



TAKING OFF

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Due to the limited space, we were unable to cover all of the support activities at other partner universities. Please reference our blog to read about more support efforts. Please check it out.

<http://inoffice.blog102.fc2.com/>



Fundraising by Love Japan311

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“The Circle of Support”

Bridges that link Japan to Overseas Citizens

The March 11th Earthquake and Tsunami caused great loss for many people. Even today, thousands remain homeless and are still living in shelters. Although Osaka was not directly affected by the natural disaster, some of the international students returned to their home countries.

We have been receiving news about support activities at our overseas partner universities. One of the stories begins at Providence University in Taichung City, Taiwan. Japanese students there, along with OGU student Shiori Fukuda, (Foreign Languages, 3rd year student) established a volunteer group named “Love Japan311” to support Japan. They began fundraising on March 16. Many local students, staff, and faculty supported their efforts. Another fundraiser was held at Bangkok University in Thailand. They gathered donations totaling 300,000 yen for the victims of both disasters. Four of our students participated in their work camp in March. During the completion ceremony, held on March 14,

those donations were presented by President Mathana of Bangkok University to the representatives of three participating Japanese universities (Hagoromo University of International Studies, Osaka International University, and OGU). OGU will forward these funds to the Japanese Red Cross Society.

The whole world now supports Japan. We would also like to do as much as we can support the restoration of the devastated areas!



Awarding the donation at the completion ceremony

Now and the Future of the Outbound Exchange Program

A total of thirty OGU students were sent to overseas partners within the past year. Although we had hope student numbers would continue to increase annually, unfortunately only 11 students applied for the current programs and will study abroad beginning this fall. One student will study in the U.S., three in Canada, two in France, two in Germany, one in the Netherlands, and two in Korea. Some good news is a student, who participated in the International Studies Department study abroad program will now take advantage of the International Center program despite the one year limit rule set by the university. Ms. Yukiko Suetake, a third year student who studied English at Waikato University in New Zealand last year, will depart this fall to Fontys University of Applied Sciences located in the Netherlands. This is a wonderful opportunity available to all OGU students.

There are several variables thoughts to contribute to the decline in the number of outbound program participants. The International Center actively supports other study abroad programs campus-wide such as the International Studies Department study abroad programs, the Global Course in the Economics and Administrative Sciences Departments, both the summer and spring short-term study programs and Cambridge Queen's College Short-term Study Abroad Program. These programs combined, in partnership with the International Center, share the goal to increase overall outbound student numbers. The aim is to send approximately 100 students overseas via these various campus-wide programs.

OGU students – won't you take advantage of one of the available campus-wide study abroad programs in the future? Find one that is a good fit for you!



Study Abroad Program of the International Studies Department

During 2009, as a part of the experiential learning initiative, the International Studies Department launched a study abroad program for all international studies majors. This program requires students to study abroad for either one month or one semester in the second semester of their sophomore year. To date, three students have studied at the University of Hawaii, Maui College, 18 at The University of Waikato in New Zealand, four at Pai Chai University in Korea, and one at Providence University in Taiwan. Two students also participated in a one-month program at The University of Waikato. Students who studied abroad, if only for a short time, claim their experiences help them mature immensely. Below are two students' stories.



From left, the host father, the dog Willow, Yukiko, Cushla (a student from China), and the host mother

The Event that Changed My Way of Thinking

Yukiko Suetake

One September day, when I just started becoming more comfortable with my life in New Zealand, my host parents were both working. No one was in the house, not even the dog. I suddenly remembered my host mother's words, "It will rain tomorrow, so I will put the dog in the garage. Please let him out when you come home." I followed her instruction, yet, as soon as I opened the garage door, the dog ran into the house. When I went to the kitchen later on, I saw a memo lying on the table. It read, "Please remember: DO NOT let the dog out of the garage." I was worried and at that time, I realized I had misunderstood her instructions. I tried to put the dog back into the garage, but it was impossible. I had to keep the dog inside. After a while, the dog stopped barking and I could smell something strange. I rushed into the living room and saw that a part of the carpet near the dog was dark in color. The dog

had peed on it! I quickly cleaned it up, but the carpet looked the same and smelled really bad. Meanwhile, my host mother came home. I explained to her what had happened and apologized for causing a problem. She asked, "Didn't you remember what I told you?" I told her I misunderstood what she had said. She kindly answered, "Oh, OK...then don't worry about it." I expected that she would be mad at me, but she accepted my apology and even cleaned the carpet. I felt relieved, but at the same time, I felt very sorry for pretending to understand her words when I actually didn't. This event led me to change my attitude about English completely. I decided not to pretend to understand anyone's English, but rather, study very hard to actually understand all the words spoken to me. For example, when I encountered unknown expressions or words while talking with someone, I confirmed the meaning of the words by rephrasing them and asking questions to learn the actual meaning. I also tried to use those new words when I spoke in English the next time. While continuously doing this, I realized that previously, I felt

ashamed to ask questions about what I didn't understand. I realized that remaining in the dark and not knowing the actual meaning of what others were telling me was way more shameful. I believe this is very important in both my university and daily life. This is one important lesson I learned over the past year and it changed my way of thinking tremendously.

This was my first study abroad experience. I was very nervous before leaving for New Zealand yet, I was surrounded by many good people in there and had a very fruitful experience. Because of this study abroad experience, I became interested in visiting many different places around the world. As a result, I participated in Thai Work Camp in March and will partake in the exchange program in the Netherlands in the fall of this year. From now forward, I will do everything possible to make my dream to work as part of an international organization come true!

The Most Important Thing I Learned

Yuri Kyuma

This was my second study abroad experience in New Zealand as I studied English there during high school. However, this time I studied in a different place in the country. While I was very excited to have a new experience in New Zealand, at the same time, I felt a little nervous because of my limited English skills. My previous study abroad experience was very short, and I didn't have enough time to study English before I left Osaka. I asked myself, "Am I able to live well if I go there like

this?" But my departure date came up quickly, no matter how I felt about it.

As you may know, the season in New Zealand is the opposite of Japan. I left Japan in August on a very hot summer day and arrived in New Zealand on a freezing cold winter day. Although it was winter time I still saw vast fields with sheep and horses near the road. The closer I got to Hamilton, where I was supposed to live, the more my heart beat with excitement! I still remember my arrival so vividly in my mind!

My host family is from South Africa and consisted of the parents and a daughter. They welcomed me with open arms! They even gave me a welcome party at their

home upon my arrival. House parties in New Zealand are when a few families get together, bring dishes of food, and enjoy talking to each other while eating and socializing! During my first house party, five families, who seemed to be very close to one another, got together and had an enjoyable time with lots of laughter. During my three-month stay in New Zealand, I went to about five different house parties. Parties like this are held only on special occasions, so for me they were fun and an unforgettable experience. I was also lucky that I didn't have any allergies to food in New Zealand.

I went to The University of Waikato everyday except on weekends. I met



students from China, Korea, Saudi Arabia and Chile. We all came to New Zealand to study English, so we often could not express ourselves to one another easily. But we tried to understand and communicate with one another by using a dictionary and body language. Everyone turned out to be good friends of mine. There were Japanese students from other universities, but I decided since I came to New Zealand to study English, it would not be productive to speak Japanese during my stay. When communicating with my Japanese friends, I tried to speak and email in Eng-

lish only. Truthfully, I can not say with confidence that my English improved remarkably in the three months yet, I can say my attitude towards studying English has changed dramatically!

I engaged in outdoor nature activities throughout my study abroad experience. I met a lot of people, learned about a fascinating new culture, and had experiences that I could of never had otherwise in Japan. I am very pleased that I decided to participate in this program. I hope to put my valuable experience to use in my future!



(Top) With host family
(Bottom) At a home party
(Yuri, second from left)

Spring Study Abroad Program: The Thai Work Camp

OGU has participated in the work camp sponsored by Bangkok University since the spring of 2007. In this camp, students volunteer in an intensive volunteer work program, which lasts only a few days. Although a short program, it gives our students a more global perspective. They leave Japan, and can see there are thousands of people in the world living in severe condition. Students learned the importance of sustainable work solutions and cooperation. The international Center hopes other students will also become interested in participating in this program and that international cooperation activities will grow campus-wide.

Masafumi Shibutani International Center Staff

This program is held annually in March during the spring break time. Participants from OGU joined another student group from Bangkok University, one of our overseas partners. Together, the students worked on a construction project building a multi-purpose room at elementary school in a farming village in the Chumporn Providence. A total of two Japanese universities, in addition to OGU, participate in this program each year.

The Chumporn Providence is located about 500 kilo meters south of Bangkok and is well known for the cultivation of fruits, its natural rubber, and fishing. This

area is also a great sightseeing spot where visitors enjoy marine water sports such as scuba diving.

Speaking of the construction project, the framework of the walls, the roof, and one room were already completed. Our students worked on spreading cement on the walls. They worked under very hot weather conditions. Some students carried 20 kg cement sack and mixed the cement with sand. Others cleaned up around the room, and assisted the Bangkok University students with the more simple tasks. Most of the Bangkok University students spoke only Thai. In the beginning, all of the students had a difficult time communicating with each other. As time passed, students played games during breaks, spent time together and naturally became good

friends. Building good relationship with the Thai students is one of the main purposes of this program. Students learn a lot when they work and live together. The Thai students' group leadership skills and cooperation during the recreation time was excellent. As the Japanese students were very stimulated by the Bangkok University students, they prepared the recreation activities and several meals while exchanging ideas and cooperating with one another in the process.

Although this program was only nine days in length, I can say with great confidence that it is a meaningful program, which offers many valuable experiences and stimulating opportunities for students. Seeing is truly believing! If you think you might be reluctant to go a day or two without taking a shower, take a cold shower or maybe feel uncomfortable sleeping in a sleeping bag.....this would be a great testing ground for you to challenge yourself and learn how tough you really are!



From left, the multi-purpose room,
Bangkok University campus (Mr.
Shibutani right rear)



Mizuki Nakagawa

Foreign Languages

4th year student

Last July, I returned from a one-year study abroad program to Germany. This experience inspired me to visit other countries. As a result, I decided to participate in the Thai Work Camp this year. This program is held jointly with Hagoromo University of International Studies and Osaka International University annually. The campsite varies every year. This year the site was in Chumphon



Recreation time at the campsite
(Mizuki front/left)

Providence, which is located in the southern part of Thailand.

First off, many may think Thai dishes are very spicy, but I found them to be rather sweet. It was surprising to find out Thai people use not only hot pepper and the familiar nam pla, but also sugar. The Chumphon area is known for sugar made from coconuts. Tom Yum Goong is probably the most well known Thai dish around the world. I learned that it is not as popular as we think in Thailand.

Thai people deeply respect Buddha and their King. 95% of Thai citizens practice Buddhism, therefore you often see images of Shyacamuni Buddha all over Thailand. More than half of the pedestrians put their palms together and greet the statues when they pass by. This is called "Wai" in Thai. Perhaps you have seen Thai people put their palms together in front of their chest or near their nose. If the image stands along the roadside, drivers honk when they pass by. I was told they do this to pray for their safe travel. I also saw big photos of

the King and royal family members placed in the middle of four-lane highways. They are very much loved in Thailand. You may see people wearing a yellow T-shirt with letters saying "I love the King" on the street.

Lastly, I will explain about the Buddhist teachings known as "Tham bun". This means to accumulate virtue. Thai people believe that doing good deeds in this world results in happiness in one's next life. I do not know if this is the reason, but all the Thai people I met during this camp were very nice and always wore a beautiful smile on their face. It is also often said that Thai people are basically laid back. I did witness this myself. This may be because of the hot weather they endure year-round.

Although this work camp is held for only a short period of time, one will definitely be able to learn many attractive points about Thailand. If you are interested in learning more, please do not hesitate to sign up for next year's trip. You never know, you may just discover a whole new world!

"Voices of the Students"

The Short-term Japanese

The following are stories from a couple students about their experience in the three-week short-term Japanese program, which was featured in the last issue.

Ms. Keun-Hye Park

Soonchunhyang University, Korea

I had always wanted to come to Japan since I was in junior high school. I was so happy that my dream finally came true. Most vivid in my memory, was the chance for me to communicate with Japanese students in the J-Chat event at the I-Chat Lounge. I also went sightseeing to Osaka Castle, and saw the traditional Kyoto and many deer in Nara. One funny story was when a classmate, Mr. Jaehwan Lee, bought an very expensive piece of a roast sweet potato in Nara for 1,100 yen. Everyone was very surprised at the cost. Since then, he was nicknamed "sweet potato". Through this program, I had the opportunity to meet Australian students and widen my point of view toward the world. I truly hope to return to Japan once again someday!

Mr. Paul Killingly

CQ University, Australia

Although I studied very little Hiragana before visiting Japan, my Japanese teacher always encouraged and praised me for what I did in the classroom, so I was able to try my best until the end. When I learned Katakana, I felt like reading symbols or solving quizzes. But after I could read them, it was exciting that I could read signboards when I went out on the town. Because I learned Hiragana and Katakana, I could type some words using my I-Phone and even change them in Kanji. While I was in Japan, I tried to communicate with people as much as possible. I now have a favorite bar close to the Senriyama Seminar House! I learned so much by participating in this program. I look forward to returning to Japan someday soon!

The group comprised of individuals of different ages and nationalities. They all shared different cultures, but also learned so much from each other. The young man Jaehwan, mentioned above, will serve in the army for two years beginning in May of this year. Apart from him, we look forward to seeing everyone again sometime soon!



(Top) Asahi Beer Factory-Suita
(Bottom) Completion ceremony

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