



International Relations SAIJO

Vol. 30
July 2021

Nonprofit Organization
Saijo International Exchange Association

西条市国際交流協会

NPO SIEA held its 2021 General Meeting.



On May 29, 2021, SIEA held its first general meeting as an NPO in the large conference room on the 5th floor in Saijo City Hall. To prevent the spread of COVID-19, a written resolution was also prepared.

At the meeting, last year's operational and financial reports, as well as officer positions for this year, were discussed and approved after much deliberation.

2021 will be SIEA's first year as an NPO. In order to help bring about a global and multicultural society, SIEA will work even harder to foster cross-cultural communication and international understanding, so we look forward to your continued support.

We can't wait to meet you all at next year's general meeting!

※One of our 2020 events. More info can be found on our homepage.

Our 1st
Super Fun English
Family Trivia Night
Sep. 25, 2021 (Sat.) 18:00
Place: Komatsu Community Center
Fee: 1,000 yen per group

COMING
SOON!



※More details will be in the Saijo City September newsletter.

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Become an SIEA Member for 2021!

Every year, SIEA recruits new members interested in cross-cultural activities. Paying membership dues is one way to help support SIEA and get involved.

【Yearly Dues】Individuals: 1,000 yen, Students (up to HS) 500 yen, Groups 10,000 yen

【Membership Length】Day of Sign-up ~ March 31, 2022

【Application Process】

After filling out the Member Application Form, please submit it to the SIEA office.

(Download the form from the official websites of City Hall, every Branch Office, or every Community Center, or the SIEA homepage.)

※ Members receive information on SIEA activities, the SIEA newsletter, and discounts on SIEA events. For more information, please contact the SIEA office.



**SI
EA**

International Relations SAIJO is a newsletter published by the Saijo International Exchange Association (SIEA). Feel free to contact us with your comments, questions, and submission requests.

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Towards a Multicultural Society



At SIEA, we believe in a future where “people of various nationalities and ethnicities can come together to acknowledge their cultural differences, treat each other with respect, and build a better society.”*

SIEA will do its utmost to bring the world to our tight-knit community.

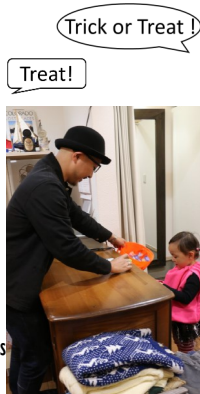
*MIC: Multiculturalism Promotion Research Report

1

International Understanding Activities

We offer local and foreign residents opportunities to experience each other's cultures, deepen their global knowledge and understanding of other cultures, and develop a cooperative, international consciousness.

- Int'l Exchange Cafe
- Int'l Understanding Lectures
- Language Courses
- Halloween Party
- Agricultural Fair
- Reading Club
- Int'l Cooking Classes



2

Friendship Building Activities

To promote a more holistic worldview, we offer dispatch opportunities and international exchange opportunities for ambitious youth through which they can experience different ways of thinking and cultures and learn about a variety of ideas.

- Young Leaders Training
- Friendship City
- Int'l Understanding Lectures
- Online Exchanges
- Visits From Hebei University



3

Activities for a More Multicultural Society

We promote mutual understanding by offering language instruction support and opportunities to learn about Japanese culture and the local area so that foreign residents can enjoy a more comfortable life in Saijo.

- Introductions to Japanese Language Courses
- Team Translation
- Japanese Cooking Classes
- Saijo Fan Club Tours

※ Due to COVID-19, some of these activities may be postponed or canceled. For more information, please contact the SIEA office.

Saijo Int'l Exchange Get Involved with Int'l Exchange! Saijo Int'l Exchange

At SIEA, we're always looking for volunteers who want to get involved in international exchange activities, including translation, interpretation,

①

Language Volunteers

Language volunteers use their language abilities to help with translation, interpretation, and other related activities.

②

Homestay Volunteers

Homestay volunteers act as host families for international students during their stay.

③

Event Planning Volunteers

Event planning volunteers help with international exchange events like the Agricultural Fair or the Halloween Party.



How to Volunteer



Get a form from the SIEA page or office

Fill in the form and submit to the office

※Applying by e-mail is also acceptable.

Get contacted by SIEA with event details and participate

※Details are arranged on a case-by-case basis.

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Het is een goed weer Vandaag.



2021.07

Welcome to Belgium!

(Writer) Honami Dewerchin

(Editor) Kondo

非常好吃！

Dat is heerlijk

Esta muy rico.

맛있어요

स्वादिष्ट

Ngon quá!

An absolutely phenomenal view of the city!



België wafel chocolade

Convenience stores and snack aisles often stock Belgian chocolates and Belgian waffles, so for many Japanese people, Belgium means chocolate and not much else. So let's dive deeper. What kind of national personality do Belgians have? What is Belgium in the first place? Having lived in Belgium for two years, allow me to show you Belgium through my eyes.

Belgium is a relatively new country, having declared its independence in 1830, and its area and population are roughly the same as Kyushu. The official languages are Dutch, French, and German, and many Belgians can speak other languages like English with ease.

The best waffles in the world



Royal Galleries, Historic Centre of Brugge, Belfort en Hallen

People often describe Belgians as by-the-book and insular, just like the Japanese people. However, it's a different story when soccer events like the FIFA World Cup or the Euros come around. During this time, Belgians decorate their homes and cars with the Belgian flag, as loud cheers for the Red Devils* echo from bars and homes.

Even though Belgium is mostly known for its sweets here in Japan, it is also the birthplace of French fries. It is famous for its gourmet cuisine, which, just like its official languages, is influenced by its neighboring countries. Besides Belgian cuisine, its restaurants offer many delicious dishes from around the world.



Good weather in Antwerp.

※The Belgian national football team



Honami D

<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCUPFe-WcR2Bnbo6dnIkong>

COVID-19 VS.

Lastly, regarding COVID-19, as of early July, over 45% of the Belgian population has been vaccinated and the northern parts of Belgium are now designated as low-risk areas. After nearly half a year of strict lockdowns, many Belgians are finally enjoying the freedom of summer, drinking beers with their friends on cafe terraces and in public parks.

Because of COVID-19, it's hard to live a "normal" life, no matter where you are in the world. As long as we consider the environment and the people around us, enjoy life, and do what we can to the best of our ability, a bright future will await us. I'm sure of it.

Honami Dewerchin

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To the People of SIEA

In early June, I finished my term as CIR and went back home to Vietnam. Thank you for everything these last 4 years.

Just like many Vietnamese people, I've admired Japan ever since I was little, and studied Japanese in college. In recent years, Japanese companies have increasingly expanded into the Vietnamese market, and the Japanese government is letting more Vietnamese exchange students and technical interns into the country. I was very lucky to have entered the job market when being able to speak Japanese meant being able to find a good job. While I was working at a company as a member of society, I started thinking to myself, "I want to be helpful." At that time, I learned about working in Japan as a CIR and introducing many people to Vietnamese culture and the Vietnamese people. On one hand, I wanted to know how Vietnamese people in Japan could be recognized as members of Japanese society, not only through my own efforts, and on the other, I wanted to be useful in any way possible so that the people around me would accept me.

As a CIR, I felt blessed to have many opportunities to promote cultural exchanges with Vietnam and Austria, set up friendship city agreements, and support foreign residents. Besides my usual work, I also planned and took part in SIEA events. I tried my best to create an environment where Vietnamese people and local residents could interact with each other. Many SIEA members and local residents helped with these events, too.

At cultural introduction events, local Vietnamese residents helped in many ways, including searching for cooking ingredients. After work, they always came to help with Vietnamese language lectures, too. Even when Japanese residents taking the language courses complained about how hard learning Vietnamese was, they kept on coming because it was fun interacting with Vietnamese people. Some of them even said that through these interactions, they could understand Vietnamese people better and wanted to support foreigners more.

Vietnamese Interns Introducing Vietnam at the Agricultural Fair



People from Vietnam and other foreign countries didn't come to Japan to work just because they wanted to live a better life. Some are working to help send their siblings to college. Some are saving because they want to start their own businesses and succeed. No matter how tough the work is, or how short the stay is, Japan is a wonderful country for people to visit. Many people dream about going to Japanese colleges. Every day, after work, they study Japanese, and on weekends, they study some more through volunteer Japanese classes. The volunteer Japanese teachers are the ones supporting them the whole way, too. Their kindness is heartwarming and precious for foreigners. On the other hand, many find it difficult to participate in cross-cultural activities or Japanese language classes because of company circumstances or situations at work. This is because some companies dislike interactions with Japanese people or other foreigners. Many Vietnamese people are also too busy with work, with most of their days spent just going back and forth between home and work. Some communities just become isolated. There is still a lot of work to do before anything gets changed, but I definitely hope volunteer Japanese classes and cross-cultural activities will continue to be held in the future.

I originally came to Japan because I wanted to be helpful to people. After coming to Saijo, I met kind Japanese people, and they helped me a lot. I also met young Vietnamese people filled with energy who motivated me to keep doing my best. Thanks to everyone, I was able to have a very meaningful time in Saijo. Thank you from the bottom of my heart. If you get a chance to come to Vietnam, let me know. Let's meet again soon!

By Former CIR Nguyen Bui Anh Thy



International Relations INFO

VIETNAMESE CLASSES

★ ★ ★
★ ★ ★ **APPLY NOW!**

【Place】 Saijo City Welfare Center

【Target Audience】 City residents or employees; SIEA members.
Able to attend more than 70% of classes.

【Fees】 7,000 yen (SIEA members: 5,000 yen) Textbooks not included.

【Term】 October 2021 ~ July 2022 (15 sessions, 2 sessions per month)

※This is not a professional course. It may be changed to an online format at any time.

※More information on applications will be posted in the Saijo City September newsletter.

Editorial Comments

This is Kondo, and I'll be in charge of International Relations SAIJO from this volume onwards.
I look forward to working with all of you.

International Relations SAIJO Staff:

Minoru Tokumasu
Kondo

Readable in
Full Color! 🖨️



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