



International Relations SAIJO



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International Relations Saijo is a quarterly newsletter published in Japanese, English, and Vietnamese by the Saijo International Exchange Association (SIEA). We welcome your comments, questions and submissions.

~SIEA General Term Meeting Announcement~

- ◆Date: May 19, 2018 (Saturday) 13:00~
 - ◆Place: Saijo City Hall Main Building 5F Large Conference Room
- We will send details along with a postcard about the general term meeting in the mail. We humbly await the attendance of all of our members.
- < Completed 2017 SIEA Projects >
- ◆Public Language Courses (Chinese · Korean · Vietnamese · English)
 - ◆International Exchange Café (4/ year)
 - ◆Hawaiian Cultural Lesson (7/15)
 - ◆International Exchange Month (8/1~30)
 - ◆Halloween Party (10/28)
 - ◆Christmas Decoration Lesson (12/3)
 - ◆Square Dance Lesson (2/24)
 - ◆International Camp "English in Action" (3/23~25)
 - ◆Diana's Mini Courses (Mommy & Me, Let's Read Together, Translation Team, and Reading Club)
 - ◆Industry and Culture Festival (4/29)
 - ◆Young Leader Trip (7/20~8/5)
 - ◆Japanese Cooking Class (9/24)
 - ◆Industry Fair (11/11.12)
 - ◆Vietnamese Cuisine Experience (2/3)
 - ◆VIETNAM OSHOGATSU in SAIJO 2018 (3/18)

2018 Public Language Course Announcement

- Course Term: June 2018~March 2019
- ◆Chinese (Saturday · 20 classes per level)
 - Intermediate 13:30~15:00 / Beginner 15:30~17:00
- ◆Korean (Sunday · 20 classes per level)
 - Intermediate 13:20~14:50 / Beginner 15:10~16:40
- Eligibility: Able to attend over 70% of the course, falling under next stipulations.
 - ①Residing or commuting within the city
 - ②Member of SIEA
- Capacity: 20 people per course
- Location: Saijo Wellness Center (Sogo Fukushi Center)
- Course Fee: 6,000円 (SIEA Members: 5,000円)
- Application Period: May 1 (Tues.) ~ May 18 (Fri.)
- Applications & Inquiries: Saijo City Hall Main Building 3F Regional Promotion Division International Affairs Section SIEA Office TEL:0897-52-1206



※Courses are not taught by a specialist.
 ※English · Vietnamese courses are scheduled to begin in November.

★Event Snapshot★





Fajar Yulianto

★~★18th International Exchange Speech Contest ★~★

On December 24, 2017, the Tanbara International Exchange Association hosted a speech contest at the Tanbara Community Center. Foreign residents; elementary, middle, and high school students; and members of the Korean and Chinese Conversation Circles delivered speeches. A trainee from Indonesia, Fajar Yulianto, received the award of excellence and the Ehime Shimbun Company Award for his speech "Traditional Indonesian Culture: Wayang." Speech summary→→

Mr. Fajar Yulianto's Reflections

I have seen the Tanbara International Exchange Association speech contest twice. I was interested in the contest, and one day my teachers asked, "How about entering the speech contest?" I felt happy to participate.

I love Wayang (Indonesian shadow puppet theatre), so I decided to give a speech on it. I asked my father, an expert on Wayang, many questions, and I asked my Japanese friends about writing my draft. My friends taught me simple Japanese that would be easy for me express. My teacher also corrected my draft and guided me with correct pronunciation. I learned how to speak clearly and slowly in a loud voice, as well as how to pronounce difficult words.

During my speech, I felt nervous at first, but after some time I could relax and speak more confidently. Thanks to the help of many people, I received awards for my speech. I felt happy, and my family, company head, and friends were happy for me. I will never forget this experience.

My name is Fajar Yulianto. I am from the Banyumas Regency on Java Island. Indonesia has traditional festivals, dances, and clothing, etc. unique to each island.

You can find the traditional culture of "Wayang," theatre that uses puppets made from cowhide, on Java Island. Passed down from the 10th Century, Wayang is performed at least once a year to give thanks to the gods. Wayang performed in the afternoon is called *ruwatto*, and after a performance ends, everyone eats rice, coconuts, and peanuts before going home. Wayang tells tales such as the *Ramayana*, *Mahabharata*, and *Prince Panji*, but there are also depictions of other tales about the triumph of right over wrong. These tales teach us about what is just.

An individual called the *dalang* operates the puppets and performs various roles using as many as 50 different voices. The *dalang* must fast before performances. About 30 musicians called *nyoggo* play *kendhang* (drums), gongs, *kenong* (large standing gongs), and *saron* (metallophone). People who sing Javanese songs during Wayang theatre are called *shinden*. Ms. Yumi Kano, a Japanese woman who became a *shinden*, is very famous in Java.

On November 7, 2003, UNESCO listed Wayang as an Intangible Cultural Property of Indonesia. We Indonesians consider Wayang the pride of our traditional Indonesian culture.

Not only do I want to learn more about Japanese culture, but I also want to experience it with the Japanese people.

Q1. What is your name?

A1. Sara Yoshioka.

Q2. What grade are you in?

A2. 1st grade in elementary school.

Q4. How often did you practice before the day of the contest?

A4. After I completed my draft, I practiced for an hour every day from December 26th to the 30th.

Q7. What is your dream?

A7. As I said in my speech, I want to be an architect.

Q6. Do you study English regularly?

A6. I learn English during English conversation class. I do my homework, and I watch and listen to DVDs and CDs. I have loved English since I was very little!

Q3. Why did you decide to enter the speech contest?

A3. I saw the contest flyers distributed at my school and thought I would like to join.

Q8. How do you feel about the contest?

A8. It was difficult to memorize English, but I enjoyed drawing the house and presenting it to everyone. I want to enter the contest again next year!

Q5. Please share your speech with us.

A5. Hello. My name is Sara Yoshioka. I'm 7years old. I go to Saijo Elementary School. My favorite food is grape. It's tasty. I like to play with my friends. I like to swing. My favorite colors are yellow and purple. I have a family of four. My father, mother and a younger brother. I love my family.

When I grow up, I want to be a designer of the house. My father runs a construction company. I saw many nice houses. I like them. And I like to draw pictures. My favorite TV program is "Junintoiro". It is about houses. I can see many good one. It's fun. <Introduction of her drawing> I drew picture. This is my favorite house. It's simple. Many trees and plants. I will think and draw many houses to be a designer. I hope my dream will come true. Thank you.

NPO Regional Revitalization•Individualized Medical Care English Speech Contest

On Jan. 7, 2018 (Sun.), an English speech contest was hosted at the Saijo City Library. The contest had 3 levels: elementary, middle, and high school. Participants gave speeches on one of these themes: "My Hometown," "My Dream," and "My Family." Here is an interview with the winner of the elementary school student speeches, **Ms. Yoshioka!**

Excellent!



*** "Vietnam Tales I want to share with the people of Saijo!" ***

Currently 1,300 people from foreign countries live in Saijo. Technical trainees make about half of that number. The trainees learn about the advanced technology and expertise of Japan and expect to utilize these skills for the economic development of their mother countries upon their return. They not only hope to receive work training, but also to experience cultural exchange with the Japanese people and learn Japanese. After work or on weekends, the trainees diligently study Japanese with the Saijo citizens in the Volunteer Organization's Japanese classes. Awarded the merit of excellence in the 18th International Exchange Speech Contest, Fajar Yulianto is one such trainee from Indonesia. The 7 trainees who entered the contest wrote their speeches on themes like "My Home Country," "Encounters in Japan," and "Hopes for the Future," etc., reaching the hearts of the audience.



Tran Thuy An wearing Vietnamese Ao Dai

The Vietnamese trainee Ms. Tran Thuy An wrote her speech on the theme "My Favorite Person ~ My Mom." In her speech, she talks about memories with her mother, encounters in Japan, and her dreams. Because her father went abroad for work, her mother raised 3 children alone. Whatever troubles they faced, they always had love. The figure of An's kind yet resilient mother left a deep impression on her heart since her childhood. She wanted to support her mother who had endured so many hardships, so she resolved to work in Japan. At the present, she studies Japanese while working at a supermarket within the city. Her 3 years of training in Japan is not long, but she endeavors to make every moment of her experience meaningful. Once she returns to Vietnam, she intends to utilize her work experience and Japanese language abilities to find a good job. An thinks of her mother in Vietnam almost every day. One day she saw a Japanese woman in the supermarket who looked exactly like her mother from afar. Unfortunately, it was sudden and during her working hours, so she did not call out to her. Still, she looks forward to seeing the woman by chance once again, as she makes her feel as though her mother is also in Japan.

After I had heard the story of An's mother in Vietnam and her "mother in Japan", my heart felt wrought with emotion. While living in Saijo, somewhere in their hearts, the trainees are thinking about *home* and *family*. It seems that the people around the trainees often think that they are just working away from home; however, they came to study earnestly, hoping to use their new knowledge for their own futures and for the development of their home countries. I think that the people of Saijo have at times become a source of emotional support for the trainees. If you see them in town, please call out to them. By doing so, their lives in Saijo will feel richer and more enjoyable, and they will cultivate hearts of love for the city.

2018~2019

Membership Recruitment



【Annual Membership Fee】

Individual 1,000円, Student (until high school) 500円, Organization 10,000円

【Membership Period】 April 1, 2018 ~ March 31, 2019

【Enrollment Method】

(Current Members) We will send renewal guidelines in the mail. We hope you'll continue your membership!
(New Applicants) Complete membership form and submit to the SIEA office (Saijo City Hall International Affairs Section).

(Forms available at City Hall and public facilities like the community centers.)

Can also download from HP)

<<http://www.saijo-iea.jp/membership/>>



Saijo International Exchange Association membership 検索



2018 SIEA Project Proposal Recruitment!

Thanks to all our members for last year's many proposals! We will continue to host festive activities promoting international exchange. Have you ever thought "I want to do something like this!" or "A non-Japanese person might be troubled by this"? We look forward to your determination and ideas! (Refer to pg.1 for 2017's events)

◆Target: SIEA members (org. • all individuals)

◆Contents: Proposals for international exchange in Saijo City

◆Application Method: Submit "Saijo City International Exchange Association Project Proposal" to SIEA office (Please call or email for consultation)

◆Submission Deadline: March 30 (Fri.)

◆Board of directors will review the applicants



Dates with Diana

A Meaningless Comparison

I'd like to discuss a fundamental component of deepening intercultural understanding and effectively communicating with people from different countries, ethnicities, cultures, and backgrounds. There is no comparison between people's pain and suffering.

People rarely express in words sincere pain, rather, the action of putting their feelings into words makes the reality more tangible and gives negative emotions life. Though not without consequences, it is more common to hide pain from others. Should someone breathe life into their problems by speaking about them, it is proof of their trust in you. However, should you say, "Your suffering is nothing in comparison to that of others" in response, you will lose that person's trust in an instant. It will be unlikely for that person to reveal the troubles within their hearts to you a second time.

I raise this issue because racial discrimination within American society has had a large impact on my life. Thanks to the unrelenting efforts and unconditional love of my parents, I grew up in a blessed environment. Even so, my family is not fully protected from the realities of racial discrimination. Should I find myself growing closer to you, I may talk about my experiences of discrimination and social problems related to discrimination. Sometimes I would like to halve the

burden of my troubles with a close friend rather than carry the weight on my own. I don't pity myself, yet someone that I had once wanted to trust had said to me, "Racial discrimination exists among white people too, so it isn't just an issue for black people," and continued to make comparisons. Despite having never faced a similar form of discrimination and despite having little knowledge of the social problems born from a history of slavery and restrictions of civil liberties, she belittled the problems of the black American community, our pain, our fears. To protect myself and to face everyday life, I built a wall between us.

Comparisons of pain are not only disrespectful, but also meaningless. Asking, "Who experiences the worst form of discrimination?" leads us nowhere and pulls us apart. We should be asking, "What barriers are created by institutionalized discrimination? How do we address those barriers? What community endeavors are necessary to overcome the bullying, violence, and fatigue engendered from psychological discrimination?"

Should someone open up to you, don't make comparisons of their problems. If you want others to understand the pain of a group of people for which you are concerned, do not elevate their suffering above that of others. We may not be able to eliminate discrimination, but people who give up have not considered the perspective of others who suffer from it. Deepen understanding by stepping into the shoes of another.

Events & Announcements

Message from the Saijo International Exchange Association

① 「VIETNAM OSHOGATSU IN SAIGO 2018」

Reenact Vietnamese New Year's Day in Saijo with Saijo's CIR Anh Thy!

- ◆Date : March 18 (Sun.) 10:00~14 : 00
- ◆Place : Tanbara Community Center (Kouminkan)
- ◆Capacity : first 15 applicants
- ◆Cost : 300円 (Members) 500円 (Non-members)
- ◆Application Period : March 1 (Thurs.) ~ March 9 (Fri.)
- ※ Please bring an apron and a bandana.

②International Exchange Camp "English in Action"

The Saijo International Exchange Association will host an international exchange camp. Immerse yourself in English with non-Japanese residents over 2 nights and 3 days! People with weaker English skills are also welcome! Strengthen your English skills while having fun.

- ◆Date : March 23 (Fri.) gather at 14:30
March 25 (Sun.) conclude at 15:00
- ◆Place : Omachi Community Center (Kouminkan)
- ◆Eligibility : 1st year middle school students~2nd year high school students (Saijo residents or students commuting to schools in Saijo)
- ◆Capacity : first 20 applicants
- ◆Cost : 5,000円 (Board · Food · Supplies)
- ◆Application Period : March 1 (Thurs.) ~ March 9 (Fri.)

Volunteer Recruitment

○International Camp

March 23~25

If you are interested, please contact the SIEA office for details!

○Industry and Culture Festival

April 29 9:00~15:00

Simple assistance as usual would be greatly appreciated!



①②Please direct inquiries to the SIEA office.

TEL : 0897-52-1206/ Email : kokusai@saijo-city.jp

Editor
Notes

This time, I wanted to introduce a more serious theme, but I still feel fortunate to have meaningful experiences and encounters in Saijo. I hope we can continue to learn from each other's experiences! (夕)

International Relations Saijo Staff

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Read in full
color !

