

Okayama Prefectural International Exchange Foundation

Activity Name	International Student Exchange Programs			
Dates	From April 25, 2009 (Sat) to January 23, 2010 (Sat)			
Location	Okayama International Center and other locations			
Participants	International Students	Residents, Corporation	Other	Total
	96	169	24	289

*Other: University officials, affiliated organizations, and staff members

<Activity Details>

We have implemented the following three programs in an effort to promote the interaction and better mutual understanding between international students and the people of Okayama, as well as to support international students in obtaining employment in Japan.

① International Exchange Bus Tour around Okayama

We chartered a bus and toured the landmarks of Kibichuo Town and Takanashi City in Okayama on October 4, 2009, with 34 international students residing in the prefecture and 5 Japanese volunteers. We visited a Memorial Hall for Kaheita Okazaki who dedicated himself to Sino-Japanese friendship, the beautiful garden at Raikyu-ji Temple, and Fukiya Furusato-Mura, a traditional village known for its streets lined with red ochre (reddish brown) buildings. The tour provided an opportunity for the students to discover a different side of Okayama.



Bus Tour (Introducing ourselves to everyone)

During our bus ride, we warmed up to each other by introducing ourselves and shared some fun learning to sing Japanese songs such as "Momo-Taro" and taking a quiz about Okayama.

As we met each other for the first time, we struck up conversations and enjoyed the interaction. We also talked about the culture and history of Okayama and Japan to increase our understanding of both.



African Social Event (International students speaking about their home countries)

② Get-togethers for International Students and the People of Okayama (Malaysian, Taiwanese, and African social events)

Between July 22, 2009 and January 23, 2010, we held three get-togethers to facilitate interaction between international students and residents in Okayama. For the first two events, we invited international students living in Okayama to speak about the history and culture of their home countries. The first event was focused on Malaysia and Malaysian students, while the second was about Taiwan. We also enjoyed practicing how to greet people and introduce ourselves in Malay and Chinese, which is used in Taiwan, with international students. In addition, we tried homemade desserts brought by international students, who also taught us how to prepare Malaysian black tea and Taiwanese tea.

We took a slightly different approach for our third event featuring Africa. We deepened our understanding about countries in Africa through listening to a keynote speech by an instructor who once lived in Africa, as well as a panel discussion that included four African students. African students also performed music and dance from their countries, entertaining everyone in the audience.

③ International Students/Employer Matching Program in Okayama

We held a job seminar for international students on April 25, 2009 to help their future job hunting efforts. The seminar provided guidance on how to look for and obtain employment, taught basic business manners, and offered information about the processes required for obtaining employment, such as changing resident status. The international students also had an opportunity to listen to fellow international students already employed at companies in Okayama. Following the seminar was the "Presentations by International Students" event on June 5.



Matching International Students with Employers (Speech)

International students made presentations to human resource representatives from local companies, speaking in Japanese about the results of their research at the universities and their motivation for work. There were discussion sessions afterwards for students to talk with the participating company representatives. These events helped international students and companies to better understand each other, and promoted employment of international students at local companies.

<Comments from The Participants>



Taiwanese Social Event (International students explaining how to drink tea)

② At the Malaysian Social Event, there was a discussion about the differences between Malaysian and Japanese cultures. It was very fascinating and interesting. Ms. Azli, one of the Malaysian students, was very humorous when she spoke. The event had such a fun atmosphere. Her guitar music and song, on the other hand, evoked such a sense of melancholy that I was truly able to experience exotic sentiments. I also enjoyed seeing other international students wearing their ethnic attire. Furthermore, I got to taste homemade snacks brought by international students with Malaysian sweet tea. They were delicious!

(Takashi Kuramoto/Japan)



Malaysian Social Event (International students introducing their home countries)



Matching International Students with Employers (Discussion Sessions)

③ The program to match international students with employers was extremely valuable. They set up an opportunity for international students to speak in front of company representatives and chat with them afterwards in order to facilitate our employment. I think it would be great if there were more companies at the discussion sessions.

(Kou Kin/China)