

Japan National Student Association Fund

Activity Name	English Campaign			
Dates	August 3, 2009 to August 5, 2009			
Location	Hachimantai Junior High School, Kazuno City, Akita Prefecture and Dai-ni Junior High School, Aizuwakamatsu City, Fukushima Prefecture			
Participants	International Students	Residents, Corporation	Host Organization (Fund Students)	Total
	10	Approx. 160	47	Approx. 220

<Activity Details>

The following is a description of the English Campaign, one of the four activities conducted as part of the Nakajima support project.

The English Campaign hosted by the Japan National Student Association Fund. International students also participate as members of JUSCO, an international student exchange organization under the umbrella of the Fund. This year, approximately 60 members of the organization, including 10 international students, divided into two groups and visited junior high schools in Akita and Fukushima Prefectures. The JNSA English Campaign boasts a long history, and this was the 46th hosting of the event. Sponsors included the newspaper Yomiuri Shimbun and Coca Cola.



The Fukushima group

The English Campaign was launched in conjunction with the hosting of the HIH Prince Takamado Trophy All Japan Inter-Middle School English Oratorical Contest, for the purpose of enabling Japan National Student Association Fund committee members to travel to rural areas and contribute to the development of English language education. These efforts are founded on the desire to expand activities geared toward junior high school students who have gathered from areas nationwide, and who have relatively high-level English proficiency, as well as activities targeting junior high students who have few opportunities for interaction with international students, in rural areas in particular. With each year, the breadth of variety in the event grows, and we have settled into the practice of visiting two of the hopeful junior highs from around the nation every year.



Three international student participants (making preparations)

This year, accompanied by 10 international students, we visited Hachimantai Junior High School in Kazuno City, Akita Prefecture, and Dai-ni Junior High School in Aizuwakamatsu City, Fukushima Prefecture. At the two schools, we conducted activities using English for a large number of students, and were able to have the opportunity for a significant amount of interaction with local residents through homestay and other activities.

The three-day program at each junior high started with an English language ice-breaker. There were many events, including the "Forest Professor Project" (a program from sponsor Coca Cola), breakout meetings for each group, and research presentations on the final day. At first, the junior high students were nervous, but by the final day they had opened up to us and had even grown to the point of being able to present their research in fine English. We were able to have even more international students participate this time than in previous years, and the opportunities for interaction with junior high students and other local residents were also greater than usual.



Fukushima group classroom



Akita group classroom activities

Rural areas provide almost no opportunities to associate with foreigners during daily life, and currently, foreign teachers are sent from the school board only a few times each month. For junior high students in such circumstances, the experience of actually trying to communicate with foreigners using the English they normally learn in school was sure to bear immeasurable fruit. In addition, although there are things that international students can learn in Tokyo, they have very few opportunities to actually visit Japan's rural areas and interact with local junior high students and other residents.

The chance to associate with local residents for purposes other than sightseeing, and come into contact with the site of English language education in Japan's rural regions, as was the case this time, was a very stimulating and valuable experience for the international students.

In this manner, the English Campaign is not merely an activity to teach English to junior high school students, but in recent years has grown particularly into an activity that provides the opportunity for interaction between a large number of local residents (with participants increasingly diversifying from junior high students to elementary and high school students as well), international students, and those of us who are Japanese students from the Tokyo area. In the future as well, we will of course aim to popularize and expand English language education in rural areas, but we would also like to conduct activities focused on association with local residents.

<Comments from The Participants>

Giancarlos Troncoso Parady (The Dominican Republic),The University of Tokyo

The overall experience of the English Campaign in Fukushima was very positive. I personally enjoyed the opportunity of interacting with Junior High School students and helping them to improve their language skills. As for the organizing party, I am very pleased with the teamwork spirit that joins all the JNSA and JUSCO members. I'm really looking forward to the next campaign.



Fukushima group junior high and international student participants

Mahesti Okitasari (Indonesia),The University of Tokyo

What I remembered clearly from the English Campaign group work session was the students' enthusiasm. All the students in our group were eager to deliver their ideas for the next day presentation. On the D-Day, we hurried a lot to prepare the presentation in a very short time and at the end I was so proud of the students. They did a marvelous presentation!! But what made me happy the most was the fact that the students were no longer shy and tried to speak English with me. At the end, I hope everyone enjoyed the campaign with my presence, and this English campaign brought tons of unforgettable memories.