

Message from Professor Toshiaki Itami CIR Director & UoM Vice President

Hello everyone! I am Toshiaki Itami, Director of the Center for International Relations (CIR) and Vice President of the University of Miyazaki (UoM). Starting this month, the CIR will publishing a quarterly English newsletter as a way of sharing information on international topics related to the CIR and UoM.

The CIR has two main roles. The first is to assist international students at UoM and their family members so that they smoothly adjust to life in Miyazaki and pursue their scholarly goals with peace of mind. Our other main role is to assist Japanese students interested in studying abroad by providing them with as much information as possible and working to ensure their safety while overseas.

As you can see on the back page of this newsletter, the number of UoM's international students is rising steadily, and currently stands at around 180 undergraduate and graduate students. Around 150 of our Japanese students also study abroad every year. UoM also has signed academic exchange agreements with 77 institutions in 26 countries, and student exchange memoranda with 58

institutions in 19 countries. Another way we are strengthening our international ties is by opening overseas offices. At present, we have five overseas offices, located in four countries (Indonesia, Myanmar, Thailand, and Vietnam).

Each issue of this newsletter will share information on these global activities of UoM, while also spotlighting the activities of international students on campus and Japanese students overseas. In addition, we want to focus on how our university is working together with Miyazaki Prefecture and surrounding areas to foster global initiatives and strengthen ties between foreign residents and their local communities.

We hope that you find the newsletter interesting and informative. Please feel free to share your comments and suggestions so we can improve the content in the months ahead.



Prof. Itami (left) and his colleague Hana-chan.



The CIR office is on the 2nd floor of University Hall (above the cafeteria).

Contents

- P. 1: Message from CIR Director
- P. 2: "Tobitate" feature
- P. 3: Interview with Rinda Puspasari
- P. 4: Data & 2016 Summer Program

TOBITATE! NEXT JAPAN

In 2014, the Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology (MEXT) launched the “**Tobitate**” (Leap for Tomorrow) Young Ambassador Program. The program’s aim to double the number of university and high-school students studying abroad by 2020. This is a public-private initiative, made possible by contributions from supporting companies. To date, 17 students from the University of Miyazaki have either participated or plan to participate in the Tobitate program.

CIR plans to regularly interview Tobitate students to find out more about their plans and experiences. So far we have sat down to talk with two students: Shin Cho and Yukiko Nakamura. The full interviews can be found on our Facebook page (Miyazaki.U.CIR), but here we offer a brief summary and excerpts.



UoM undergraduate Shin Cho discusses his study abroad plans.

Back in April, we interviewed UoM student **Shin Cho** (Faculty of Agriculture) for our Facebook page to find out more about his plan to study in Poland and Russia on the Tobitate program. Shin has a talent for languages: he is already fluent in English and Chinese (as well as Japanese), and now is studying Russian and Polish for his upcoming trip. In his interview he offered all kinds of helpful advice and insights to other students interested in the Tobitate program, including the following: “The program encourages you to take a look back at your life and understand yourself better. Plus, encountering other cultures will open your mind. You can find out how awesome Japan is and also how weird it can be. When you step back a little you can see things more objectively, whereas if you are too close to something you can never see it as it really is.”



Tobitate scholarship recipient Yukiko Nakamura in Kenya.

Yukiko Nakamura may have a Japanese name, but she speaks English like a native speaker. She spent the first 13 years of her life in San Jose, California, where her parents were living at the time. But for the Tobitate program she decided to pursue research in Africa, where she had dreamed of visiting ever since watching wildlife shows on TV as a child. In August 2015 she traveled to Nairobi, Kenya, where she spent eight months participating in the “Urban Zoo” project at the International Livestock Research Institute. The project gathered samples in Nairobi from the environment, animals, and people, targeting the bacteria *E. coli* to find a “footprint” of the disease and understand how it comes into people. Next February, Yukiko plans to take the national veterinary exam and then perhaps pursue a PhD. Her long-term goal is to work for an international organization like the WHO.

Follow the CIR on FACEBOOK!

In late 2015 we launched a Facebook page to regularly post info and photos related our activities as well as news related to UoM.

Visit us at:

**[www.facebook.com/
Miyazaki.U.CIR/](http://www.facebook.com/Miyazaki.U.CIR/)**



PhD candidate Rinda Puspasari stopped by the CIR office in June for an interview.

Interview with Rinda Puspasari

In early June we had a chance to interview Rinda Puspasari, an Indonesian PhD candidate at UoM's Graduate School of Agriculture for the CIR Facebook page. Rinda began her graduate studies in Miyazaki in 2015. She is researching the adaptability of a "interspecific hybrid legume" derived from the Lotus corniculatus. This hybrid legume is useful in preventing dairy cows from bloating. Both of Rinda's parents are academics, also in the field of agriculture. As a girl, she lived with her parents for a year in Australia, where they were studying at the time. This experience and working for an international company in Indonesia explains why she is so fluent in English.

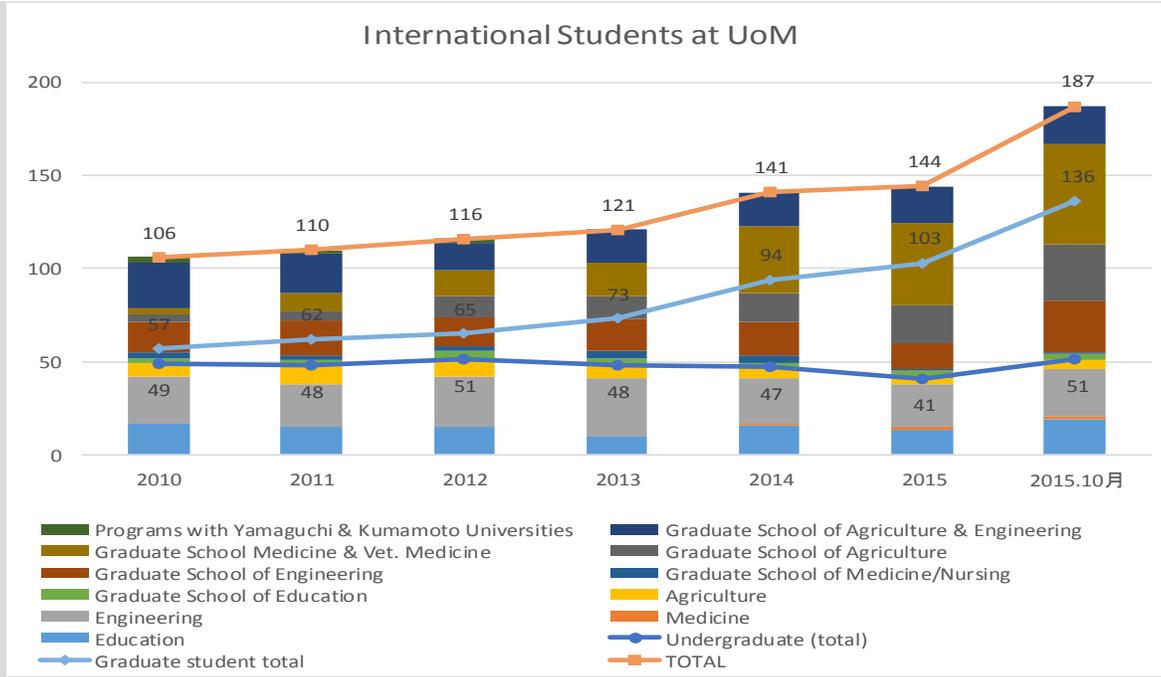
Rinda explained some of the differences she has faced at UoM compared to studying in her home country. One major difference has been that students here do all the lab work themselves, rather than relying on lab technicians. Another difference is that all the facilities are in one place at UoM, rather than spread out among different locations. She recommends that Indonesian students who want to study in Japan try to find out more about which specific faculties or graduate programs are the best, rather than just looking at overall university rankings. The entire interview with Rinda and more photos are available on the CIR Facebook page.

Kimono Rental Event at CIR Office



On Wednesday June 22, the Kimono Rental Event was held at the Center for International Relations. International students and others had a chance to try on a kimono for free and wear it around campus all day. The event was sponsored by the Miyazaki Chamber of

Commerce and Industry. The aim is to promote closer ties between international residents and the local community. Here are a few photos of the event — and more can be found on the CIR Facebook page.



The number of international students at UoM has been climbing steadily in recent years. The chart above shows the progress that has been made have been making since 2010. Currently around 180 students from overseas study at UoM and we are working to boost that figure to over 250 by around 2020.



Summer Program

Summer is a busy time for the Center for International Relations because it is the month when the University of Miyazaki hosts its annual **Summer Program** for international students. This year a total of 43 students from 11 countries

and regions (China, Indonesia, New Zealand, Russia, South Korea, Spain, Taiwan, Thailand, Ukraine, the United States, and Vietnam) will take part in this year's program. Along with studying Japanese and learning about traditional culture, participants have the chance to visit tourist sites around Miyazaki Prefecture. Above are a few photos taken from last year's summer program.

IntErACT is a quarterly newsletter issued by the University of Miyazaki's Center for International Relations

Address: 1-1 Gakuen-Kibana-Nishi
Miyazaki, Japan, 889-2192
E-mail: kokusai@of.miyazaki-u.ac.jp
Tel: 0985-58-7104
(Open weekdays from 10 am to 5 pm)
Website: www.of.miyazaki-u.ac.jp/~kokusai/english/

Publisher: Toshiaki Itami (CIR Director)
Editor: Edward Schauerte
Issue printed on August 31, 2016
All rights reserved