



International Relations SAIJO



Vol.22
March 2019

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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~

◆When: June 1, 2019 (Saturday) 13:00~

◆Where: Saijo City Hall Main Building 5F Large Conference Room

Details will be sent along with a postcard for attendance in the mail.

We humbly await the participation of all of our members.

<SIEA Projects Completed in 2018-2019>

◆Public Language Courses (Chinese • Korean • Vietnamese • English)

◆International Exchange Café (4/ year) ◆Industry and Culture Festival (4/29)

◆Disaster Prevention Course (6/30) ◆Chinese Cooking Class (7/14)

◆Saijo and Hue Friendship City International Understanding Lecture (8/19)

◆International Bake Off! (8/22)

◆Having Fun Learning about the World (8/26)

◆Scottish Culture Lesson (8/29)

◆Japanese Cooking Class (9/1)

◆Vietnam Mid-Autumn Harvest (9/8)

◆Thinking about Cuisine, Japan and the World with 1 Cup of Coffee (9/29)

◆International Understanding Lecture (Germany) (10/3)

◆Halloween Party (10/27)

◆Saijo Industry Fair (11/10.11)

◆Vietnamese Ikebana Class (12/9)

◆Fair Trade Class (12/15)

◆Conversations with the People of Vietnam (1/19)

◆Vietnam OSHOGATSU in Saijo (2/16)

◆Mini Courses

(Let's Read Together, Translation Team, Reading Club, and Saijo Fan Club Tour Guides)

<2019-2020 SIEA Project Proposal Submissions>

This year, we will continue to plan 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!

◆Target: SIEA members (organizations • individuals • students)

◆Contents: Project proposals for international exchange in Saijo City

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

◆Submission Deadline: March 29 (Fri.) ◆Submission Place: SIEA office

◆Decision Method: Board of directors will review the applications and make a decision.

【Annual Membership Fee】

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

Organization 10,000円

【Membership Period】 April 1, 2019~ March 31, 2020

【Enrollment Method】(Current Members) We will send renewal guidelines in the mail. Hope you will continue your membership!

(New Applicants) Complete membership form and submit to SIEA office (Saijo City International Affairs Section). (Forms available at city facilities and for download online)

<<https://www.city.saijo.ehime.jp/soshiki/somu/kokusaikoryu-boshu.html>>

Saijo International Exchange Association membership

2019-2020 Membership Recruitment



<Tanbara International Exchange Association Report>

On December 16, the Tanbara Community Center hosted the International Exchange Speech Contest. Local Japanese and non-Japanese residents gathered to demonstrate the results of their foreign language study. Enjoying its 19th run, the speech contest evolved from the goal of deepening intercultural understanding.

Non-Japanese residents; elementary, middle, and high school students; and members of the Korean and Chinese Conversation Circles delivered speeches. This year, Toni Wibowo won first place. Given in fluent Japanese, his speech, "The River in Our Hometown: Bengawan Solo," painted a picture of the Indonesian landscape in our minds.



<English Speech Contest>

NPO Regional Revitalization•Individualized Medical Care and the Saijo Boy Scouts Association hosted the 3rd English Speech Contest at the Saijo Library on January 14. The groups endeavor to discover internationally motivated adolescents and create an environment for their academic cultivation. It was a full house with so many people that guests had to watch while standing. First, there were presentations on the international study tour to Seattle, USA, language training in New Zealand, and life in the study abroad program at Canterbury University. The organizers even used the internet to connect to the venue in New Zealand for a question and answer session. Then, the English speech contest began. The 12 elementary, junior high school and senior high school students gave their speeches passionately. After the speech contest, a social gathering was held at the SICS Salon (Saijo Industry & Information Centre for Support) in the evening to give the participants more time to deepen the exchange.



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※Change the ● to @ when emailing.



Saijo International Exchange Volunteer Association Activities

Every Saturday night, we hold "Japanese Class" through which Japanese and non-Japanese residents enjoy a fun cultural exchange.

We divide into several groups during our class. For example, there is a group preparing for the Japanese Proficiency Exam with a textbook, one studying work-related Japanese, and one for light conversation.

We will be approaching our 23rd year of activity, and we currently have members from many countries, including Vietnam, Indonesia, the Philippines, South Korea, etc., and from various fields of work.

Japanese residents, non-Japanese residents, how about joining us Saturday night for a relaxing session of intercultural exchange? Even if it's just once, please join us! We also host ohanami (flower viewing) get-togethers, barbecues, cooking classes, and various other events!

【When】Saturday 19:30~21:00

【Where】Saijo Sogo Fukushi Center 3F(324-2 Kanbai-kou, Saijo) ※Depending on availability, session may be at another venue or cancelled, so please make an inquiry beforehand.

【Annual Fee】 Non-Japanese resident 300円

Japanese resident•Adult 2,000円

Japanese resident•Below Senior HS 500円

【Facebook】<https://www.facebook.com/skv1995saijo/>



Introduction to Vietnamese Ikebana

On December 9 (Sun.), Ms. Thuy, a trainee from Vietnam, introduced Vietnamese ikebana. We would like to express our heartfelt thanks to the director of Ono Farm, where Ms. Thuy currently works, and his wife who keep updated on SIEA events and took part in this class.

Although the term “Ikebana” is not used in Vietnam, we deliberately say “ikebana” instead of “flower arrangement” to convey the cultural practice to a Japanese audience.

The Vietnamese people consider flowers special, and there are many opportunities to give them as presents. October 20 is a particularly special day for Vietnamese people; it is called “Vietnam Women’s Day.” Like the Japanese White Day custom, Vietnamese men give flowers to women at the office or at home. According to Ms. Thuy’s explanation, even if Vietnam and flowers are divided or cut, relationships do not sever. It is said that Japanese ikebana values the beauty of blank space and maintains the vitality of nature, while Vietnamese ikebana seems to fill the blank space.

Many local residents collaborated with us to make this event a success. We are grateful to the participants who provided pine from their gardens and to Ms. Thuy’s neighbors who provided various leaves.

Lastly, we would like to include a few words from Ms. Thuy about her experience, as they leave a deep impression.

“Before I came to Japan, I experienced grave personal strife, so coming to Japan was especially meaningful for me. Although it is important to earn money while I am here, I have received so much generosity from those at Ono Farm, my place of work, that, as a trainee, I feel that I have gained so much more than just an income and knowledge of Japan’s advanced technical skills. As I have experienced intercultural exchange with the local people and absorbed so much kindness, I feel nothing but sincere gratitude for the meaningful livelihood I have been able to cultivate here. I will continue to give my best effort.” (Ms. Thuy)



☆ Conversations with the People of Vietnam ☆

On Jan. 19, we held a session for local residents to speak with Vietnamese residents at the Fukushi Center. First, Mr. Kyoza Teramachi gave a presentation on his experience of the 2015 and 2017 Hue Traditional Crafts Festival, so many participants seemed interested in attending the next festival. City personnel also explained plans for the 2019 festival and details regarding SIEA members’ ability to apply for a grant assisting exchange between our friendship cities. Contact the SIEA office if you are interested in the Hue Festival.

Afterwards, 3 Vietnamese residents in Saijo, Phung Thi Nhuong, Nguyen Van Tuan and Khong Thi Thuy, gave speeches in Japanese. They talked about working in Saijo while living apart from their families, differences between their expectations and the reality of making a living in Japan, their initial inability to communicate in Japanese, and the differences between Vietnam and Japan. Though they have faced many difficulties, they tackled them head-on. Meeting kind-hearted Japanese people has been a great source of support for them. Although Ms. Nhuong and Mr. Tuan will be returning to Vietnam soon, they intend to make use of their experiences in Japan in their future careers. Ms. Thuy will be here for another year and a half so she intends to enjoy more cultural exchange opportunities by improving upon her Japanese language skills. Through this exchange, the Vietnamese residents could impart some of their feelings to the local Japanese people, so we hope to carry out more cultural exchange opportunities with the community so that we can develop more intercultural understanding.



Mr. Kyoza Teramachi provides information on the Hue Festival.



Many of the participants are interested in the Hue Festival.



Mr. Tuan who climbed Mt. Ishizuchi



Ms. Nhuong who loves the city of Saijo



Ms. Thuy experiencing Japanese culture first-hand in Saijo City.



Cultural Bridges

On Jan. 25 (Fri.), Saijo City Hall Regional Promotion Division collaborated with the Saijo branch of Kuraray Co., Ltd. to host an international exchange gathering. At present, foreign nationals comprise about 1/3 of the Kuraray staff in and out of Japan, and having come from different cultural backgrounds, their common language is English. Members of the Kuraray staff are proactively creating opportunities for English conversation, so that Japanese staff members may gain confidence and overcome current language barriers. With this goal as an incentive, the first international exchange gathering was held the other day. From this point forward, Saijo City Hall and Kuraray hope to create more opportunities for international ex-

change that are inclusive of the greater population of foreign nationals in Saijo, so that we may increase intercultural understanding and improve upon English conversational skills.

This opportunity for cultural exchange happens to include the chance to use English, but I know there are many people who don't feel comfortable communicating in English. With globalization, English language abilities are definitely a useful tool, but it is essential that we deepen intercultural understanding. Language barriers only amount to one of the obstacles in encounters with people from different nations. There are many other hurdles to overcome, for example, cultural differences, mutual prejudices, and the tendency to oversimplify tensions between foreign nationals as "differences in culture." After all, tensions can arise from personal differences between people of different nations just as they can between people of the same nation.

When misunderstandings arise, it can be difficult to ascertain the source of the problem; however, if you can consider this a part of what makes intercultural exchange interesting, then you will be able to brave encounters with people from all over the world without fear, while increasing your capacity for effective communication. Whether you can or cannot speak English, anyone who makes a conscious effort toward intercultural understanding is a Coordinator for International Exchange.



Events & Announcements

2019-2020 Public Language Courses

- Course Term: June 2019~March 2020
- ◆ Chinese (Saturday • 20 classes per level)
- Intermediate 13:30~15:00/ Beginner 15:30~17:00
- ◆ Korean (Sunday • 20 classes per level)

ATTENTION! Class times have changed this year!

Intermediate 9:15~10:45/ Beginner 10:55~12:25

○ Eligibility: Able to attend over 70% of the course, falling under these stipulations:

- ① Residing or commuting to the city
- ② Member of SIEA

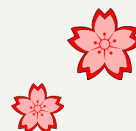
- Capacity: 20 people per course
- Location: Saijo Sogo Fukushima Center
- Course Fee: 6,000円 (SIEA Members: 5,000円)
- Application Period: May 7 (Tue.) ~ May 21 (Tue.)
- Applications & Inquiries: SIEA Office
- TEL: 0897-52-1206

※ Courses are not taught by specialists.
 ※ English • Vietnamese courses are scheduled to begin in November.

ELIS Saijo English Volunteers International Understanding Lecture

Theme: "Scotland and Japan's Influence"

- ◆ When: March 16, 13:30~15:00
- ◆ Where: Saijo Sogo Fukushima Center
- ◆ Lecturer: Megan Hammersly
- ◆ No reservations necessary



Editor Notes

This is the final publication for the fiscal year. We owe a great debt to all our members. In 2018, the scope of the SIEA activities expanded tenfold. At the office, I sensed that the number of students interested in our activities increased as well. Through the international exchange events over the year, we welcomed more student volunteers and made a step forward in the revitalization of the region. We hope that we will be able to expand upon our international endeavors with the support of our members during the upcoming fiscal year. (石)

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Read in full
color ! ➡

