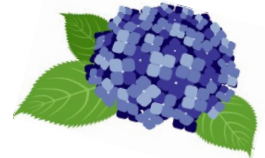




TAKING OFF

Vol. 19 Summer, 2013



1. Hello from All Corners of the World!

Mitsuaki Sakubayashi International Studies Major Graduated in 2009

I am proofreading my article now on a plane flying to Thailand. I feel a little sad to know this will be my final trip to Thailand as a student, but I know I feel this way because my study abroad experiences have been quite happy and very positive.

During the first half of my university life at OGU, I just attended classes, read books, and went home almost everyday. It was my daily routine. One day, my friend told me about a volunteer trip to Thailand. I thought if I didn't go now, I would never have a chance again, so I decided to join that trip. It was only a one-week trip, but I just fell in love with everything about Thailand: the hot and humid weather, spicy food, caring people, the freedom, and even the bit dangerous environment.

After the volunteer trip, I wanted to learn more about the country. One year later, while my classmates were busy with job-hunting, I flew to Bangkok. I studied at Bangkok University for a year as an exchange student, and then went on to graduate school at the same university. Why did I decide to go to graduate school there? It is because I could not do anything during my time as an exchange student. I could not speak, read, hear, or write English well*, and I also could not find a girlfriend. These were hard days for me.

It is surprising to know that if you constantly study for a long period, you can get used to it and be able to take regular content-based courses in English. I thought I could make the most of the knowledge I accumulated in the undergraduate program, so I decided to study Marketing in the MBA program at Bangkok University.

When I first started the MBA program, I could not look up from my notes during a presentation. I would always look at my memo and read from it. But putting aside my English with a Japanese accent, I now put my memo in my pocket and give my presentation without

using any memo or notes. There are two people who gave me unforgettable comments about my presentation. One comment came from a Chinese student who does not speak English well. He said, "My English is so bad, but I can understand your presentation really well. I want to do a presentation like you!" Another comment was from a British professor, who hardly praises his students. He said, "Sakubayashi Mitsuaki... Your presentation is easy to understand. You use not only the textbook, but also other materials, and furthermore, your presentation provides theoretical perspectives. Excellent!" This may sound exaggerated, but after hearing their comments, I felt that my efforts in the past four years had paid off.

However, good presentation skills are not the only things I acquired. Another important thing I learned is how to strengthen humanity by working together with those who have quite different backgrounds both in and out of the classroom. I tried not to separate study and play, and whatever I did, I tried my best. This made me realize that studying was somehow similar to playing and this lifted the tension from my shoulders. I really enjoyed both studying and playing!

Now, my graduation is just around the corner and I am now 28 years old. My parents entirely supported me up to now, so to tell the truth, I was worried about job-hunting. What I did was I tried to be confident on my good points and thought of how I can use them to contribute to a company. I thought about this over and over and prepared for my interview. I also proactively communicated with my interviewers. As a result, I got a job at a Japanese machinery manufacturer. I was hired in Japan, but after a few months of primary training, I will be transferred to an office in Thailand.

When I visited Thailand for the first time four years ago, Thailand and Japan already had a



With friends at the graduation ceremony at Bangkok University (Second from right)



Thai taxi "Tuk Tuk"



Trip with friends at the graduate school (Far left)



close relationship in the fields of business and culture, but it has grown even more. I heard that thousands of Japanese companies have a Thai branch and factory. However, I do not recommend you to go to Thailand just because you would like to get a good job. I hope you will choose a country which you feel excited to study in.

Studying in Thailand is probably harder than you expect, but if you are active and outgoing, you can get a lot more out of the experience than you think. If you face something difficult, please do not get discouraged. Please don't forget the exciting feeling, and move forward to achieve your

goals.

If you think Thailand sounds interesting and you would like to go there after reading my article, I am extremely happy. I hope to see you in Thailand someday!

*Most of classes are instructed in English at Bangkok University.

2. An Interview with Future Pro Golfer, Goh Aoyama (4th year, Business Administration Major) by Danford Chun

Student-athletes play a major role at many universities as they help to foster friendly competition with other universities in their own country as well as with institutions abroad. Osaka Gakuin University is highly regarded nationally for its outstanding sports programs, boasting several famous alumni who have reached the professional ranks including Olympic Gold Medalist Naoko Takahashi and Hanshin Tigers pitcher Kazuyuki Kaneda. The following is an excerpt from an interview with aspiring golf professional Goh Aoyama, a senior majoring in Business Administration.

Q: How did you become a golfer?

A: My cousin, Daisuke Harada, who is eight years older, is a professional golfer and he taught me how to play golf back when I was in the 4th grade of elementary school. In fact, I shot my first hole-in-one back in elementary school and this helped me to believe that I could turn pro someday like my cousin. Later when I was in high school, my golf coach recruited me to play for the OGU golf team.

Q: When do you expect to turn professional?

A: Hopefully by the end of this year. This month I'll be competing in my first professional tournament, the Mizuno Open, in Okayama from June 27-30. If I finish in the top four, I'll qualify for the British Open where I'll be able to compete against the world's greatest golfers like Tiger Woods and Rory McIlroy. If I don't finish in the top four at the Mizuno Open, then I'll enter a QT (qualifying tournament) for aspiring professionals here in Japan that runs from August till December. It consists of four stages with the preliminary rounds taking place each month over a period of 3-4 days on six different golf courses throughout the Kansai and Kanto regions. The final round is the most rigorous and takes place over six days. That means I'll be playing a total of 108 holes in a six-day span. It's highly competitive with golfers from all around the world coming to Japan to compete. Player rankings are then cal-



Goh Aoyama at the I-Chat Lounge

culated at the conclusion of the final round and only the golfers who are ranked -1 under par can move on to the next level.

Q: Please tell me about your tournament in Hawai'i last year.

A: This was my second international tournament so I was very nervous (my first was a tournament in Malaysia back when I was in high school). Over 100 top golfers from various universities all across America came to Hawai'i to compete in the 2012 Amer Ari Invitational. I was one of five students from OGU selected via special invitation. Players were ranked according to both their group and individual scores. Out of the 20 college teams that participated, our OGU team finished 14th with the University of Texas golf team winning the tournament. Although our team didn't do so well, this motivated me to improve my short game and driving distance. I've been practicing three hours a day on the driving range nearly every day and working on my short game from the bunker. I'm a big Tiger Woods fan so I study his game intently and try to emulate him on the golf course.

Q: Why is English important for your future career in professional golf?

A: Playing in tournaments overseas as well as with players from other countries here in Japan made me realize how important English is for communicating with non-Japanese speakers. When I went to Hawaii for the golf tournament last year, I gained a lot of confidence from speaking with the American golfers. The golf tours in

Japan also have a lot of foreign players, especially from South Korea, so it's a good chance for me to get to know players from other countries. In fact, professional golfer Eric Chan from South Korea, whom I had met at the Kansai Open several years ago, is a good friend of mine. I want to eventually play on the U.S. Tour in a few years.

Q: How did you learn to speak English so well?

A: Even though I'm really busy, I try to go to I-Chat at least once or twice a week, and I hope to continue doing so even after I graduate. I also use the smart phone application "Real Eikaiwa," which has helped to improve my vocabulary. I also have a lot of friends from foreign countries. One of my best friends is from Australia and we met back in high school when he was an exchange student at OGU High School.

Q: What can faculty members do to support student-athletes at OGU?

A: If the foreign teachers have free time, I would like to learn natural daily conversation from them. For example, I want to know what to say if I'm on the train, having lunch, driving, etc. I want to speak English more naturally like a westerner.

Thank you for being an exceptional student-athlete, Goh, and good luck in your future pro golf career!



Goh Aoyama (black polo shirt on right) and OGU golf team captain Yujiro Ohori (black polo shirt on left) posing with golfers from the University of Texas at the Amer Ari Invitational held in Hawai'i



3. “Inspire Me!” by Susette Burton

A group of fresh young talents served up a helping of inspiration to Osaka Gakuin University students recently with their energetic performance of song and dance numbers from the famed British musical masterpiece “Oliver.”

The hour-long performance featured a lively collection of songs, dances and scenes from “Oliver,” which is based on Charles Dickens classic novel, *Oliver Twist*. The troupe of about 25 performers and musicians are all members of Japan’s National Theater of Young Artists, an international theater company that features young artists performing classic plays, musicals and operas in English. Members range from age six to 26 years old.

And while they were certainly enter-



Young performers with Mr. Steckler (far right)

taining and received great reviews from those in attendance, the young performers also provided special inspiration for all who attended the packed performance, especially for the OGU the students in the audience.

The “Oliver!” show was the third musical event held as part of OGU’s “Inspire Me!” series. It was sponsored by OGU and the International Center. One of the main goals of the “Inspire Me!” series is to bring different young performers to OGU to help inspire OGU students to be more interested in the world and different things.

The “Inspire Me!” series is the brainchild of OGU’s own Professor Theo Steckler. By bringing in these guest performers, Mr. Steckler said he wants to show students that young Japanese are doing great things in Japan and throughout the world.

Mr. Steckler, who is also the founder and director of the National Theater of Young Artists, said he wants students to be “positively motivated to not give up on their dreams and hopes.”

While introducing the performance, Mr. Steckler told the audience about his troupe of young performers, saying “they are just average, normal, everyday kids like you. They are doing something special in their life and they really are inspiring other people.”

And the show was amazing to see as the entire lively production was done in English. The cast performed scenes from



Young performers playing “Oliver!”

“Oliver,” the musical without missing a beat, belting out famous and catchy songs including “Food Glorious Food,” “Where is Love?,” “Consider Yourself,” and “You’ve Got to Pick a Pocket or Two.” The acting scenes were well done, ranging from humorous at times to moving and poignant.

Following the performance, OGU students had a chance to talk with members of the cast and take pictures with some of them. Those students who attended the performance said they enjoyed it very much and that they were really impressed with the young performers, especially the young boy who played the role of Oliver Twist.

Students said they couldn’t believe how well the actors sang their English songs and performed their roles all in English. In the end, I think all were truly inspired by the performers.

4. I-Chat’s Doctor English Program

Back by popular demand, I-Chat’s Doctor English program is a great opportunity for Osaka Gakuin University students to get one-on-one support from a native English speaker. Dr. English is one of I-Chat’s many programs that allow students to choose a topic of study and work towards a goal with the help of an OGU professor who is an expert in English.

I-Chat helps to equip students with the necessary skills to achieve their future goals. Whether their goal is a higher TOEIC score, English homework support, job placement preparation, or practicing an English presentation or interview, the Dr. English program is a resource that students can use to help them quickly attain their goals. In addition to I-Chat’s mission to provide students with an environment

where they can strengthen their ability to communicate in international languages, Dr. English is one of many effective support tools at I-Chat that students can also utilize. This tool is not only for students with specific majors, but is geared to all students who have a desire to advance their English language skills.

The Dr. English thirty-minute sessions are open to students three days a week: Tuesday, Wednesday, and Friday mornings. Students can schedule appointments for Dr. English in a manner that best fits their schedule. When students make the appointment, they must list specific goals, which help the native speaker better aide the student’s needs. With these goals in mind, the benefits of using Dr. English—such as grasping a better understanding of the English language and using the lan-

I-Chat's Doctor English Dr. イングリッシュ

One-on-one class with a native English speaker

Schedule: Any English Topics
 April 16th (Fri) - May 22nd (Wed)
 10:00 - 11:45

30 Minute Sessions

Tue (火)	• TOEIC Pre-Test
Wed (水)	• Presentation Practice
Fri (金)	• Interview Practice
	• Vocabulary & more

Sign-up is required at the I-Chat Lounge located in Building 13

マンツーマンで英語に関するあらゆる質問ができます。
 英語の勉強、TOEICの勉強、英語のプレゼンテーションや
 面接準備など、なんでもDr. イングリッシュに相談しよう！
 4月16日～5月22日まで
 日時：毎週火曜日・水曜日・金曜日 10時から11時45分まで(30分間)
 I-CHAT LOUNGEにて事前予約をしてください。

I-Chat Lounge

guage in every day conversation— are easier to attain. During the thirty-minute appointments students receive customized, one-on-one attention that targets the topic in English they have requested. They will also leave with a “prescription,” from the Dr. or homework assignments, which the student then completes independently,



to reinforce the skill they are receiving instruction for.

Masahiro Yotsuya, better known as Max, is a senior majoring in Hospitality Business Administration. Max attends I-Chat daily to improve his English skills. His goal in visiting Dr. English is to obtain a higher TOEIC score, and he is specifically interested in improving his grammar skills. When asked about why he made the decision to give Dr. English a try, Max replied, "I took the TOEIC test and noticed that my grammar needed improvement. I come to I-Chat to see Dr. English one time a week and it is very helpful for me. The Doctor gives me assignments designed to polish my grammar skills, which we then discuss in a follow-up appointment." Max is a great example of a student who is working hard and using all available resources that

move him forward towards his future.

Asuka Hara, a senior majoring in Business Administration, is preparing for his dream of becoming an interpreter in Japanese and English. "I come to Dr. English to advance my skills in business English and vocabulary, which is really important to an interpreter's career. I like the fact that students can choose which skill they want to work on and receive one-on-one attention from an instructor." Asuka works continuously to make his dream of interpreting come true.

Teaching students to set goals and work hard towards those goals are skills that they will need throughout their lives. Given the opportunity and appropriate resources, a student's dreams for the future can become a reality. I-Chat is committed to helping students make their dreams come

true for all Osaka Gakuin University students who walk through its doors. Dr. English is a unique resource at OGU on "everything" English. Due to the outstanding success, I-Chat is proud to announce that the Dr. English program will return in the fall semester!

At print time of this newsletter publication "Taking Off", I-Chat's Dr. English 6-week spring semester session has concluded. Stay tuned for the return and further details of this program for the fall semester. Stop by I-Chat in Bldg. #13 anytime to learn more about this program as well as other upcoming programs hosted for all OGU students.



Flavor in Thailand by Sayuri Hiraoka

It is quite hot throughout the year in Thailand, so it makes you really tired even when you walk just a short distance. A Tuk Tuk is something that helps you to survive in the hot weather! Tuk Tuk is a three-wheel taxi that can accommodate up to 8 passengers at the same time. It has no windows and doors, so the wind feels so good when it is driving fast. Furthermore, in Bangkok especially, streets often become jammed, so a Tuk Tuk driving and weaving between cars is the fastest way to get to your destination. It is also a thrilling and fun ride. The fare is extremely cheap, so I recommend you to try it when you go to Thailand. However, you have to be careful of drivers asking you to pay an outrageous fare! (International Center Staff)



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