



**Tohoku University Overseas Office Newsletter**

Issued by Global Learning Center

TU-FTU Cooperation Office,  
Foreign Trade University, Vietnam

Tohoku University Center,  
University of California, Riverside  
U.S.A.

## Newsletter from TU-FTU Cooperation Office

by Mai Quynh Doan , Coordinator, TU-FTU Cooperation Office, Foreign Trade University (tohokuoffice@ftu.edu.vt)

### **Get Together! Go Global!**

The establishment of the TU-FTU Cooperation Office marked an important milestone in the joint partnership between the two universities. After more than 3 years of operation, the Office has become a destination for Vietnamese students who want to know more about studying in Japan, especially at Tohoku University. It also serves as a space for cultural exchange activities between Vietnamese students and TU students.

Academic consultancy is one of the TU-FTU Office's core activities. Every month, the Office welcomes 20 Vietnamese students, on average, with a broad range of educational backgrounds: from high-school to undergraduate and graduate students; yet they share a common interest in pursuing high-quality education in Japan and namely in study and scholarship opportunities from Tohoku University, which has long been internationally recognized and known as one of Japan's leading universities. By offering official information about a variety of program options such as Future Global Leadership (FGL) undergraduate courses,

GPEM Master's Program in Economics and Management, DSP Graduate Program in Data Sciences, semester exchange and many other short-term academic and cultural exchange programs, the Office has gained a reputation as a reliable channel of academic-related consultancy for those who are passionate about obtaining an excellent education in Japan and for scholarship seekers.

However, the TU-FTU Office is more than a free academic consulting service – “it is a cultural exchange hub” – said Yuki Okuda, exchange student from TU at FTU. Yuki Okuda is currently the teacher of a non-profit Japanese Language and Culture Class. The Class is organized every semester, taught by exchange students from TU and free for all Vietnamese high-school and university students. It not only provides knowledge about Japanese language, but it also brings Japanese and Vietnamese students together through cultural exchange activities such as Origami lessons, a Chanoyu mini-workshop and Vietnamese-Japanese cooking class. Yuki said: “There is no better way to learn about a culture than

from the locals. As an introvert, I had never expected to have such a once-in-a-lifetime chance to step out of my comfort zone to make brand-new and lasting connections with Vietnamese friends”.

As globalization proceeds, the world is becoming more interconnected and borderless education is being promoted. Believing in the value of global citizenship, the TU-FTU office has always put great effort into accomplishing its mission to empower students through study abroad and cultural engagement opportunities.



## **Imagine the Future Together**

In March 2019, the Future Leadership (FL) Short-term Exchange Program was jointly organized on the FTU Hanoi Campus as part of a fruitful strategic partnership between Tohoku University (TU) and Foreign Trade University (FTU), with the participation of 14 TU students and 6 FTU students.

Travelling more than 2000 miles from Sendai, across the ocean, TU students teamed up with FTU students in not only academic sessions such as lectures on Japan-Vietnam economic and diplomatic relations, investment, entrepreneurship, project-based learning, field trips, but also cultural exchange activities, including Vietnamese lunch, language class and excursion to Ha Long Bay, a UNESCO World Heritage Sites in the North of Vietnam.

“It was really a memorable experience in my life”, said Haruo, a participant from TU. “Before going to Vietnam, I used to see this country as a place filled with war and poverty. But it turned out that I was wrong. Through, fascinating lectures and practical company visits, I have learnt

about the development potential of this amazing country. One more important thing is, I really enjoyed the time with my FTU buddies during the program. Together we finished the project and travelled to many beautiful places. The program came to an end, but our friendship is definitely long-lasting”.

“I had never thought that I could have such a wonderful opportunity”, The Anh, a participant in the FL Program from FTU shared. “It was Saturday evening, while surfing Facebook, I bumped into a post by the TU-FTU Cooperation Office, seeking participants for the FL program. Overcoming my lack of confidence took all my courage when I applied for the program, and my efforts paid off. I was chosen! Participating in the program, being close to friendly, talented Japanese buddies, working and sharing academic and cultural knowledge with them, I started to imagine my future as a global citizen and since then I have been trying my best to broaden my horizons by updating my knowledge constantly

and making new friends from diverse cultures”.

“The program provided me with a clear picture about Vietnam’s socio-economic status and promising development. I imagined that if I become an international investor in the near future, I will absolutely add Vietnam to my investment portfolio”, Wang, another FL participant shared, “ I will also never forget the precious moments we shared with our beloved Vietnamese buddies and other Japanese friends. I still remember how much we cried when we said goodbye to each other at the airport”.



## **Newsletter from Tohoku University Center at UCR**

by Reiko Sato, Specially Appointed Associate Professor, University of California, Riverside (reiko.sato@ucr.edu)

### **Bridge Program 2019**

Eighteen high school students, who have been admitted by Tohoku University, participated in the Bridge Program at UCR Extension Center from March 3<sup>rd</sup> to March 16<sup>th</sup>. This opportunity presented many occasions to learn about multiculturalism and diversity in the United States and gave students unique opportunities to meet Japanese researchers/professors at UCR. Professor Yamanaka from the department of Entomology talked about his research on fruit flies and shared his personal

experiences as a researcher in the United States. On the final day, students presented what they had learned during their visit, receiving high evaluations!

### **Japanese Garden in Riverside**

Celebrating more than 60 years of friendship between Sendai and Riverside, the City of Riverside restored the Japanese Garden at the White Park dedicated to the City of Sendai. Three Japanese Niwashi

(Landscapers) were invited from Sendai to come to redesign the garden and the Tohoku University Center participated in its restoration as well. The Tohoku University Center organized a UCR student committee and helped the Japanese Landscapers throughout their restoration. The garden looks even more beautiful and authentic! If you ever have an opportunity to come to Riverside, please stop by this Japanese Garden!

## **Innovative Riverside**

It has been 5 years since the Exploring-Germination-and-Growth program for young Scientists at Tohoku University established a relationship with the Riverside

STEM Academy (RSA)! The Tohoku University Center had a Tohoku University booth at RSA's "Innovative Riverside" event that took place in downtown Riverside on May 18<sup>th</sup>. Many people

stopped by our booth to learn about Sendai and Tohoku University and its relationship with Riverside.

## **Student's Experience**

### **16 Hours Away**

by Harrison Liang, Economics & Political Science/International Affairs Major, University of California, Riverside

My interest was sparked when my Japanese professor mentioned an opportunity to participate in an email exchange program with students from Tohoku University. My partner and I shared our life experiences, among other things, with one another and I was given the opportunity to briefly meet him when he visited UC Riverside. I first chose to participate in the email exchange program with the Tohoku students because I will be studying abroad for a school year at a university in Japan. The reason I chose to participate in these various opportunities is that they presented me with the ability to learn more about different cultures and improve my cross-cultural sensitivity. The motivations that led me to participate in the TUJP program are many, of which the main factors are: my experiences interacting with the Tohoku students were enjoyable and short-lived – I wanted to do something like that again – and because I am interested in learning foreign languages and studying other cultures. As a student at UC Riverside, I felt compelled to participate in this

opportunity to learn more about the sister city of Riverside, Sendai, and to further strengthen the relationship between the two cities. This experience was truly eye-opening for me as I got to make lasting relationships and it inspired me to participate in the TUJP program at Tohoku University. I cannot wait to visit the friends that I made last March, and to meet new people when I visit in July.

