

Come HIA

Learning the Threat of Natural Disasters and Utilization of Evacuation Centers

On September 1st, 2019, Hyogo prefecture and the Harima region jointly hosted the disaster drill at the Tatsuno Municipal Gymnasium and the riverbed of the Ibo River. At the drill, HIA and the Tatsuno International Association held a lecture on disaster prevention for foreign residents. Companies accepting foreign trainees also joined the lecture, and more than 30 foreign residents participated on the day of the drill.

First, participants received an explanation about earthquakes, heavy rain and suchlike disasters in "Simple Japanese". Then city officials gave a mini-session of disaster prevention and talked about the evacuation centers that people use in the event of disasters. After that they tried CPR and making cardboard beds at the booths provided by affiliated organizations, and also got on an earthquake simulation vehicle to experience an earthquake of seismic intensity 7. They learned what disasters are like and how to prepare and deal with them with both seriousness and enjoyment. It was a valuable day for foreign residents to recognize the importance of being ready for an emergency.



Filling out "Registration card for Evacuation Center"



Above: Practicing CPR
Below: Having a try at the cardboard bed



HIA Volunteer Interpreters/Translators Workshop

Learning the Translation Skills Required in a Disaster

HIA has a lot of volunteer interpreters/translators registered, and when a disaster occurs, we ask them for help to act as interpreters at disaster multilingual support centers set up by HIA or the government, or with evacuation center patrols. On February 16th, a workshop for disaster translation and interpreting was held for said volunteers. They learned methods of information communication for foreigners and performed a role-play to simulate some topics of consultation assumed at time of disasters.

Masayoshi Okubo, a guest lecturer from the NPO National Council for Multicultural Corporate Manager, showed some initiatives based on real experience in other regions as well as useful terms for during disasters. Participants learned a lot in terms of what they should do at the disaster scene.



Trying the
interpreter
role-play



Mr. Okubo was involved in the foreigner-supporting activities in areas affected by recent major earthquakes



Friends of
Hyogo

Kobe Kodomo Nikoniko Kai —Aiming for a place where children can be themselves—

The Kobe Kodomo Nikoniko Kai's native language class in Spain is held in the conference room at Kobe Honjo Elementary School. At the entrance of this room, there is a signboard of "Amigos (Friends)". The children gathered at 3pm on a cold Tuesday in February. The teacher gently talked to the early arrivals; "Is your friend ○○ coming today?" "Is your homework done?"



I can now write the alphabet!

children remain proud of their home country's culture and their identity.

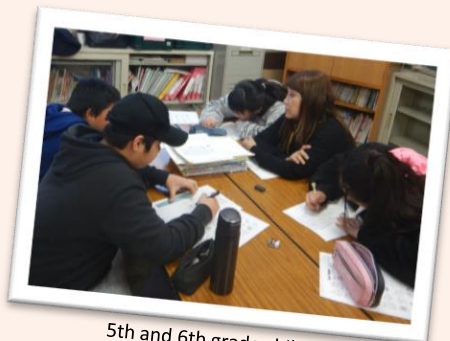
The children's language skills vary from child to child; some children are better at Japanese than Spanish, while others can speak Spanish but are not good at reading and writing. Teachers use their abundant educational experience to teach Spanish while reading aloud books and using games to increase vocabulary, depending on the children's language skills.

Children often use Japanese in their everyday lives, which can make them less willing to speak Spanish and less motivated to participate in classrooms. Ms. Matsushita, Secretary General, said "I'm happy that even in such a situation, children come to this classroom and say it's fun". Recently, parents have become more aware of the need for children to learn their native language.

Some children are embarrassed and nervous when they first start going to the classroom, but because they are all from the same Spanish-speaking areas, they get along quickly and learn together. Because the teachers have gone through the same experience as the children, they can understand the children's feelings well. Ms. Fujito (teacher of

this classroom) said, "I want children to value their native language as well as their roots." The classroom will continue to work with local people as a place where children can be themselves.

The Kobe Kodomo Nikoniko Kai is looking for people with experience teaching Spanish and speak Japanese, who love working with children.



5th and 6th grade children studying
using crossword puzzles.

News from Abroad

The Japan-France Exchange Coordinator has been Relieved

HIA dispatches a coordinator as trainee to the Seine-et-Marne Economic and Tourism Promotion Corporation in France for one year every year, and also welcomes two trainees every summer. These personnel exchanges have continued for nearly 30 years since 1991. The coordinator changed on October 2019, and so we will introduce each coordinator with a small comment from each.



Previous Coordinator, Ms. Yamahana
Promoting Hyogo with Paris office

2021 is a year when we welcome the 30th anniversary of Hyogo Prefecture- Seine-et Marne exchange. So, I will work hard as a bridge between us for that upcoming big event.

I believe that I have contributed to strengthening both Hyogo-Seine-et-Marne and Japan-France relations through the promotion of tourism information of both prefectures at events of Japan-France exchange, and lectures on Japanese and Japanese culture at educational institutes during my year here. I had valuable experiences through differences of culture, ways of thinking and encounters with many people.

New Coordinator, Ms. Suzuki
with her coworker at the office



New Year Gift Money in Hong Kong

Hirofumi Wada –
Hong Kong Office

Hong Kong celebrated Chinese New Year on January 25th in 2020. While 2019 had been a rather eventful year, with New Year's approach the town quickly became gorgeous with red and gold decorations. There is a tradition of New Year Gift Money in Hong Kong too which is called "Lai See (利是)"; however, the situation is a bit different from Japan.

Not only to family members and relatives, in Hong Kong they are also given to subordinates in the office, apartment managers, even receptionists of the office building. Those who are married will also give them to friends and colleagues who are single.

So, in this period, you may see apartment managers or unfamiliar cleaning staffs expecting something at the apartment entrance. Office building staff, who may usually be unfriendly, will give you New Year greetings and follow you with full smiles, pressing elevator buttons for you.

This is a different custom to Japan and a culture shock for me as a newcomer to Hong Kong. People who are used to it, distribute them as if they are distributing pocket tissues or flyers.

It is about HK\$20 to 50 (300 to 750 yen) per person, but I think it's a good custom to show our gratitude once in a year to those who support us behind the scenes. As for your subordinates, if you do not pay at least HK\$100 (1500 yen), apparently you may be considered stingy.



Introducing Korean Traditional Crafts at the Plaza

The “Korean Traditional Craft “Maedeup” – The Melody of Strings” exhibition was held at the gallery in HIA’s International Plaza from November 5th to 19th. Maedeup is a traditional form of knot-tying created from a single string, developed in the Korean Peninsula. In the exhibition, works finely hand crafted with colorful strings were displayed and attracted many visitors.

Over November 8th and 15th, a workshop to make Maedeup pin broaches was held a total of four times. Under the kind guidance of instructors such as Ms. Bae Puja, who runs a Maedeup classroom in Kobe, attendees completed wonderful works.



During the workshop



The Gallery display

“Consul General (CG) Café” in Kobe with American Diplomats

We held a “Consul General Café in Kobe” with the US consulate general in Osaka-Kobe at HIA on November 15, 2019 as the Kobe version of the “Consul general Café” which is held regularly around Osaka. We discussed the subject “Environmental problems caused by plastic waste” with participants, listening to lectures by three American diplomats. The participants listened to the presentations of lectures, after which they divided into groups and discussed topics given to each group. The lecturers joined them and had an enthusiastic discussion. At the end, each group presented their ideas debated in the discussion, and each presentation was met with applause. Although everyone had different reasons for going to the Café, such as enjoying speaking English, or having an interest in environmental problems, it was a fruitful time for all, talking in English with cups of tea and coffee.



Presentations of ideas each group discussed

Groups discussing their topic



Special Thanks

We would like to thank the following HIA Volunteer Translators for their assistance with this volume’s publication; we would not have been able to produce it without their help.

Ms. Mai Itagaki Mr. Fuyuo Tanaka
Ms. Aoi Murakami Ms. Yuki Tatsumi

