



The Hokusei Times

Shine Like Stars In a Dark World

New Relief Funds Raised to Support Kumamoto Hit by Earthquakes

By Takako Nagai

Hokusei Gakuen University has a 5-year history of volunteer activities to help victims in disaster areas of the Great East Japan Earthquake. This year, the university undertook a new charity campaign to support Kumamoto Prefecture and an affiliated school of Hokusei.

Kumamoto Prefecture was hit by a major earthquake with a seismic intensity of seven on the Japanese scale on April 14. In addition, an even more serious main quake occurred two days after. Even after that, a series of aftershocks continued and caused extensive damage like the collapse of buildings and the landslide disaster. Many volunteers from across the country took part in the relief operations for the earthquake victims. After the “Golden Week” holidays, however, the support activities subsided as the number of volunteers decreased gradually.

School activities to support Kumamoto started on campus at Hokusei Gakuen University. The student organization called “Hokusei-net” began a fund-raising campaign. Sumire Ogawa, a 3rd year student of the Department of Psychology for Well-being and a member of the support group, proposed her members with an idea to help the disaster area and decided to do the new assistance activity. They collected contributions in front of the Hokusei’s cooperative store from April 24 to 28. As a result of the fund-raising, the students and the school staff donated a total of 74,469 yen.



Students collect donations for a fund-raising campaign for Kumamoto in front of Hokusei Gakuen University’s cooperative store.

Yoshihiko Hidaka, the chaplain of Hokusei Gakuen, decided to send the money directly to the Kyusyu chapter of the United Church of Christ in Japan to be used specifically for the Kumamoto area rather than for operating funds in general for the Red Cross. Hokusei-net dispatch students to the disaster area of the Tohoku region twice a year, and they have a plan to send volunteers to Kumamoto this summer. In the meantime, they continue their fund-raising campaign and a donation box is placed at the entrance of building C.

Shin’ichi Tamura, the president of Hokusei Gakuen University, submitted a prospectus of the fund-raising for Kumamoto Gakuen University to the faculty members and other staff members of Hokusei Gakuen on April 28. Hokusei has formed a tie-up with Kumamoto Gakuen University in 2008 as in the support

project of strategic cooperation of university by the Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology. As a business partner, Hokusei decided to collect contributions from the school staffers in 1,000-yen increments on a voluntary basis. This project was different from that of Hokusei-net. This campaign was only intended for the teachers and other staff of the school and held from April 28 to May 20. It was voluntary and all the money was allocated for supporting Kumamoto Gakuen University. A total of 485,000 yen was raised for the campaign. On June 23, President Tamura went to Kumamoto and handed the donation money to Ryoichi Koda, president of Kumamoto Gakuen. He also visited the disaster area and offered an assistance by Hokusei students as volunteers. As a result, Hokusei-net has decided to send some volunteers to Kumamoto.



A fund-raising poster with a picture of Kumamon, the character of Kumamoto Prefecture, by Hokusei-net

What’s “Hokusei-net” ?

“Hokusei-net” is an organization primarily intended to plan and carry out support activities for disaster areas. The group belongs to the Smith Mission Center. It was formed at the end of November, 2011, following the Great East Japan Earthquake on March 11, 2011. Students play a central role. Besides volunteer activities for the Tohoku region and the fund-raising for Kumamoto, there is another activity they are engaged. They go to the high school affiliated with Hokusei and teach students their experience in volunteer activities. They offered the lecture this year. They manage a Web-site, Facebook and Twitter and send out school-related information to Hokusei students.

Volunteer activities by Hokusei Gakuen University

By Erika Nakagawa

Hokusei-Net is a student group at Hokusei, doing volunteer works and many other activities. Members of the group went to affected areas in the Tohoku region hit by the 2011 Great East Japan Earthquake. Also, they recruit people who want to do volunteer activities in the disaster hit areas who have a like mind. In Sendai, there is a group called “Emao” which is engaged in volunteer activities. The name has its roots from the New Testament. It is called “Tohokukyoku Hisaisiyashien center”(Tohoku Victims Assistance Center) in Japanese, and was established to mark the 5th year of the earthquake of Tohoku. Some staffers of Emao lead volunteer workers from many schools and universities across the country. The next volunteer activities are going to take place in August. The explanatory meeting by Emao is going to be held in June.



Volunteer workers clean up rubbles in the disaster-hit area in the Tohoku region.

Courtesy by Asahi Shimbun 2011

My experience

One of the volunteer activities was called, “Ochakko,” in which some volunteer workers and staffers go to the temporary home of the victims of the disaster for a visit. Then they do radio gymnastics with the afflicted people together, and drink tea and talk with them. The elderly people talked about their experience of the day. One story particularly stayed in my mind.

“There is no true rebirth of my life. Even if the place I lived is restored and I can fend, my home town can never make a comeback, never. I know it cannot be helped, but I feel sad. Because, I got separated from my neighborhood and

we cannot communicate with each other. My home town was designated as the zone of dangerous disaster,” said one of the victims. After hearing the story, I felt the rebirth of the town is almost impossible. “The houses, rubbles, and grounds can be restored, this is just for restoring the form. Afflicted people’s heart cannot be soothed easily,” said the victim. We helped with farming in the disaster area for two days, and understood the meaning of the word “slow work” which “Emao” had reminded us again and again. “Slow work” is the way to work. Volunteer work does not need to be so much working fast and efficiently but very careful work and talking a lot with disaster victims.

Interview with a volunteer

Kotone Minamikawa, 3rd year of the English department, participated in Hokusei volunteer activities this spring. The following are excerpts of the interview with her.

● “About the field work. We go to place where victims fell to Tsunami.”

There were five wall newspapers on the Ishinomaki Nyuze station. When the tsunami hit the local area, they posted newspapers at the shelter. The owner of Ishinomaki Nyuze was a person in a high position of the newspaper company at that time. He explained the company’s situation in details. The tsunami hit up the first floor, many things broke down including the printer, so they could not make a newspaper then. They gave out the latest information by imitation papers. Some of the company members went missing in the disaster. However, those who were alive tried to deliver news to give everyone the latest information, they did their best. “We have to correspond flexibly for a local neighborhood

even in a case like that. This is the function of our local media, it is our belief,” he said. Kotone was strongly impressed by his determined eyes. The newspaper staff experienced many things. For instance, they were walking with their cameras which got in mud. There was a time when they got pelted with rotten tomatoes by other victims. She knew we cannot understand anything about it, unless we go there. So she joined the volunteer activity of Hokusei.

● Why did she go there?

One of her friends went there this spring, and recommend her to go there. Also, during the graduation ceremony of her junior high school, she was shocked to see the news of the earthquake, and she could not believe what she saw then. She asked herself, “Did the earthquake really happen in Japan?” She watched the condition of the shelter for the victims and realized “I am lucky living safely without any trouble. But I could not do anything to help.” “Someday,” she thought “I



Kotone Minamikawa

want to go there, and I can help.” She feels that the power work of volunteer is not all volunteer activities. She wanted to help people by talking with them. So she participated in the volunteer activities of Hokusei in her own style.

Japanese Conversation Partner Program

By Yuumi Akashi

“Japanese Conversation Partner Program” started at Hokusei Int’l Center for the first time this year under the directorship of Prof. Misao Okada. The explanatory meeting was held on May 10. A total of 15 foreign students and 45 Hokusei Gakuen University students took part in it. The Hokusei students are not only from the department of English but also from other departments. I took part in it for the first time.

This program is conducted by some groups which are made up of a foreign student and two or three Hokusei students. Each group gets together three times a month and talks about free topics in Japanese. And also, the members must turn in the paper about the progress of this program. These are the basic contents of the program. I have interviewed Prof. Okada, Ms. Rie Tahara and Ms. Masako Kokusen, who are staff members of the international center, to learn about the program in details.

The history of this program

This program began about eight years ago as one of opportunities that foreign students speak Japanese not only in classes but also in daily lives with people of the same age. Prof. Okada explained about the purpose of this program, “It serves best for foreign students, but I want Japanese student who can’t study abroad to join it because it is a great opportunity that they can get to know foreign students on campus easily.” Some of the students who have joined it said, “I was happy to talk with people of my generation.”; “I could learn about many kinds of different cultures.”; “I could make new friends.” So, this program is highly-evaluated and has a good reputation among many students.

Exchanging e-mail addresses with each other is one of the rules of this program. However, there was a case in which a foreign student lost contact with his partner in the past. So,

they had to cancel this program. It was a very sad incident. As a result, it was decided that not all members of each group have to gather for the meeting. Making contact with each other is a very important matter in this program.

The number of participants was not necessarily many. When there were only five foreign students to participate, Prof. Okada carried out an additional recruitment. She agonized over whether to discontinue the program or not. Eventually, however, the number of participants increased by social network systems and so on. In fact, the greatest number of Japanese and foreign students have participated in the program this time.

Finally, she said to us, “I want you to form a good relationship with people of different cultures and values and get to know about individual personalities regardless of their nationality.” She was determined to continue this program.

My Partner

Ian Price is a foreign student in my group. He is from the United States and staying in Japan from April this year as a foreign student. He decided to take part in this program because he wanted to speak Japanese and make new friends. After finishing this program, I asked him about his impression of this program. “I could make new friends and know the language used by young Japanese people. It was fresh and exciting for me,” he said.

He became interested in Japan when he visited Kyoto with his family as a kid. Although he was only 11 years old then, a lot of historical architectures made a deep impression on him. “I want to study Japanese in order to know about the Japanese culture and Japanese history,” he thought. He made up his mind to study abroad in Japan. He stayed in Fukuoka for a month. However, he doesn’t like a hot weather so Hokkaido’s weather is just right for him.

He is most interested in art. He learns not only Japanese grammar and kanji but also the history of Japanese art. Whenever he takes a trip, he tries to visit a museum. And the place where he wants to go the most is Tokyo National Museum of Modern Art. He loves the art. Among all histories of Japanese art, he is especially interested in the Heian period. In addition, I was surprised that he is reading “Makuranosoushi,” an essay written by Seishonagon in the 10th century, in English. I felt his enthusiasm for studying Japanese by his performance in his class.

He also likes old Japanese music and movies. When he sings a song at karaoke, he often sings Japanese music from 30 years ago. About movies, his favorite Japanese directors are Akira Kurosawa and Yasujiro Ozu. When he talked about them for me, he looked very happy and excited.

The length of his visit in Japan is only two months. When he thinks that he is staying here for only two months, he feels really sad. After going back to the United States, he intends to enter a graduate school there. And also he wants to join a JET program (The Japan Exchange and Teaching Programme). Under this program foreigner nationals can work for international exchange office and foreign languages education as teachers of English in elementary school, junior high school and high school all over Japan. His dream is getting a job related to art. I wish him a good luck in making a rapid progress toward his dream.



Ian Price is from America.

Renewed Center Building Was Opened

Special Features about Center Building

By Haruka Wakabayashi

The center building of Hokusei Gakuen was reopened in October 2015. There is a new café “NORTH STAR CAFÉ Sarah” that was so much hoped to be by students. And, International Lounge was established for interaction between students from foreign countries and Hokusei students and experience different cultures. On the second floor, there is Learning Commons for meeting with our school students and studying together. There are six areas for studying, providing a space for each student with different studying styles and purposes.

A Day in North Star Café

I interviewed two salesclerks to find out about the business operations of North Star Café. I think that not many people know about the new café. NORTH STAR CAFÉ Sarah sells mainly drinks and snacks, such as hot coffee, orange juice, and a hot sandwich. Both Hokusei students and students from foreign countries work here depending on the situation. The most crowded hour is lunch time, there are usually about 40~50 customers during the lunch time. The rest of the time, even the general public come here including many elderly persons from the neighborhood. We can use the café calmly in spare time of the class because inside the café is very quiet. And also, once twice every month, when the students from foreign countries are in the café, we can get a chance to speak foreign languages. It is a valuable experience. There are menus written in foreign languages so everyone can enjoy ordering and in each language. According to the salesclerks, they are planning to increase the new menu in the future. One of the salesclerks said, “Please come to our café, whenever you want to study at a calm place and have a break time.” You should go there if you have an interest in foreign countries and have fun.



The menu of cafe

The entrance of cafe



International Events & News

There is an international lounge in the center building. And a lot of events are held there every month. First of all, there is the so-called “ambassador program.” In this event, students from foreign countries talk about their hometown in their language. You can take part in the event 4~5 times a month. The international lounge has a big screen, so we can enjoy their presentation with a visual aid. So far, presentations about America and Korea and so on have been held. People who have an interest in foreign countries should take part in this program. Second, a study meeting of Indonesian is held once a week from 12:10 to 12:50. Hokusei students who may have nothing to do with Indonesia, should try it because such an opportunity is rare.

Among other things to do, we can always watch news in nine different languages on the screen. News is presented at a real time, so it is fascinating that we can watch and listen to news in many languages. In addition, we can use free Wi-Fi, if you want to study with the Internet. But now, most users are the students of English major. The students of other majors may stay away because they are too international for them. If you do not have confidence in your English, you should take part in. The international lounge waits any person anytime by all means.

Making the Best Use of International Lounge

By Risa Kondo

Mrs. Maiko Koyama, a staff member of the International Lounge of the International Education Department, explained to us the daily operations of the facility and how to use it. She is a graduate student of the English department of Hokusei Gakuen University.

We don't give financial assistance here to help students when they go on an overseas study program. However, there are some universities overseas which offer financial assistance to some students. In addition, students may be waived in not only school expenses but also the cost of the trip. If you want to study abroad and need such assistance, you need to ask them about it directly.

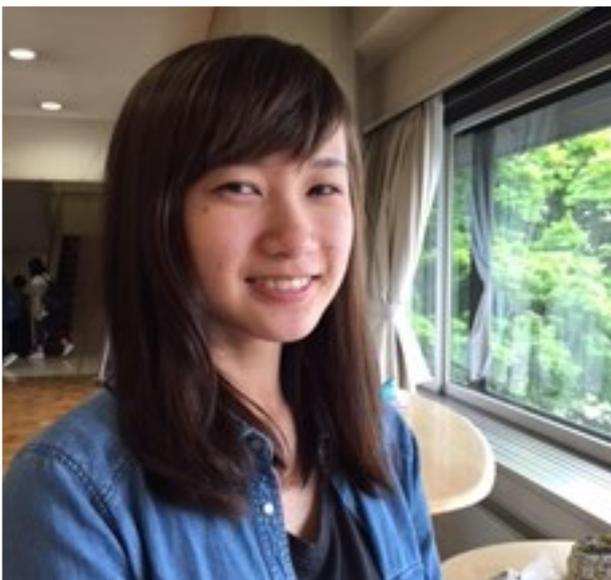
There is a big screen in the midst of the International Lounge. Various news from all over the world are broadcast on the screen. The news program lists are posted on the board near it. Sometimes, the same news are broadcast throughout the day to watch for those from outside Japan. You can make a request for news you want to watch by asking the staff workers to broadcast it. Many students use this place mainly to study. However, they are allowed to talk with their friends, eat lunch or get a rest. That is, they can use the facility freely. Moreover, many foreign students utilize here as a communicational place for meeting people. For example, foreign students who happen to walk by can take part in the conversation of the group of some Japanese students. Only an Indonesian language program is held for a foreign language study meeting. An international communication session called "English lunch time" is held on Tuesdays (16:20 ~ 17:15). Unfortunately for English-department students, however, they can not participate in this event to let other department students to have more opportunities to learn in the English program freely.



Students are relaxed at the international lounge.



A monthly event calendar is displayed.



Kotone Adachi

Comment from a member of the committee

Kotone Adachi, a junior student of the Department of Psychology for Well-being, is appointed as a member of the committee of the International Lounge. She says the job of the committee is to do a plan and administrate various events to provide some opportunities of the interchange of the Hokusei students and the foreign students. When people imagine about international communication, the language used is mainly English. However, there are a lot of languages all over the world. So, she hopes that she can help arrange some places for students to communicate through languages other than English. She says, "I want them to understand that they can have contact with foreign people even if students cannot speak English well. Furthermore, I want them to take an interest in various languages through the opportunities here."

6 New Innovative Spot to Learn

Learning Support Desk

By Ayaka Miura & Nanami Sato

Learning Support Desk at Learning Commons plays a key role in management of Learning Commons, such as planning, management of learning support programs, rental equipment and consultation. Learning Commons is a space where each student can study and learn independently by using various tools and spaces. There are six different areas and many students are using each area for their individual purposes. “The number of the participants has been increasing and in April this year it surpassed 2,000 in total,” said Mr. Sato, one of the staffers at the Learning Support Desk.

They hold a learning seminar and offer an individual learning support at the Learning Support Desk. According to Mr. Sato, an event that they emphasize most is a “learning seminar.” It is programed for students to master study skills necessary when they study at the university. Seminar instructors are part-time teachers who finished a graduate school. There are various seminars, such as a notetaking seminar, an image map seminar and so on. One or two seminars are offered every day. These seminars are held during the 2nd and 4th periods but many students find it inconvenient. Therefore, they decided to take questionnaires among students to find out the most convenient time for them because they want more students to attend the seminars. Students attend seminars willingly because they are free of charge and there is no need to submit an application for attendance.



Flyers of seminars are displayed on the board.

Works of Peer Supporters



Natsuki Kakuyama

Peer supporters are stationed at Learning Commons every day. The concept of a peer supporter is “A student to support a student.” Natsuki Kakuyama, one of the peer supporters, said their activities include management of Learning Commons, holding an orientation for new students, study consultation and study meetings. The event that they put in most efforts is the orientation for new students. The department-chief professors were holding it until two years ago but peer supporters have taken it over since last year. “Students can support students from the students’ perspective. So, we can hold an orientation program for freshmen from the students’ standpoint,” said Kakuyama. “Come and consult with us if you have a trouble about study.”

Voices of Users



Kodai Yasui, 2nd-year student of the English department in junior college

He stopped using the university library after the center building was completed because in the library, as he says, “We have to be quiet.” He wants to speak English with his friends. The computer in the center lounge works faster than in the library. “It is also a good point that we can eat at Learning Commons,” he said. He uses this facility six days a week and he stays there throughout his free time. It gets sometimes noisy, but he doesn’t care very much. According to him, he can concentrate to study in a quiet room rather than a noisy one because he becomes sleepy in the quiet room. The only thing he wishes is that the facility allow easier utilization of CDs because we have a limited space to use CDs at Learning Commons.



Ako Mizoguchi, 3rd-year student of Law and Economics department

She likes the center building because it is clean and comfortable. She uses different areas depending on the circumstances. When she is alone, she uses the back of the relaxation area, she uses the group session area with a few friends, and the creative project area with many friends. She often does a group working by using a whiteboard at Learning Commons. She uses this facility six days a week, and she wishes the building to be opened for a longer time at weekends.



By Ayaka Miura, Nanami Sato

Group Session Area

It is located in the center of Learning Commons. The area is designed as an open and free space to support students learning individually in separate groups.



Relaxation and Collaboration Area

Students can project the screen of the PC on the large display and make a document, or hold discussions by using a white board. Students can be relaxed and study in the comfortable seats.



Creative Project Area

It provides a good space for working with many people or many documents. It has a larger desk than that of any other areas.



Print and Copy Area

Printers and a photocopier of the color correspondence are installed in this area.



Tutorial Support Area

A small number of people use this area for an individual learning support program. A whiteboard and a projector are provided in this area.



Presentation and Seminar Area

It is a good space for activities such as sending information to people like a practice of the presentation or the trial class. Study seminars by the support desk are held mainly here.



Unique Way to Learn in Seminar

By Marie Kishino and Nanako Miyamoto



Discussion leaders

In the intercultural communication seminar taught by Prof. Noriko Hasegawa, there are 23 female and a male students. All of the students are interested in different cultures well and doing their best to broaden their own horizons.

The seminar is held mainly through the students' discussions about the contents of the text. The students are assigned four practical works in a year to understand different cultures. After carrying out the tasks we exchange and share our own views and opinions and get feedbacks from the experience. Now, let us introduce you about the practical work in our seminar.

There are four unique practical works to be conducted for a year in the Hasegawa seminar. The first is named "Who Should Be Hired?" In this work, all members in the seminar take part in a discussion to decide who are suitable to

be an elementary school teacher. There are 15 candidates whose age, skin color, religion, sex, race, experience and ways to think are different, and only 7 candidates can be selected for the teaching post. Each member of the seminar will try to identify their own stereotypes and prejudices.

The second task is a wheelchair practical work. The students can experience what kind of barriers exist to disabled people who use wheelchairs and how they feel about non-disabled people. The third is a simulation called, "The Albatross." This work simulates a country which puts women above men.

The last one is that we make videos for exchange students to introduce Japanese culture. By creating videos the students can reconfirm and realize what their own culture and identities are.



First discussion in the class

Students Experience Wheelchair

Thursday, May 19

The students in this seminar experienced using a wheelchair. The goal of this practical work is to think from the standpoint of the wheelchair user as intercultural communication. The students participated in this with much interest. They moved around many places at Hokusei Gakuen University and noticed that there are many inconvenient places such as a slope on the campus. Many of them are a little too sharp in angle for a wheelchair user. They had to take a roundabout way. Furthermore, they were compelled to use an elevator even though they were going to move only one floor. The elevator was too narrow and difficult to ride at a crowded time like the end of lunch time. The cafeteria was also inconvenient because we cannot reach and take items high up on the shelf. A lot of vending machines are not adapted for wheelchair users. In Hokusei's library, wheelchair users cannot move to 1st, 3rd and 4th floor because there is no staircase. Also, the wheelchair users worried other people's eyes and felt sorry to their partner. Communication with disabled people is one of the biggest problems in society. The students increased their interests and knowledge of it through this practical work and took a step forward to become an effective intercultural communicator.

By Marie Kishino and Saki Yoshimoto



At the school cafeteria



Going outside in a wheelchair



In front of the elevator

Seemingly Barrier-Free but...

By Haruka Kariya & Nanako Miyamoto

Going to the class or moving to other places in a wheelchair on campus can be a challenge for wheelchair-bound students. There is only one person who uses a wheelchair at Hokusei Gakuen University. She is a junior and belongs to the school of social welfare. We had an interview with her. She let us write an article about her under the condition of anonymity. She talked about the difficulties she encounters every day on campus in a wheelchair. The following are excerpts from the interview.

She started using a manual wheelchair when she was a third grader in elementary school. In the last few years, she began using an electric wheelchair. It allows her to move around more widely. Using a manual wheelchair needed strong arms to go through some of the uneven places.

Both inside and outside the campus, she finds it dangerous to move up and down at the steep slopes. There was a time when she slowed down not to be in a head forward posture and fell off the wheelchair. While the new campus building was under construction, there were simple slopes. However, it was too steep to go down as usual and she had to move back slowly. She said, "I was afraid of using it because I can't see behind my back very well."

She rarely goes out of the campus to be somewhere else. Sometimes she has to depend on a car to go to some places for some situations such as that the road is rough, there are

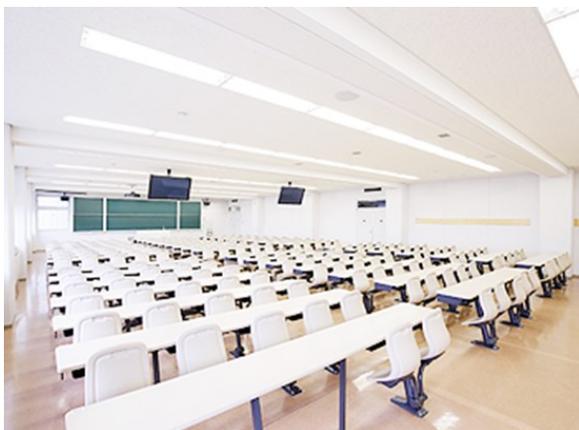
steep hills, or there is an uneven ground between sidewalks and streets. Whenever she plans to visit a new place, she always tries to make sure that a person using a wheelchair can be accepted. It is necessary that there are slopes and parking spaces for wheelchair-bound people. In other words, she does not go anywhere without doing an advance research.

She talked about some of the problems with her campus life. For example, she often needs someone's help with opening the door. Also some classrooms have only a narrow space between desks. It is hard to put a wheelchair in there without the help of other people. Some of the desks are fixed to the floor and can't be moved. There is a desk without a chair for wheel-chair-bound people. But it is usually located in the back of the room. And it makes it difficult for her to see what are written at the bottom of a blackboard.

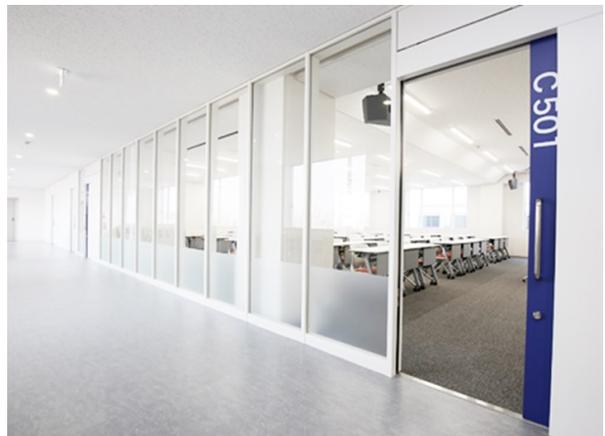
Although she is using an electric wheelchair, it is still hard for her to climb up a steep slope. Therefore she always needs a carer for help.

Whenever she goes to a new restaurant for the first time, she does a research in advance to see whether a wheelchair-bound people are accepted in the restaurant or not. Therefore she usually goes to the same old restaurants. And she never goes there alone by herself.

Places for disabled people



The desk she can use in a wheelchair is located in the far back of the classroom.



A fully-opened door is helpful for people who use a wheelchair.

To be an excellent communicator

By Marie Kishino & Saki Yoshimoto

Monday, May 9

Prof. Noriko Hasegawa has developed a unique way of teaching intercultural communication through “practical works.” In a recent interview, Prof. Hasegawa explained the purpose and the meaning of her method. Through her talk, we got interested in intercultural communication even more.

Q1: What is the purpose of each practical work?

A1: It’s important to learn from experiences such as working for a part-time job. There are many things which we cannot learn from a classroom lecture. Intercultural communication means thinking from other people’s side through experiences, getting close to and having empathy with others. People who have developed these skills are an ideal communicator. Practical works have purposes that students put themselves in a position of being a person who has sights from multiple perspectives. Especially in the wheelchair practical work, we aim to learn and understand how some social settings can be inconvenient to minorities such as disabled people and how majority people see these minorities. Hokusei Gakuen University is supposed to be barrier-free but there are still many inconvenient points from the standpoint of the minorities. For example, do you know how people using a wheelchair go to the school cafeteria which doesn’t have an elevator? The answer is they have to use the elevator in the research building and the passageway. Furthermore, the height is different between Building A and Building B, so they have to go by a slope and take a roundabout way. These are some of the problems with this campus facing the wheelchair-bound people.



Prof. Noriko Hasegawa gives an interview in her office.

Q2: What do you want to teach in this seminar?

A2: I have planned and organized each practical work by taking in students’ opinions and I want to continue this style. If the contents of practical works change, I hope my students take steps forward and become a good intercultural communicator. Technology is changing as everyone can edit a movie easily, so I want to make practical works better to keep up with the advanced technology.

Q3: When do you feel you have a good response from your students to your seminar?

A3: Whenever I catch a glimpse of my students’ attitudes being matured, I feel it a good response from the students of my seminar. I also feel satisfaction by hearing the students’ comments such as “I’m really enjoying the seminar!” or “The practical work was a great experience for me.” I want my students to become a great intercultural communicator who can take an action on their own will. It is as it were I watch over them as sort of like a mother.

Q4: What is the most important point in the seminar?

A4: I think it is important for students to be active and independent rather than be always passive. I try not to give them too much task in the seminar. If students don’t say a word or look a little spaced-out when getting in touch with an intercultural environment, I assume they are bored with the practical work. I want them to get more interested and involved with other people.

Q5: Is there anything you have learned from students?

A5: Sometimes, I feel I should have had many more experiences in my younger school days when I see strongly motivated students and find young students’ opinions and ideas fresh.

Casual & Friendly are His Seminar Style

By SHUNSUKE NAKAMINE

< Personal Profile >

Prof. Hitoshi Eguchi of the English Department teaches a seminar of English Education Class, in his unique style, creating a casual and relaxed atmosphere in an academic environment. His students call him “Hitoshi” by his first name, instead of a formal reference of “Prof. Eguchi,” and converse in English with him at all times in any place on campus or off campus. The students have fun and feel very close to him in a relaxed relationship. “Hitoshi” is a cheerful person. He is always smiling and talking to someone. That makes circumstances comfortable and relaxed for students. And he always tries to give a hand to us if there is a need for help. Also, he is very good at cooking. The picture of the dinner he cooked which was uploaded to Facebook looks so delicious. If we want to eat food he cooks, he can make that at the Kirari of Hokusei Gakuen University.



Prof. Hitoshi Eguchi

< Contents of the Seminar >

We mainly set out these three projects. At first, we introduce ourselves by using Power Point in English. In the process, we practice it with voice chat and, we also record our voice and improve presentations. Secondly, we work on Multi Media Project. We cooperate with other members and make one short movie in English. The content of the movie is decided freely, so we can produce anything we like. Thirdly, we work on an individual research project. Mainly, we make use of databases of the library in Hokusei and collect materials that we want to learn. Also, based on it, we make a presentation in class. It will be a practice for graduation work. Through these projects, we can develop the skills in reading comprehension, how to do a presentation, pronunciation and so on. Lastly, there are some activities we get engaged off campus. We have an opportunity to teach at a local elementary school. Teaching to children directly in English will be a precious experience. Also, we can share the time to eat lunch with “Hitoshi.” He can entertain us with homemade dishes at Kirari on the campus of Hokusei. Furthermore, if we hope, we can hold an English training camp. If there are needs, Hitoshi can teach us how to study English or TOEFL. He will hold a study meeting.



Members gathered in the classroom.

Interview with Prof. Eguchi

Q. What are the advantages of this seminar class compared to others?

There are many types of classes focusing on different purposes or goals, so there is nothing special in deciding what is superior to other classes. But I designed this class to be interesting enough for students. I don't use textbooks nor teach anything explicitly. Instead of that, I will show my students how English can be taught by demonstrating different ways of teaching it. Consequently, the students can learn how to teach English indirectly and learn English at the same time by being engaged in various activities.

Q. What do you keep in mind particularly in communicating with students?

I'm very conscious about building a very good and equal relationship with students so that the students can open up

their mind. I'm also careful about what makes it easy for the students to contact me. Now, I use LMS (Moodle), Facebook, Line, e-mail to communicate with my students. They can learn English by corresponding with me by using those tools.

Q. What's the most important point for advice in learning English?

"I don't know exactly what is the most important. Many things are very important. Learning the grammar, vocabularies, pronunciations and intonations, reading, listening and using English are all important. Maybe keeping the focus on learning is important. I couldn't comprehend spoken English at all when I was a college student. I couldn't speak English at all until I became 24. It is very difficult to know when such sudden improvement may take place. I am very glad that I never stopped studying English even though it was very difficult to learn."

Hokusei Team May Need Another Tactic To Win

By Hiroto Sato

●The World of Iharasuisan & Hokusei

The Yosakoi Soran Festival is a major dancing performance event in which about 300 teams from across the country and overseas participate. This big event is held in Odori park in Sapporo in June every year. The festival celebrated its 25th anniversary this year. The team of Hokusei Gakuen University is a regular participant.

The team is called Iharasuisan & Hokusei Gakuen. It is composed of around 130~150 members and the women percentage is 70 percent, which features the color of this team. Throughout the year, we take part in various events anywhere across the country. Every year we go from Hokkaido to Sendai to join a festival called Michinoku Yosakoi Festival. Some famous teams gather there from all over Japan. One of my team members is similar with outside Hokkaido team. They talked flatly to others and as we greet others many times, they get to know each other. We all become "Yosakoi friends." We focus on greeting as a team concept. It is true that it costs money as a traffic expense to go somewhere to participate in such events outside Hokkaido. So many of us do part-time jobs to earn money.



A scene of "A ship comes back. "

●Enthusiasm for next year

The reason why we lost in this year's contest is mainly because of the inadequate quality of each practice. This year we changed the way to express our performance in production so as not to stagnate in our progress of yosakoi in the past. Each Hokusei team exercised ingenuity every year to make a production better. They often changed the style and shape of composition in dance performed by the members. In our case, we stick to using a ship as props on the stage and it took a long time to be able to use it effectively in a practice. We had difficulty thinking about where we put it and when we use it on the stage. We spent much time thinking about what is the most important thing. We have to be more conscious about how to use the finite length of time effectively.



Members of the Iharasuisan & Hokusei Gakuen team gather on the campus.

●Our performance this year

Our performance this year was very different from that of the previous year. Our theme was titled "Ookadehune." We tried to change the way to express our production based on an ocean. We used a huge ship in our performance for the first time. By using a ship, the spectators can easily image a view of an ocean. Men danced as "fishermen" and women their "wives." Wives are waiting for men coming home. The accompanying music also was changed with a strong intention to win the contest this year. Listen to the music of the performances of other years, and you will know how different it is this year.

It goes without saying that the Iharasuisan & Hokusei Gakuen team is among the most powerful student teams now. Some of the previous results show that we were in a higher rank in each tournament of the annual contest. But this year, we lost in the first tournament and couldn't enter the final block for the ticket to perform on the final stage.

Volleyball crosses a frontier!

By Sakura Tomita

From this April, Hokusei Gakuen University's Girls volleyball team got a new member from the United States. Her name is Shelby Caitlyn Poole. She is from Hawaii and a student of Lewis Clark University. This university has an arrangement with Hokusei Gakuen University in an academic tie-up. Many students have come to study at Hokusei Gakuen from Lewis & Clark University. Shelby came to Japan this April and she is expected to study in Japan until July. She studies Japanese, literature and religion. Hawaii, her home state, is a famous resort destina-

tion. Many Japanese people visit Hawaii. She became interested in talking with Japanese tourists when she was over there. Moreover, she thinks Hawaii has been influenced by Japan. For example, Japanese food is very popular in Hawaii. She said she doesn't like fish, but she likes *mochi* and enjoys a Japanese tea ceremony. Especially, she likes *zenzai*. People can buy them in Hawaii. She is influenced by Japanese playing dress up, and she is interested in going to Akihabara. Akihabara is the center of Japanese anime and other pop cultures.



Shelby poses as receiving a volleyball.



His name is Flag. They are good friends.

When she was a junior high school student in Hawaii, she started playing volleyball and continued to play it for eight years. However, after graduating from the high school, she became like a sloth because she became lazy in playing volleyball. Lewis Clark University has a volleyball team, though she didn't join the team because of her

health. Before she came to Japan, she met a Japanese volleyball comic titled "HAIKYU!!" This comic reminded her of the appeal of playing volleyball. Thanks to this comic, she decided to join Hokusei Gakuen University's volleyball team. She said that playing volleyball at Hokusei Gakuen is a lot of fun.



Hokusei Gakuen University's girls volleyball team

Question & Answer

Q:What is Hawaii's good point?

A: Hawaii has many sea shores and beautiful sand beaches. Hawaii is warm and has a beautiful scenery.

Q:What is your favorite point of Sapporo?

A: I like Odori. Because Odori has an "animate shop" which has many "HAIKYU!!" goods. I visit there once a week.

Editorial Staff of The Hokusei Times

A total of 14 students worked as reporters covering current topics on campus and published the No. 17 issue of The Hokusei Times. The following are personal profiles of each member with brief comments about their dream place to visit in the future and things they want to do there.



Takako Nagai

I want to go to Finland!

I want to spend Christmas and see Santa Claus.

Italy! I like Italian foods and hope to eat real ones over there. Also, want to visit world heritage sites such as Colosseum.



Saki Yoshimoto



Nanako Miyamoto

Spain!

I want to eat delicious paella and drink with passionate Latin people.

I want to go to Bolivia.

Because there is a beautiful view of the named Uyuni salt lake.



Ayaka Miura



Erika Nakagawa

The United Kingdom.

I want to see the shooting location of Harry Potter which is a famous movie all over the world and then have many local foods.

India!

I want to change my sense of values.



Nanami Sato



Risa Kondo

America. I want to go to Disneyland in California and watch Broadway shows because I'm interested in American dramas.

France! I have studied French for 3 years, so I want to feel the atmosphere there and come into contact with French culture.



Marie Kishino



Sakura Tomita

I want to go to U.K. !
And I want to sightsee the Cotswold village in Bibury.

Australia! I'd like to try to hug a koala in my arms and feed him/her eucalyptus leaves.



Haruka Kariya



Yuumi Akashi

Italy!
Because I want to visit historical architectures.

Thailand!
I want to see the sky lantern festival of "Yeepeng Sansai."



Haruka Wakabayashi



Shunsuke Nakamine

France.
I want to see a lot of beautiful sceneries and splendid architectures.

I wanna go to Australia. In a vast and broad environment, I want to challenge to take a trip by myself.



Hiroto Sato



Prof. Toshiya Kawahara

The islands of Tahiti in the South Pacific.
My long-cherished dream is to stay on the beach in the daytime and look at the stars in the Milky Way at night.



Relaxed and smiling after finishing the newspaper together as a team.