

Miyagi International Association

Activity Name	MIA Friendship Family Program			
Date	November 7, 2009 (Sat)			
Location	Kurihara City Wakayanagi General Culture Center in Miyagi Prefecture, Ramsar Park Plaza			
Participants	International Students	Residents, Corporation	Other	Total
	37	0	94	131

<Activity Details>

<MIA Friendship Family Program>

This is a program that connects international students living in Miyagi Prefecture to Friendship Families in the area.

We aim to provide opportunities for international students to interact with Friendship Families and experience Japanese culture and life in an effort to deepen mutual understanding. International students and Friendship Families are introduced to each other at an initial get-together. After that, they are able to schedule their own time together. (The program does not require a Friendship Family to act as a home stay family for an international student.)



Imoni cookout



Meeting their Friendship Families for the first time

<Initial Get-Together>

The initial get-together for 2009 was held on November 7 in Kurihara City, located in northern Miyagi. Kurihara City is known for Izu Marsh where swans stop during their migration. 37 international students and 81 Friendship Family members gathered to meet one another on the day of the event.

After we got acquainted with each other, we moved to the Ramsar Park Plaza near Izu Marsh to enjoy our imoni (taro root soup) cookout, which is a autumn tradition in Miyagi. Sitting around the pot and enjoying the wonderful imoni put international students at ease in no time. We all became friends with each other so quickly that it was hard to believe that we had just met that day.

During the free time after the imoni cookout, the international students spent some quality time with their Friendship Families and enjoyed the Miyagi autumn, strolling around Izu Marsh, bird watching, admiring autumn flowers, and so on. Although the event was short, we all enjoyed ourselves in the nice weather.



Lecture about Izu and Uchi Marshes

<Comments from The Participants>

•It was great! I would love to have more opportunities to meet Japanese families in the future.
(Male student from Mongolia)

•I was very happy to meet my Friendship Family. I hope to spend more with them from now on.
(Female student from China)

•I'm thankful for such an opportunity.
Thank you for providing food for Muslims as well.
(Male student from Indonesia)