like last year, New Year cards to our supporting members and related personnel, from this year, we will be replacing it with this New Year's Reflections.

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## 【02】 Activity Report

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### ‡ 2014 Training for Interpreter/Translator Volunteers during Disasters

A training session for interpreter/translator volunteers who would provide multilingual disaster information and support to foreign residents of Osaka Prefecture was held on November 5 (Wednesday). There were 31 participants adept in 7 languages at this session co-hosted by Osaka Prefecture, the Kinki Council of Local Authorities for International Relations, and OFIX.

This training has been held since 2011, and has always included role-play exercises, but at this year's workshop participants also learned more about the flow and scope of the activities of an interpreter/translator volunteer in an actual disaster and reconfirmed the anxiety that foreigners experience in disasters to better

imagine what they can do to help besides language assistance, since needs are varied in a disaster.

The following are (abridged) comments from participants:

"Massive earthquakes, tsunamis—what could we really do in our panic if these disasters suddenly occur? It would especially be a problem for foreigners, since they would be facing these disasters in a foreign land with different culture, customs, and language. Now that local areas are becoming increasingly international, there is an urgent need to provide emergency assistance to foreign residents through establishing a multilingual interpreter/translator volunteer system. I think this volunteer training program with interpreting practice was an extremely meaningful and effective way to address this need."

"Both morning and afternoon sessions were very useful, and I learned about disaster response at a deeper level. In the afternoon workshop we were given real case studies to practice thinking about appropriate responses. Even if we are volunteer interpreters, is it enough to just translate? Shouldn't we be more proactive about providing all-around support in an emergency? How do we tell rumors from true information? The more I learned the more questions I had, but the lecturer's remark that "There is no correct answer in disaster response" made a big impression on me. It would be best if disasters never occur, but I think there should be more training sessions like this in the future so that we can help alleviate some of the stress experienced by foreign disaster victims."

"Before I took part in this training session, my impression of the role of interpreter/translator volunteers during disasters was that they relay the instructions and communications of Japanese rescuers providing support in foreign languages to foreigners, and communicate in Japanese the questions and requests for help from foreigners. Through real case of real foreign victims in past earthquakes and the accounts of the lecturer, who was actually there, I learned that interpreter/translator volunteers sometimes have to play a variety of roles as they provide support to the emergency multilingual support center staff. I think the case studies helped me better imagine the situation of foreign disaster victims in ways that I couldn't before."

! Disaster Prevention Workshop for International Student Administrators in Higher Educational Institutions

A workshop to consider the international student support system during disasters was held at My Dome Osaka on November 14 (Friday). There were 23 participants from a wide field, including staff of universities and vocational schools in Osaka, who are in charge of international students, and staff of administrative offices and international associations.

During the first half, Assoc. Prof. Natsumi Onaka of the Center for Teaching, Learning, and Career Development in Iwate University delivered a lecture on "Rehabilitation and restoration and international student support in the Great East Japan Earthquake: Learning from the disaster and Educational activities for the first step towards tomorrow". She is involved in the rehabilitation and restoration program after the Great East Japan Earthquake. A Youtube video that the students made portraying university student life and town scenery after the earthquake was shown. A slide presentation about an international training implemented for 3 years since 2011 was introduced together with a talk about the restoration activities and various measures led by the students. It was a chance for the participants to see actual activities at the site and they were able to realize that students do have much to say.

Later, all the participants divided into 4 groups and exchanged ideas on the topic, "Confirming the safety of international students during a disaster". Aside from staff from academic institutions, employees from administrative offices and international associations were also in each group. It was a very lively exchange. In the last presentation, a summary of the measures, problems and solutions of each school were presented by each group. The lecturer gave an advice, "The situation is different from school to school. It is best to have different measures to confirm the safety of students, adjusting to the situation in your school. Do not depend only on SNS, but also have other measures, such as keeping track of the students' circle of friends", to which many of the participants agreed. In response to the questionnaire, many participants wrote, "It was helpful to know the measures of other schools", "All schools have the same problems", showing that it was a very meaningful program for everyone.

#### | Disaster Drill for Foreigners Izumitsu City Planning Division·Crisis Management Division

On November 22 (Saturday), Izumi Otsu City Izumi Otsu International Exchange Association held a Disaster Drill for foreigners at Izumi Otsu City Hall, which was also co-sponsored by OFIX. There was a total of 41 participants of which 12 were foreigners from 4 countries. In the disaster prevention seminar by Izumitsu City Crisis Management Division, a multilingual disaster prevention handbook made for the seminar was used. The participants carefully looked at the hazard map indicating the nearest evacuation areas.

In continuation, the Izumi Otsu Fire Department gave a lecture on first aid, how to put out a fire, how to report a fire and how to escape. The participants also experienced how to use an AED, do CPR, and how to extinguish a fire.

While experiencing being in an evacuation and

eating emergency food, foreigners and Japanese sat in a circle on a blue sheet and talked about each other's countries, further strengthening the exchange.

In the questionnaire, most of the participants voiced their satisfaction by saying, "I now understand the difference between actually taking a class from just learning from a pamphlet." and "Today, I was able to learn a lot about Japan."

#### ! 2nd Osaka Prefecture Local Municipalities Internationalization Promotion Liaison Conference

On November 28 (Friday), the 2nd Osaka Prefecture Municipalities Internationalization Promotion Liaison Conference was held, sponsored by Osaka Prefecture. 16 organizations and 16 members from municipalities and local international associations participated.

In the opening, Chief Assistant Director Mr. Shimura of the International Relations and Tourism Division, Osaka Prefectural Government mentioned, "In the next term midterm Management Plan being made by OFIX, focus will be placed on the Consultation Program, International Understanding Education, and Disaster Measures Program, which are becoming very important. To effectively promote these, further cooperation with related institutions is necessary and so, I request for your cooperation." An explanation of the 3-year Management Plan (Proposal) followed, together with an explanation of the implementation of the 3 programs.

First, for the "International Understanding Education" (Foreign Supporter Dispatch Program), OFIX will be targeting schools that will introduce English language education from Grade 3 gradually shifting from high schools to elementary and junior high schools, aiming for schools that have never utilized the international understanding education program. Cooperation in promoting the program to elementary and junior high schools was requested. Second, with regards to the consultation program, municipalities were asked to sponsor a 1-Day Consultation, with OFIX as a co-sponsor, as a trial, aiming for the installation of consultation desks in the municipalities. Lastly, with a 70% chance of a Tonankai earthquake in the next 30 years, it was explained that a booklet to train disaster volunteers will be made with a training session scheduled for next year.

In the questionnaires filled out after the conference, participants gave comments, such as, "we are thinking of holding a 1-day Consultaion in Spring", "it was helpful to know the current situation of the disaster volunteers", and "it's a valuable information in the future when collaborating with the City government".

#### ! The 17th International Exchange Festival

The 17th International Exchange Festival was successfully held at the Kansai International Center on November 23 (Sunday) . This Festival was planned by the Kansai International Center Trainees Support Council (composed of 10 international associations in Southern Osaka) to provide a venue for exchange between the Center trainees learning Japanese and people of the community. Each association prepared various programs and booths so everyone could enjoy a festival atmosphere.

This year's festival started with a Japanese drum performance of the the Sennan Taiko Juku, followed by the "Tajiri Collection", a fashion show of ethnic wear with the trainees as models. At each booth, trainees experienced various traditional Japanese culture, such as tea ceremony, kimono wearing, paper cutting, origami, post card making, etc. The laido was very popular maybe because for foreigners, the image of "samurai" is strong when you talk about Japan.

On the other hand, the trainees also had a booth to introduce their countries showing souvenirs and ethnic food. People went around curiously looking and communicating with the trainees. The mascots of Southern Osaka were also a big hit. This year, Tajiricchi from Tajiricho, Misakki from Misakicho and Inunankin from Izusano participated making the event lively.

#### ! Orion Dormitory Community Exchange Party

On December 20 (Saturday), a community exchange party was held at Orion dormitory. It was a lively event joined by 50 dorm residents and Higashi Uenoshiba 2 cho community members.

The Senior's Club members sang a song and introduced calligraphy. Mr. Takahashi of Izumi City played "Amazing Grace" with his bamboo flute. Ms. Yoshida of the Yoshida Kimono Fabrics, held a Kimono wearing demonstration. Intenational students who tried it were overwhelmed saying, "this is the first time for me to wear a kimono!"

Moreover, Assistant Inspector Koderu of the North Sakai Police Department talked about aware of snatchers and how to avoid being victims of crime when out on the street.

This year, OFIX staff made a big pot of boiled Chinese yam, which was a hit that it was soon gone. Everyone had much fun.

Each year, Orion Dormitory holds a community exchange party in spring and winter.

Hello, my name is Carolyn Heaton, and I have worked part-time at OFIX since October 2012. I am leaving OFIX at the end of the year in order to go to California in January.

I am an American who was born in Tokyo and brought up in Hyogo. After finishing public Japanese elementary school, I was homeschooled, and then earned a BA (Chinese history) at Kansai University and an MA (Linguistics) at Kobe University. At OFIX I used my bilingual upbringing to translate, edit, and interpret for each of OFIX's projects, particularly the Ando Program. My experiences studying abroad and attending an interpreter training school were also useful for helping with OFIX's volunteer interpreter training program. All of the volunteers I met had a keen interest in the world and a friendly, truly cosmopolitan attitude toward foreigners, which I found inspiring.

Osaka is internationalizing. There is a growing need for people talented in foreign languages, including English, so this is a good time to tackle learning a new language. Studying a foreign language might also help you to rediscover the beauty of your native language as well. My two years at OFIX went by all too quickly, but during this time I was fortunate to meet many interesting people and learn a lot of new things. Thank you!

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## 【04】 Osaka Information Service for Foreign Residents

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### ! Counselors' Network Meeting --The Industrial Training and Technical Internship Program

An Osaka Prefectural Information Service Desk and Counselors' Network Meeting was held on November 27 (Thursday) on the theme of "Let's learn about Industrial Training and Technical Interns". Mr. Yukio Takahashi, Director of the Japan International Training Cooperation Organization and Mr. Hisanori Hikata, a lawyer, were invited to talk about "Technical Internship Program" and "Technical Internship Program and Local Municipalities".

During the first half, an outline of the Technical Internship Program was given. The Technical Internship Program is a program for foreigners to come to Japan to work and learn technology and have them bring it to their countries. Under the new system, after 2 months of training, trainees would start working and current labor laws, such as working hours, paid leaves, etc. would already apply. The later half focused on actual situations and violations of labor laws, immigration laws and human rights. It was a venue to know the problems supporters face in the field.

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

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## **【05】 JICA Volunteer Activity Report**

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↓ Osaka People Active in the World  
Japan Overseas Cooperation Volunteer  
(The Kyrgyz Republic/Tourism Industry) Takahiro Imazu

### <History>

After resigning from the travel agency where he worked for 5 years, he went to the Kyrgyz Republic in Central Asia in July 2013 as a JOCV(Tourism Industry)

### **【Reason for becoming a JICA Volunteer】**

During my university days, I backpacked to developing countries and engaged in volunteer activities. I wanted to be involved in work overseas, so I entered a travel agency. However,ut I was assigned to an Internet related division and was in charge of the sales of a leisure and business travel system and Internet marketing. I didn't have any overseas related work. I applied for the JOCV program because it has been my desire since mys student days to live in a developing country and work together with the locals.

### **【Life and Work in the Kyrgyz Republic】**

The Kyrgyz Republic is a country of nomadic people in Central Asia.

The Kyrgyz people look so much like Japanese that there is even a legend that the Kyrgyz and the Japanese are brothers. Those who liked meat remained in Kyrgyz, whereas those who took to sea are the Japanese today.

The area is about half of Japan. It is a mountainous country. 93% of its lands is surrounded by mountains. In the summer, there are many tourists who come for trekking and nature. In the winter, you can also enjoy skiing.

I work at a Tourist Information Center in Karakol managed by volunteer university students. I teach students how to entertain clients and how to make trekking maps, tourism information tools and guides. I also teach about tourism and Japanese language in the university.

### **【Future Activities】**

There are many attractive tourism resources, such as the Issyk Kul, known as the 2nd clearest lake in the

world and also called the pearl of Central Asia, and Qian mountains. You can experience the life of nomads, who move using horses, by staying in a yurt. I would like Japan and other the other people of the world to know more about Kyrgyz. A marathon running along the lakeshore of Issyk Kul is held in May every year. Please come and experience magnificent Kyrgyz.

Editor's Note

- When you talk about the New Year, you talk about new year's cards. In my country, the Philippines, we do not send new year's cards, but after studying Japanese, I started sending them. The most that I've sent was about 400 cards, but with the coming of the internet, the number of cards I send has decreased. It has become a very convenient world, but I feel that the "heart" of Japan is slowly fading away.(Tan)

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