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【01】 Activity Report

As one of our main programs, at OFIX we are working hard to strengthen our system to assist foreigners in the event of a disaster.

In this volume, we will introduce a lecture jointly conducted by Osaka Prefectural Government, Kyoto Prefectural International Center and OFIX, which addressed the results and challenges associated with assisting foreigners during the Kumamoto Earthquake. We will also report on our other programs.

Lecture “Discussing Assistance for Foreigners in a Disaster:
Results and Challenges from the Kumamoto Earthquake”

On Tuesday August 30th, we held a lecture and welcomed two speakers: Mr. Yagi, Section Chief of Kumamoto International Foundation (kif) where the Multilingual Support Center (hereby “Center”) was established immediately after the Kumamoto Earthquake, and Mr. Kondo, Department Manager of Kyoto Prefectural International Center (KPIC) who participated in support efforts.

Kif took charge of the evacuation shelter at Kumamoto City International Hall. Mr. Yagi spoke about issues such as the steps involved in establishing the evacuation shelter after the earthquake occurred, the difficulties attributed due to lack of manpower, and the requests that were sent out to other organizations for assistance.

From KPIC, we heard about the sequence of events from the moment assistance was requested to their actual participation, as well as the Center's possible areas for improvement and related programs that KPIC is regularly involved in.

Questions were fielded from those from municipal internationalization departments and community international exchange organizations about the running of multilingual support centers and evacuation shelters and how to coordinate efforts with other organizations, resulting in a lively discussion.

In dealing with these issues, at OFIX we are working at strengthening our system to assist foreigners in a disaster, while also improving our ties with local municipalities and international exchange associations.

***** ★ Volunteer Training ★ *****

○○ Community Interpreting & Translation Training ○○

- Co-hosted by Kawachi Nagano International Friendship Association and OFIX

Helping Each Other: Learn About it and Give it a Try:
Community Interpreting and Translation

Date: Saturday August 27th
Participants: 19

In the first half of the training, NPO Multilanguage Center FACIL Director Ms. Shizuyo Yoshitomi spoke about her experiences in relation to what to look out for regarding community interpreting and translation. Her comment that "you should neither underestimate nor overestimate your ability as community interpreters and volunteers" made a particular impression among the participants, who nodded in agreement.

Later on participants took part in a drill to summarize the most crucial points from a large amount of information, using only simple Japanese.

○○ Volunteer Interpreter & Translator Training ○○

- Co-hosted by Izumi City, Izumi International Exchange Association and OFIX - Disaster Prevention & Drill

Foreigner Assistance in the Event of a Disaster

Date: Thursday September 15th
Participants: 50

In the first section, participants took a lesson on lifesaver training, attempted CPR and tried using an AED. In the second section entitled "Instantly Usable Phrases in a Disaster", instructors taught participants about phrases commonly used in a disaster or emergency situation in English, Chinese and Korean.

There was an air of excitement in the room and time passed quickly, with participants asking the instructors many questions, commenting that "next time I'd like to learn more thoroughly".

- OFIX-hosted Advanced Training Session

Date: Saturday September 3rd
Participants: 16

This training was held at the Tsunami Storm Surge Disaster Prevention Station for the first time, where participants were about to get a real sense of the kind of damage that a tsunami can cause.

While June's basic disaster interpreting and translation training centered on learning about the system and activities involved, this advanced training had volunteers interpreting for foreigners who simulated that they were at the Station to learn more about disaster prevention.

Participants separated into groups and took turns at interpreting what the Station's guide said. Despite struggling with unfamiliar vocabulary related to tsunamis and storm surges, the training ended full of smiles.

★ Development of Human Global Resources ★

- Dai-Yu-Kyo Foundation of International Exchange, Assistance & Research 5th Open Discussion with Consulates General of Osaka

Date: Thursday July 21st
Participants: 38

Those affiliated with Dai-Yu-Kyo, Dai-Yu-Kyo scholars and their respective countries' consuls general divided into groups to openly discuss the assistance available to international students. Dai-Yu-Kyo scholars brought up topics such as their job hunting troubles, fulfilling university student life and their dreams for the future, while Dai-Yu-Kyo and others concerned actively discussed the types of support available for international student going forward. For the scholars, it was a meaningful event full of valuable advice and encouragement.

- 2016 Osaka Invitational Program for Short Term Overseas Trainees in Architecture and Arts (Ando Program)

This year's Ando Program marks its 24th year, with eight trainees from eight different countries in Asia currently undergoing training in Osaka. Since arriving in Osaka, the trainees have paid a courtesy visit to the Vice Governor of Osaka, Mr. Takeuchi, undertaken training at Osaka Prefectural Government, been involved in an architecture workshop with Kinki University students, visited the Water Temple (Honpukuji) on Awaji Island, as well as Naoshima and other Ando Tadao-design buildings. They also did homestays with Japanese families. Through these experiences, the trainees have deepened their understanding of Japanese architecture, art and culture. After completing the most vital aspect of their training - their practical training at Osaka-based architectural firms - the trainees will return home on October 20th. More details about the training will be provided in the next volume!

★ Information Service for Foreign Residents ★

- Free Information Service for Foreign Residents Co-hosted
by Sakai City and OFIX

Date: Tuesday July 12th
Participants: 18 (24 total consultations)

Specialists such as a lawyer, a legal administrative specialist, a licensed social security specialist and a public health nurse responded to enquiries from Sakai foreign residents such as status of residence and pension.

- 1st Osaka Prefectural Network Meeting for Counselors at Help Desks
Providing Administrative Information to Foreigners

Date: Wednesday July 27th
Attendees: 22

During the first of half of the lecture, examples of consumer consultations from individuals including foreigners were introduced. In the second half's open discussion, attendees talked about multilingual assistance efforts, making the meeting an opportunity to strengthen connections between fellow counselors.

★ International Student Support ★

- Disaster Workshop for International Student Leaders of Higher
Education Schools

Date: Tuesday September 6th
Participants: 14

Ms. Rie Sugita, Consultation Advisor for Council of Local Authorities for International Relations and an employee of Higashimurayama City's Citizen's Department, gave a lecture about the kind of disaster prevention measures undertaken for foreign residents in her city, and key examples of similar policies created by universities. In the workshop, participants discussed among themselves and then presented about the kind of assistance one can do during a large-scale disaster and the potential ways to solve issues that arise. By sharing the different challenges and potential solutions, participants reaffirmed the importance of rallying together to help foreigners in times of need.

- Career Counselling for International Students

Date: Monday September 26th
Participants: 25

The "OSAKA JOB FAIR" (Co-hosted by OFIX) is a large information session conducted by various companies for Japanese and international students graduating next spring. OFIX itself set up a career counselling booth for students of foreign nationalities. The Job Fair consisted of 97 very reputable small to medium-sized companies in the Kinki region, and a total of 720 people visited, of which 148 were international students. International students who visited OFIX's booth had questions regarding job hunting methods to enter Japanese companies and the suitable visa status to enter the job of choice.

- Sakai International Hall (Orion International House) Residents'
Social Gathering (Potluck Party)

On Sunday July 24th, a potluck party was held for dormitory residents to share the different cuisines from their home countries.

For the 20 residents who participated, this gathering was an event planned by their tutors as a chance for students to develop stronger relationships with each other. Cuisines from the residents' four different countries were introduced, and everyone enjoyed the different food cultures of one another's countries.

We hope to continue to plan memorable events for the international students staying at Orion House.

■ Development and International Education Seminar:
Introductory/Hands-on Experience Program

Date: Thursday August 4th
Participants: 151

In this seminar, a lecture was held incorporating “Active Learning” and workshops were conducted by organizations including NGOs and NPOs that contribute to the fields of development and international education.

Various new and fresh approaches to international education were provided and the event finished, having been well-received by participants.

* * * * *

As a co-host, OFIX took part in the workshop titled “Most-Useful and Valuable Information from Co-hosting Organizations”, introducing its different programs and also undertaking a mock international understanding education lesson by the OFIX Coordinator for International Relations.

[02] The Current State and Future of Multicultural Coexistence Facing Local Governments

Osaka Prefecture has an increasing foreign resident population with approximately 210,000 foreigners residing in the prefecture. This accounts for about 2% of the whole prefecture population (as of the end of 2015).

For foreign residents, the understanding of the issues they face and the assistance provided by their local community and residential area has a large influence on the quality of their daily lives.

In this issue, we have contributions from the Director of the International Affairs Office, Local Administration Bureau, Ministry of Internal Affairs and Communications regarding their various policies in promoting internationalization, and from the Civic Collaboration Section, Civic Collaboration Division of Matsubara City, who are actively invested in assisting foreigners residing in the community.

● The Promotion of Multicultural Coexistence by Local Governments

Masashi Ito Director,
International Affairs Office, Local Administration Bureau,
Ministry of Internal Affairs and Communications

This year marks 10 years since the Ministry formulated its “Plan for the Promotion of Multicultural Coexistence in Local Communities”. In recent years, we have seen some shift in the conditions relating to multicultural coexistence measures. Additionally, notwithstanding the 2020 Tokyo Olympics and Paralympics, we also expect the needs pertaining to these measures will be further strengthened going forward. Here I’d like to touch on the current state of multicultural coexistence and the challenges facing us, while also expressing my own personal sentiments.

The change that has occurred over the last ten years is largely attributed to growing diversity of foreign residents and an aging society. This may be due to reasons starting with changes in the economic climate, and we can now expect an even stronger movement towards a more diversified and multilingual society.

Additionally, the number of foreign residents in Japan is believed to be

trending upwards. In Japan's "2016 Comprehensive Policy", which details the basic policy guidelines for future economic and fiscal management and so on, we wish to promote "the utilization of foreign professionals", as well as the cross-sectional efforts of ministries and agencies to work towards the development of other related measures.

In the midst of this, local municipalities at the forefront of policy development for multicultural coexistence are designating certain organizations to formulate strategies and plans, resulting in a growing recognition regarding the importance of such measures. On the other hand, I believe there is a need to amending the current system in place for promoting these measures at the related government departments in charge of multicultural symbiosis.

With this in mind, the Ministry of Internal Affairs and Communications has established the "Multicultural Coexistence Case Studies Working Group" in February this year, collecting and summarizing excellent examples for multicultural coexistence programs undertaken at a municipal government level around Japan. Considering the recent frequency of large-scale disasters, we set up the "Zero Project to Limit the Information Divide" in September to improve the environment for information exchange so that the necessary information can reach people without fail in the event of a disaster.

It is our hope that with these policies can be of some help to communities looking to promote the multicultural symbiosis. Our wish is not only to act as the "provider" of support in the way of reform, but to also develop programs that stem directly from point of view of foreigners as the "recipients" of support.

- The Assistance Efforts for Foreign Nationals Residing in Matsubara City

Chika Sato Civic Collaboration Section,
Civic Collaboration Division, Matsubara City

Matsubara City is home to 1,272 foreign residents, accounting for 1% of the city's population. As the city with the largest foreign resident population in the Minami Kawachi area, we are helping in the internationalization of the area based on our "Respect for Human Rights City Planning Ordinance" and the "Fourth Matsubara City Comprehensive City Plan".

Specifically, we have been providing counselling services since 2003, as well as interpreting and translating support services. Currently our human rights consultation service provides counselling for foreigners in eight languages: English, Chinese, Korean, Spanish, Portuguese, Vietnamese, Tagalog and Thai (reservation required).

A great number of consultations concern education and medical services, and recently we have seen a significant rise in cases relating to elderly citizens and new systems such as My Number. Matsubara city's foreign resident population continues to diversify in nationalities year by year, and the challenges faced in trying to cater for these so-called "minor languages" are significant.

Another one of our programs aims to have foreign residents learn Japanese necessary for their daily lives, by providing a necessary place for those unfamiliar with the language. Since its establishment in 1996, the "Kokusai Hiroba Momen" has become a place of community cross-cultural exchange where the city and its citizens can collaborate on planning projects, and where learners of Japanese and citizen volunteers can come together in a casual environment. By also helping connect those to consultations at the city hall when necessary, this classroom utilizes the strengths our city planning and available services.

By giving foreign residents the chance to learn Japanese, we hope to continue promoting these efforts in order to create a Matsubara city where foreigners become self-reliant members of the community and live safe, enjoyable lives.

Consultation Service for Foreign Residents and Interpreting

/Translation Service

⇒ <http://www.city.matsubara.osaka.jp/index.cfm/10,0,30,137,html>

(Japanese Only)

Reading and Writing Japanese Classroom

⇒ <http://www.city.matsubara.osaka.jp/index.cfm/10,28570,56,384,html>

(Japanese Only)

[03] Notice

- One Day Consultation Service for Foreigners (OFIX Co-hosted Program)

OFIX jointly holds one-day consultation events with local municipalities so that foreign residents have local access to consultations.

Feel free to come by.

- ◆ Sunday November 13th 9:00am - 12:00 noon

Information Service for Foreign Residents

Tadaoka-cho Citizen's Ground (Tadaoka-cho Shoko Carnival Open Space)

(English, Chinese, Indonesian)

We can help you with living-related issues.

Tadaoka-cho Shoko Carnival will also take place!

- ◆ Friday November 25th 5:30pm - 9:00pm

Consultation Service for Foreign Residents

Shijonawate City Citizen's General Center

(English, Chinese, Vietnamese, Spanish, Filipino)

Consultation Specialists such as legal administrative and licensed social security specialists will help with enquiries regarding status of residence, employment, pension and insurance.

- ◆ Sunday December 18th 10:00am - 4:00pm

One-Day Consultation Service in Daito(2016 International Exchange Festival)

Daito City Life-long Learning Center (Across)

(English, Chinese, Vietnamese)

Consultation Specialists such as legal administrative and licensed social security specialists and lawyers will be available. The International Exchange Festival will also take place!

[04] Topics

- ◆ Looking for FY 2016 Autumn JICA Volunteers

- Application Period

Friday September 30th - Friday November 4th (received by this date)

For details about information sessions in the Kansai Area:

<http://www.jica.go.jp/volunteer/seminar/kansai/> (Japanese Only)

- Requirements to Apply

- Japan Overseas Cooperation Volunteers and Youth Volunteers for
Nikkei Volunteers
Japan national between 20 and 39 years old

For more details:

<http://www.jica.go.jp/volunteer/application/seinen/> (Japanese Only)

- Senior Overseas Volunteers and Nikkei Society Senior Volunteers
Japan national between 40 and 69 years old

For more details:

<http://www.jica.go.jp/volunteer/application/senior/> (Japanese Only)

- ◆ FY 2016 Osaka Multilingual Support Center in Times of Disaster Training
to be conducted! (Scheduled)

Osaka Prefectural Government and OFIX will hold a training drill for the Osaka Multilingual Support Center in Times of a Disaster in January 2017, which will become the stronghold for the distribution of information in multiple languages if a disaster is to occur. The aim of the drill is to ensure that the Center can be set up to commence operations immediately after a disaster.

In the first basic training section, we will learn about the role and operations of the center (scheduled).

In the second section, we will simulate the Center being established and how information will be distributed from its collection, selection, multilingual translation, and finally the tools used for its transmission. Hands-on training will also be conducted involving the Center's response to telephone consultations from foreigners - a key component of its operations (scheduled).

Through this training, participants will reaffirm the flow of how multilingual information is provided and the foundations of the support system.

【Osaka Information Service for Foreign Residents】 (Within OFIX)

Free Consultation Service for Foreigners
(Consultations about Status of Residence, Employment and Labor,
Medical and Welfare and Living)

Consultation Hours 9:00am - 5:30pm (Monday to Friday) ※except for national holidays
Lunchtime (12:15pm - 1:00pm)

Designated Line 06-6941-2297

Available Languages English, Korean, Chinese, Portuguese, Spanish
Thai, Filipino and Vietnamese

E-mail jouhou-c@ofix.or.jp

Editor's Note

My city has been looking for foreigners working and living in the area to take part in the mikoshi at the autumn festival in late October. In the poster outlining the event, there are explanations about what to wear and the food provided (sushi) in carefully written easy Japanese.

Having foreign residents participate in traditional events in their local communities and experience Japanese culture is an example of an event promoting multicultural coexistence. I can't wait to see the finished product on the day!

- The next edition (81th edition) will be available in January.
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★Osaka Prefectural Government E-Newsletter Information

★ 『GEO(Global E-net Osaka)』

This e-newsletter provides information on upcoming events, famous places and other important trivia regarding Osaka!

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

★Other announcements★

※International Understanding Education Program dispatching foreign volunteers to Elementary, Junior High and High schools.

⇒ <http://www.ofix.or.jp/english/training/education/dispatch.html>

※Introducing OFIX's volunteer system

⇒ <http://www.ofix.or.jp/english/accept/volunteer/system.html>

※OFIX supporting members and donations wanted

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

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≫ ≫ Comments and suggestions for OFIX News

⇒ E-mail info@ofix.or.jp

≫ ≫ To cancel your registration or change your registered email address

⇒ http://www.ofix.or.jp/english/info/mail/register_j.html

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

⇒

http://www.ofix.or.jp/english/info/mail/backnumber/pdf/mail_english_no80.pdf

≫ ≫ Back Numbers

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

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