



# 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)

### Summer Getaway from Peaceful Sendai

Have you ever thought that life should be about going on journeys and taking opportunities to learn? If so, it is time to get away from peaceful Sendai for a while and fly to Vietnam for a short-term exchange program at Foreign Trade University (FTU).

From the viewpoint of TU students, and of anyone else who has visited Sendai, the city always seems like a very peaceful place with green landscapes, delicious food and kind people. Sendai leaves the impression that life here is more or less easy and stress-free. Therefore, to a large number of TU students, travelling to a bustling city like Hanoi means stepping outside their comfort zone.

When TU students who have been to Hanoi are asked to describe their first impressions of Vietnam, the most common answers are “motorcycles”, “hot tropical weather”, “traditional markets” and “street food”. Crossing busy streets, coping with air humidity and communicating with locals etc. can be unfamiliar, challenging and sometimes scary during their first days in this special country.

But once they figure out that they can learn about a new culture and connect with people despite differences, they realize that they can do many things, and suddenly the obstacles seem less obstructive and more like welcomed challenges. For example, when they figure out how to ask for directions or buy things in a grocery store, they build their confidence and ability to adapt in foreign situations.

“Until I arrived in Vietnam, I didn’t think I could make any foreign friends because I’m a shy person. However, thanks to the

warmness of the people (not that of the weather) here, I started being open, so I gained more knowledge about this amazing country and made some incredibly valuable connections”, said Rui from TU, a participant in the FTU Summer Program. Another TU student shared that he hoped to learn the Vietnamese language and sharpen his English upon returning home, adding that he wanted to go back to FTU as an exchange student in the future.

Understanding the value of international cultural and academic exchange, TU and FTU are always focused on building an increasingly fruitful partnership with a view to creating more opportunities for students of the two universities. Grab the opportunity, take yourself far from the comforts of home, embrace the differences and open yourself up to new cultures and experiences!



## Newsletter from Tohoku University Center at California Riverside

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

### SAP Multiculturalism Program Summer 2019

20 Tohoku students participated in a Multiculturalism program at the UCR Extension Center from August 12 to August 30th. Besides learning about the variety of diverse cultures found in the US, they had opportunities to interact with other UCR students and learned exhaustively and comprehensively about all the coalescent traditions and norms built into the base of the culture itself. Tohoku University

also invited UCR alumni who had studied on the TU campus, and they talked about how wonderful and unforgettable their study abroad experience was! This summer, a total of four UCR students participated in TSSP and TUJP, returning home with great academic and cultural experiences from Tohoku University! We hope all SAP participants had a great experience at UCR as well!

### Long Night Riverside 2019

On October 10<sup>th</sup>, the City of Riverside held an event called “Long Night Riverside” in downtown Riverside. The Tohoku University Center along with multiple UCR student volunteers helped operate a Sendai booth in hopes of promoting Sendai and Japan by writing guest’s names in Japanese on origami bookmarks. We hope this wonderful Sister City relationship will keep getting deeper and stronger and are glad to be part of it!



### From Alumnus

## What's up! ~ Nothing much ~

by Michelle F. Miranda, UCR alumni class of 2014. Tohoku - UCR Riverside December 2012

This December, it will be 7 years since I was selected to participate in a cultural exchange program between Tohoku University and my alma mater, UC Riverside. I never had a chance to travel overseas before then; so when my Japanese language professor, Sato-sensei, made an announcement about the program, I quickly applied and prayed to be selected. I had this strong gut feeling it would really affect my future.

7 years and 9 visits later. No regrets.

From up north in Aomori to as far south in Fukuoka, and many places in between like Sendai, every visit has been full of reunions and adventure with wonderful people; my friends and host mother. Truly my heart is always over the moon with happiness and grateful to be met with at least one, if not more, happy familiar faces in Japan and make even more great memories with plenty of laughter and a bit of adventure. Just as well, honestly, even when I receive a little postcard, a message, or e-mail from friends reaching out to catch up, like just a “what’s up!” puts a big silly smile on my face and brightens my day. My host mother and I have kept in regular contact all this time by email, especially during the holidays, and like promised her years ago – I always make time to visit her in Sendai. I really do hope that others who have an opportunity like I had are able to meet just as many amazing people, but also keep in mind: even though not everyone is meant to be in your life forever, it does not mean they were not meant to be a part of it at all.

So, take chances when you can, travel if you can, be yourself, meet new people, keep an open mind and, most importantly, an open heart but do be smart. Real friendships are hard to find and take some time, but that doesn’t mean you shouldn’t try.

Don’t risk missing out by not reaching out because some of the most amazing, funny, interesting, and kind hearted people you might ever have the chance to meet will be there at the most unexpected of times or unexpected places; maybe even just one flight away.



# Adventure Time with Tohoku University Students

By: Danielle Teng || Student at the University of California, Riverside

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During this summer of 2019, my colleagues and I had the pleasure of meeting and getting to know the wonderful students from Tohoku University who came to UCR for their study abroad program. After meeting the students in our Japanese class with Reiko Sato, my colleagues and I wanted to take them to lunch at In-n-Out as well as show them around our favorite spots in Riverside on the weekend.



The first stop on our list for the weekend was UCR's own Botanical Gardens. We started off the morning with a little adventure through one of the greenhouses and a mini hike from which we could see UCR's bell tower, which marks the center of campus. After getting a good start to the day, we headed off to Ontario Mills Mall to do some shopping where we found Pokémon products and put on matching jackets to take a group picture together. For a snack, we had Potato Corner which was fun to share and eat together. After walking only half the mall, we were all hungry, so we went to King Taco for some good Mexican food.

The last stop for the day was by far the most fun. We drove around for a while and ended up at Sycamore Highlands Park. The park had a beautiful view of Riverside and a splash pad that we ran through to cool down on that hot summer's day.



Thank you for such an amazing time and come visit again!

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